

The Quest 46

Chapter 46: Meditation

The content in the booklet was straightforward, containing just a few diagrams on entering a meditative state and some pages of mental techniques that briefly explained how to regulate, stop breath, and enter meditation, and how to abandon miscellaneous thoughts to achieve a state of self-forgetfulness.

Mo Hua looked over the few diagrams and lines of text in the booklet, seemingly wanting to say something but hesitating.

"Does it seem very simple?" he asked.

Mo Hua nodded, then asked, "Sir, is this just a basic method of meditation?"

"No," Mr. Zhuang denied, "All the insights and practices of the meditation technique are in this booklet."

Seeing Mo Hua's confusion, Mr. Zhuang further explained:

"The meditation technique is simple in that all the key points are laid out in these diagrams and pages of insights, clear at a glance. However, the difficulty lies in the elusive nature of human thought; you cannot simply decide to meditate and forget yourself and the world around you."

Mo Hua pondered thoughtfully as Mr. Zhuang continued:

"For instance, the myriad desires of the world—people claim they can see through them, but how many truly can? Some truths seem simple, those who understand can grasp them instantly, while those who don't might never understand in their entire life, and often, those who don't understand think they do."

"This meditation technique is the same. If you truly can meditate, casting aside miscellaneous thoughts, then naturally, you will learn quickly. But if you are burdened with heavy thoughts and cluttered with distractions, no matter how much you learn, you will not grasp it."

Mo Hua seemed to understand, then frowned and said, "So if I can't cast aside my miscellaneous thoughts, does that mean I won't be able to learn it?"

Mr. Zhuang smiled, "It's not as difficult as you think. I have used this meditation technique for many years and have distilled it down to a simple piece of wisdom—'Follow nature without deceiving yourself.'"

"Follow nature without deceiving yourself..." Mo Hua murmured to himself.

"Everything in the world is what it is, as is your own mind, whether it's restless or calm, cruel or depressed, righteous or despicable, even if it's unbearable, you should accept it frankly without deceiving yourself."

"If you can achieve this, your mind will be as still as water and as clear as a mirror, and you will more or less be able to meditate."

Mo Hua, enlightened, started browsing through the "Meditation Technique." After a while, out of curiosity, he asked:

"Sir, does the meditation technique have any special use when mastered to a high level?"

"There isn't," Mr. Zhuang replied, "The meditation technique from beginning to end only enables you to meditate and recover spiritual awareness. Even when mastered to a high degree, it merely speeds up the meditation and recovery of spiritual awareness. Moreover, the longer you practice, it doesn't necessarily mean you'll get better at it."

Mo Hua was stunned, "Can it actually get worse with more practice?"

Mr. Zhuang looked at Mo Hua meaningfully, "You're still a child now, your experiences and thoughts are relatively simple, and you have fewer distractions, so perhaps you can meditate more quickly. As you grow older and see more of the world, you'll have more distractions and desires, and then meditation won't be so simple."

Mo Hua nodded in realization.

He thought about his own experiences, which weren't few, considering he had memories from another life.

But thinking about it, he was only in his twenties in his previous life, and not very experienced. This lifetime was just a decade more. Even combined, he was much younger than Mr. Zhuang, and his experiences couldn't compare. Being called a "child" wasn't wrong.

Mo Hua, curious, asked again, "Then sir, how is your meditation technique now compared to before?"

Mr. Zhuang thought for a moment, "I probably started when I was over ten years old, had learned various array theories, and was quite proficient in high-grade arrays. I then began learning the meditation technique, and initially, I learned it very quickly. During my youth, the technique continued to improve, often after drawing an array, a mere tea-time meditation would suffice to replenish my spiritual awareness."

"When I was young and impetuous, my thoughts were unsettled, so my progress in the meditation technique stalled. Later, through many upheavals and a troubled state of mind, I didn't settle down to meditate, and my proficiency regressed."

"Now, many things seem less important, and I hardly need the meditation technique anymore..."

Mr. Zhuang felt nostalgic, but realizing he had been talking too much, and seeing Mo Hua still engrossed as if listening to a story, tapped Mo Hua on the forehead and said, "

Study hard."

"Oh," Mo Hua then calmed his mind, focusing on studying the meditation technique.

The essence of the meditation technique was to cast aside miscellaneous thoughts, to clear the mind, and to enter a state of self-forgetfulness.

Mo Hua followed the methods described in the "Meditation Technique," sitting quietly and thinking of nothing, slowly entering a state of meditation.

After entering the state, he truly felt relaxed, as if he had escaped the physical constraints of the body, his mind suddenly felt broad and open, and the spiritual awareness he had used up drawing arrays was gradually recovering, faster than before.

However, Mo Hua's meditative state was shallow; not even lasting the time it takes to drink a cup of tea, his thoughts drifted slightly, and he exited the meditative state.

Mr. Zhuang, who had been meditating with his eyes closed, noticed this and opened his eyes, saying:

"For your first time reaching this level, it's quite good. Once you master it, after drawing arrays, just meditate and you'll accomplish much more with less effort."

"Thank you, sir!"

Mo Hua was thrilled, previously he could only practice arrays on the stele in his sea of consciousness, and his progress during the day was slow. Now that he had learned to meditate, he could recover his spiritual awareness quickly, and even if he didn't have the background of those noble family disciples, his diligence could make up for it, and he might not be inferior to others in the future.

Mo Hua then asked, "Sir, I understand the meditation technique now, but what about the visualization technique you mentioned earlier?"

Mr. Zhuang, lying leisurely in a bamboo chair, said, "Guess, what is the visualization technique used for?"

Mo Hua thought for a moment and said, "The meditation technique is for recovering spiritual awareness, so is the visualization technique used to enhance spiritual awareness?"

"Exactly," Mr. Zhuang nodded, "In the cultivation world, there are no techniques for cultivating spiritual awareness. Ancient cultivators created the visualization technique to strengthen spiritual awareness."

"Is the visualization technique different from other techniques?"

"The visualization technique is a simplified, unstable method that can enhance spiritual awareness, but it is not a cultivation technique for spiritual awareness," Mr. Zhuang explained.

"Spiritual power is tangible and can be used to activate spiritual weapons and practice techniques, it follows meridians, but spiritual awareness is different, there are no meridians in the sea of consciousness, and there is no stable way to cultivate spiritual awareness."

"The only way to quickly enhance spiritual awareness is through contemplation. Contemplation involves patterns, text, or ancient objects containing the rules of Dao or powerful spiritual awareness. To some extent, you can assimilate with them and gradually strengthen your spiritual awareness."

"However, the effects of the visualization technique vary from person to person, and the diagrams used for practicing the technique, even in those large noble families, are extremely rare, so it has not spread widely in the cultivation world and cannot be promoted as a stable cultivation method like other techniques."

"Visualization technique..." Mo Hua murmured.

Mr. Zhuang hesitated for a moment, his expression slightly serious:

"Although the visualization technique can enhance spiritual awareness, you better not use it, even if you do, be cautious and not completely rely on it."

Mo Hua asked, puzzled, "Is it because my talent is insufficient, so it might backfire?"

Mr. Zhuang shook his head, "It has nothing to do with talent. The visualization images reflect others' spiritual awareness and their understanding of the Dao. In other words, what you visualize is someone else's 'Dao', or perhaps, a non-human 'Dao'. Once your spiritual awareness becomes immersed in it, it can lead to very dire consequences."

Mo Hua felt a chill in his heart.

Mr. Zhuang waved his hand, "These things are still too early for you to worry about. You just need to focus on studying arrays. You might not even come across such diagrams in the future."

After that, Mr. Zhuang had Mo Hua practice the meditation technique a few more times, and as the evening approached, he let Mo Hua go home.