

## **Kabbalah**

I feel that every individual should try some type of meditative practice to become enlightened about his/her feelings, thoughts, and beliefs on ethical and philosophical matters. By exploring one's inner and true stance in life and beliefs one acknowledges and enhances the spiritual self. Hence, I chose to practice the Jewish spiritual aid called Meditative Kabbalah. The purpose of this type of Kabbalah is to become more aware and mindful of the world and spirit of the self. Kabbalah intertwines with Kavannah and touches the base of Contemplative Kabbalah. Kavannah, "directing of the heart to achieve higher contemplative thoughts and attain inner strength," is the base upon which the meditative mind flows and expands. Typically prayer becomes involved during the meditation period; prayer during meditation can be unstructured and personal.

I haven't practiced proper meditation though I have wished to; I had prayed consistently as a child and teen but had fallen from the habit years ago. Therefore, I figured this would be a good getting back into spiritual shape. I practiced Meditative Kabbalah without prayer for the first two days, the third day I included silent prayer in my practice, and each session was limited to thirty minutes. My sole focus through the meditation period was to explore my ethical mannerisms when it comes to worldly concerns, my personal habits, and interactions amongst other people.

The first attempt at meditating was slightly difficult. My mind was definitely focused on what I needed to do and subjects that I wanted to tackle, but it was difficult to get started on the mental conversation with myself. After a few minutes of having a mental block I started to ask myself questions which opened the line of communication and understanding. To every question I tried to understand the perspective of others' opinions and also sought to know the truth of the situation. Formulated from more than one perspective I based my own opinion on the subject. Considering others' views on worldly circumstances, exploring how I personally feel, and balancing them with fact brought me to think of and react to important topics with rational thoughts and emotion.

During the second thirty minute session I focused on where I stand religion-wise, recognized my beliefs and the root of my beliefs, and how I react to other religious beliefs and individuals. I used the same tactics from the first session. The third session I included prayer. Including prayer definitely engaging a spiritual self that has been hidden by selfishness and at times heartlessness.

I prayed for the strength to treat all people as people. I prayed that differences between my views and actions will not faze others with who I become associated. I felt good because I was wishing better for the world around me and not wishing for me to be better off. Yes, I would like to live a comfortable life but my world would be a happier place if the world around me was a happier place. It undeniably feels as though there is a force far more advanced than what I can understand radiating from my body. There was an electric tingle that flowed from the tip of my big toe to the top of my head when praying, I believe this is because I was being selfless and looking at the picture as a whole.

I would definitely suggest this enlightenment technique to anyone and everyone. Due to respect of beliefs and religion I would not ask them to pray but rather to practice selflessness and getting in touch with where s/he stands in the world.