

Settling Back Into The Moment

A Selection of Verses from the Book
"The Experience of Insight" by Joseph Goldstein



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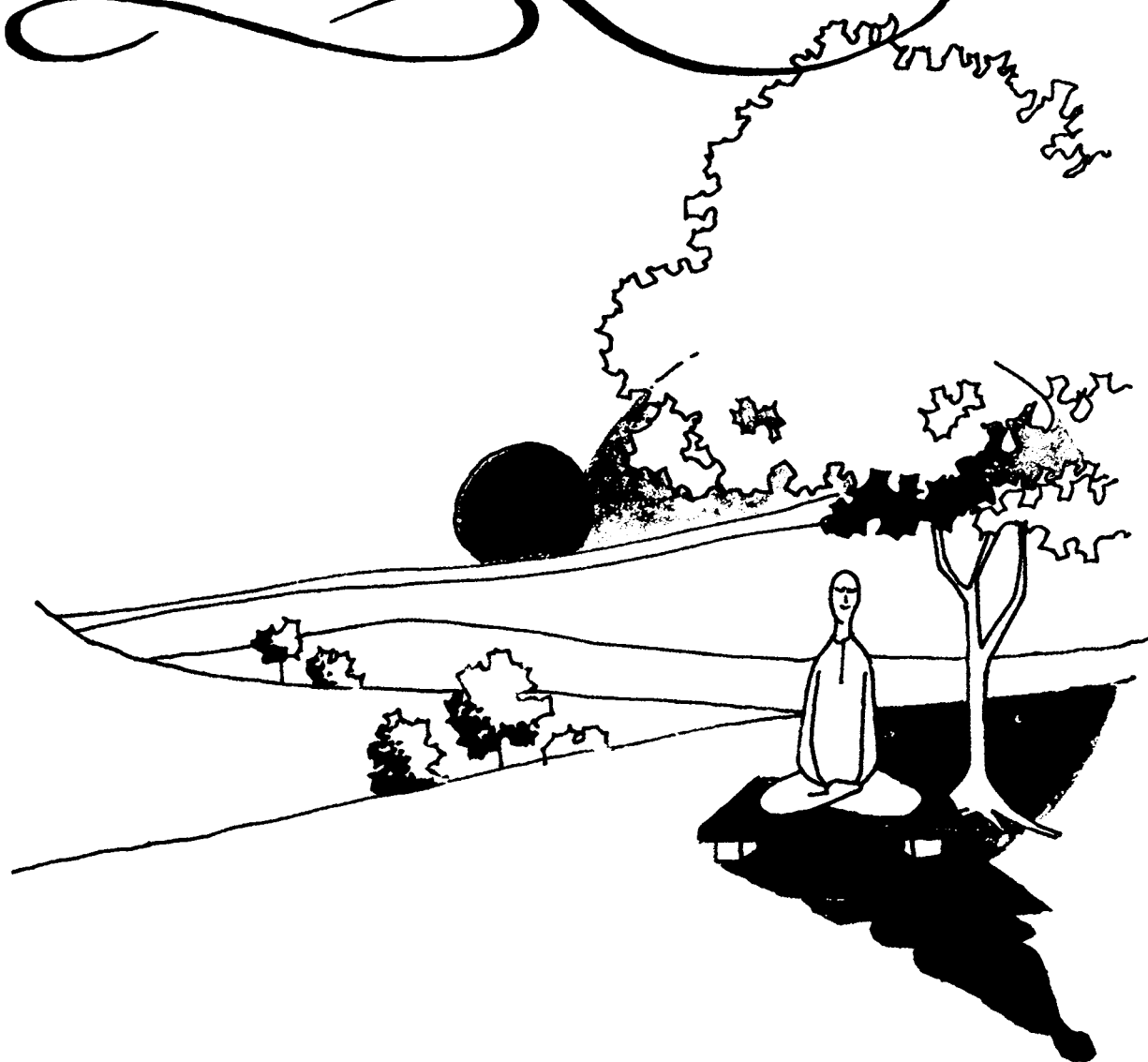
139, JALAN TANJUNG TOKONG

10470 PENANG.

A WORD OF THANKS TO JOSEPH GOLDSTEIN FOR HIS KIND PERMISSION TO REPRINT EXCERPTS FROM HIS BOOK ENTITLED 'EXPERIENCE OF INSIGHT' SKETCHES SHOWN ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES DO NOT NECESSARILY EXEMPLIFY THE WORDS.

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Settling back into the moment



A SELECTION OF VERSES
FROM THE BOOK 'THE EXPERIENCE OF INSIGHT' BY JOSEPH GOLDSTEIN

PREFACE

This book belongs to a different genre; not a book in the sense of having a beginning and an end; where a reader reads from left to right for continuity.

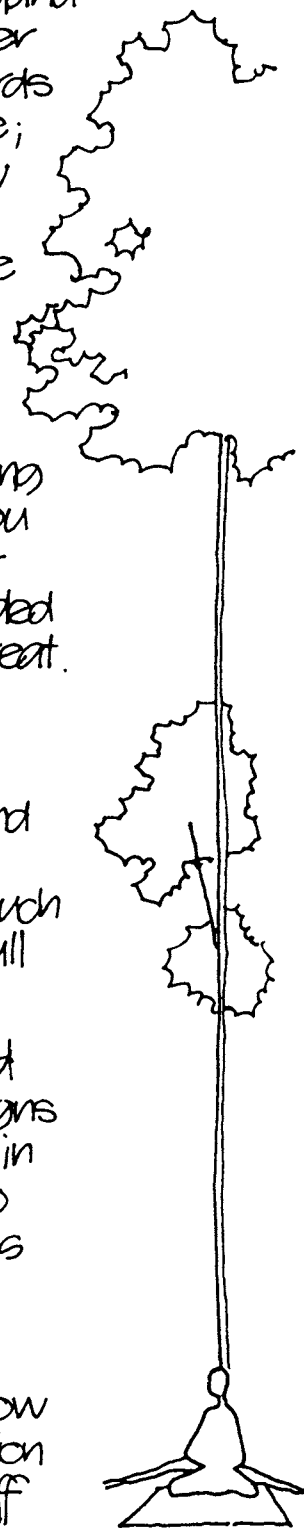
It is a compilation of excerpts that ably stand alone in meaning whichever way your finger may flip open the pages; for these are words of timeless truths devoid of space and time; words that are meant for your reflection now and here; words that talk straight to your heart and mind; words that are very close to you, as close as your breath.

For the moment, let the quaint words and myriad number of lines (that suggest painstaking digital effort) wrest your quivering mind and somehow point out to you that you have also to put in an effort and rouse your own energy; effort and energy that is needed for something worthwhile ~ striving in a retreat.

To the uninitiated, the words may conjure a seemingly new vista of neither looking backwards nor ahead. Keep on reading and be inspired. At least you are aware that sitting and looking at the moment can be such a big subject worth many words. Not a dull subject, huh?

To the initiated, let the words refresh and advise. By thus knowing what the road signs will be and what is expected from oneself in the journey, a yogi is better equipped to disentangle from a maze of wrong turnings and avoid going in circles.

As a saying goes, a journey begins with a single step. We might as well start right now by going through short sessions of meditation daily. After all, mountain climbers started off



climbing walls. Mental-culture or insight meditation is not to be deemed practicable only at a retreat. If at a place where solitude and quietude is of greater magnitude, how could one adjust from home where latitude breeds lassitude.

It is often remarked that opportunity knocks but once. This is utterly not true in the context of insight meditation; opportunity does not start at the doorknob of a retreat. As Joseph Goldstein puts it ".....situation of retreats did not happen by chance. It happened because there were strong forces of purity within each of us...." If you have the opportunity to attend retreats why waste it away.....

Meditation teachers have always encouraged yogis to familiarise their minds with meditation prior to each actual retreat. For instance, one could practise a short session of meditation daily for a week or two (but of course, practising every day is always called for). If a yogi enter a retreat without getting acquainted with the practice, he or she has to 'struggle' mentally for a few days before the mind settles down. By then, two or three days could have elapsed; a sheer loss for those (earning a living) who have to 'fight' for a week or less of holidays to embark on a retreat.

This does not mean to say that those with lots of time in their hands could say "what is two or three days?" Never heard of death giving priorities. Have you?

Reading this book now and perhaps ten years later will definitely yield a different perspective; a different depth of meaning. Sketches in the book are not meant to exemplify the words; but are graphics to break the monotony of words. Feeling bored with words? Awareness.

It is hoped that this compilation will guide many to realising the fruit of the practice. If this compendium speaks to a thousand in order to propel one to urgently allow the experience of insight to engulf him or her,

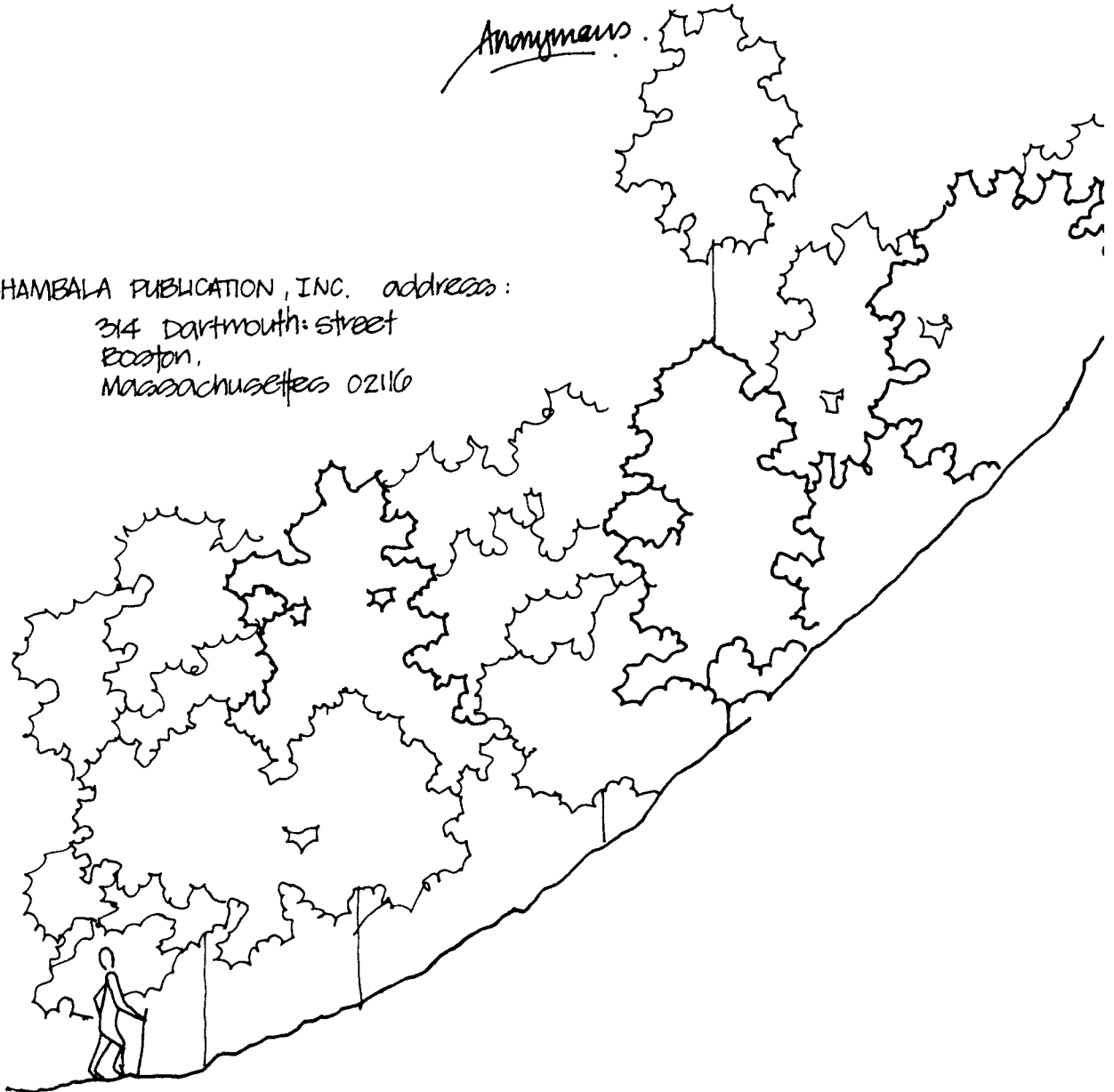
the book would have achieved its noble purpose.

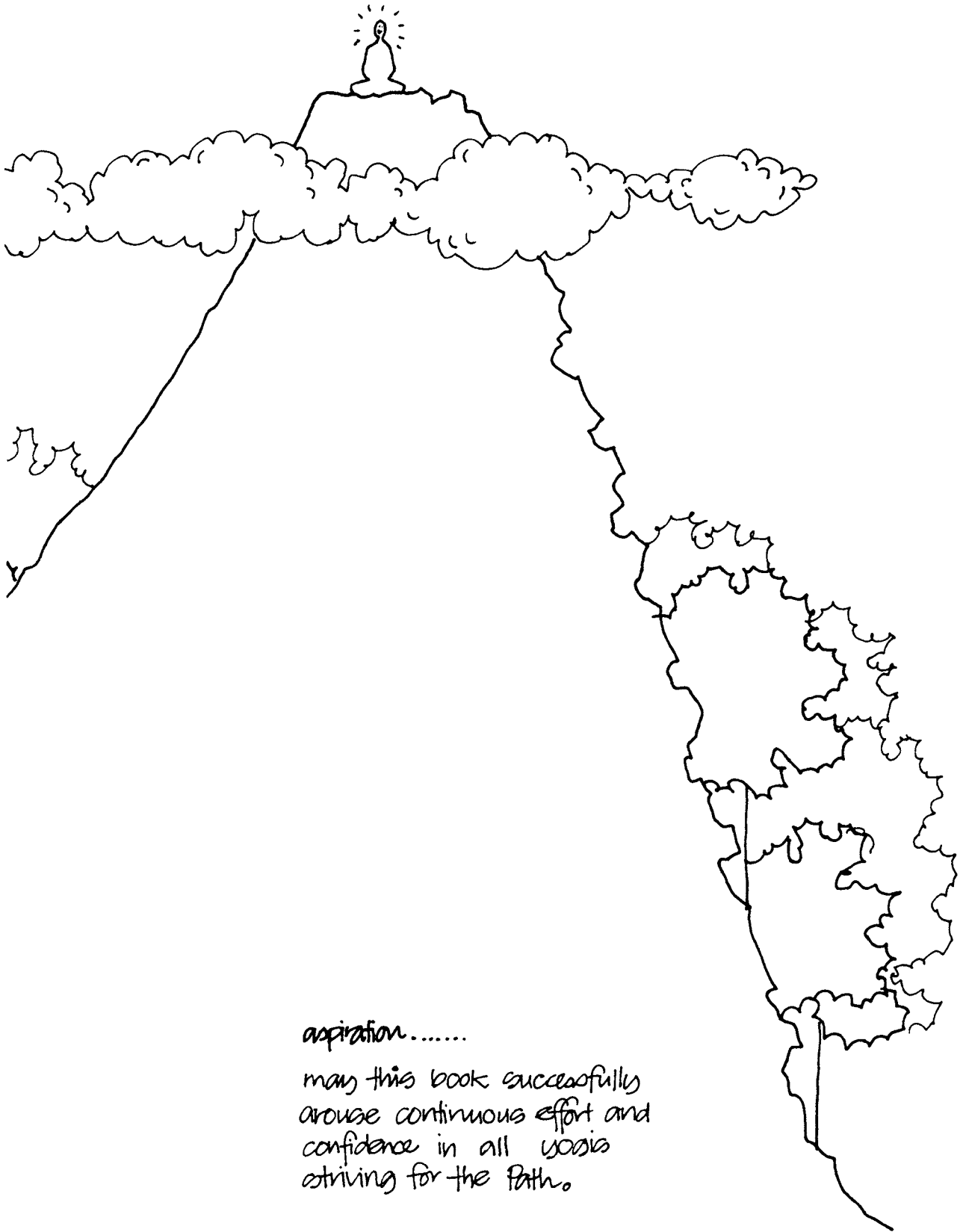
Readers are strongly encouraged to read Joseph Goldstein's "Experience of Insight - a simple and direct guide to Buddhist meditation" (Published by Shambala Publication, Inc.) from whose book this compilation is attributed.

Maha sadhu to all the kind people who have helped to defray the cost of printing.

Anonymous.

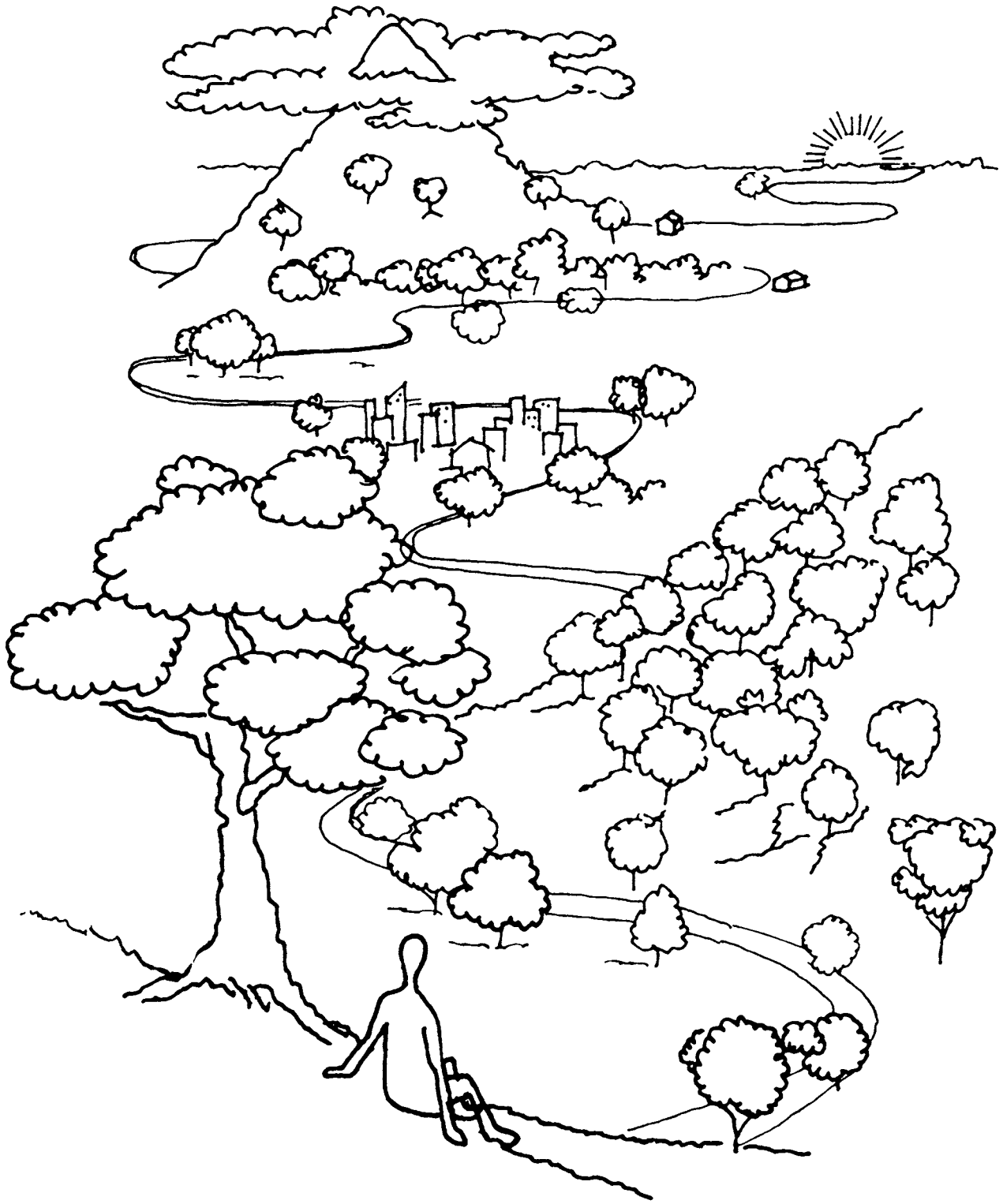
SHAMBALA PUBLICATION, INC. address:
314 Dartmouth Street
Boston,
Massachusetts 02116





aspiration.....

may this book successfully
arouse continuous effort and
confidence in all who is
striving for the path.



A JOURNEY

We have all begun
a journey.

A journey into our minds.

A journey of discovery
and exploration of
who and what we are.

Taking the first step is
difficult, and in the
first days of practice
there is often

restlessness,

or sleepiness

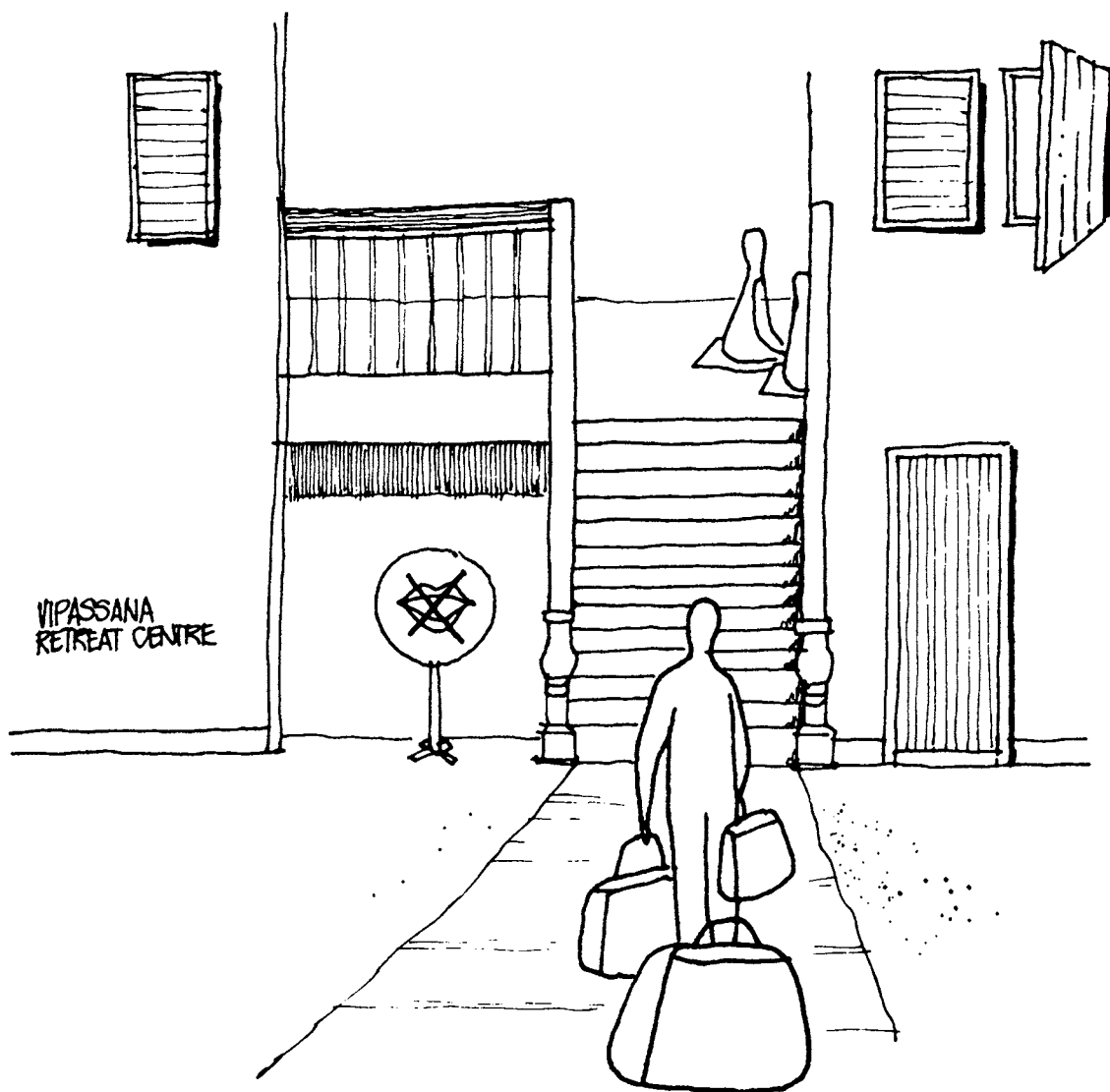
some boredom

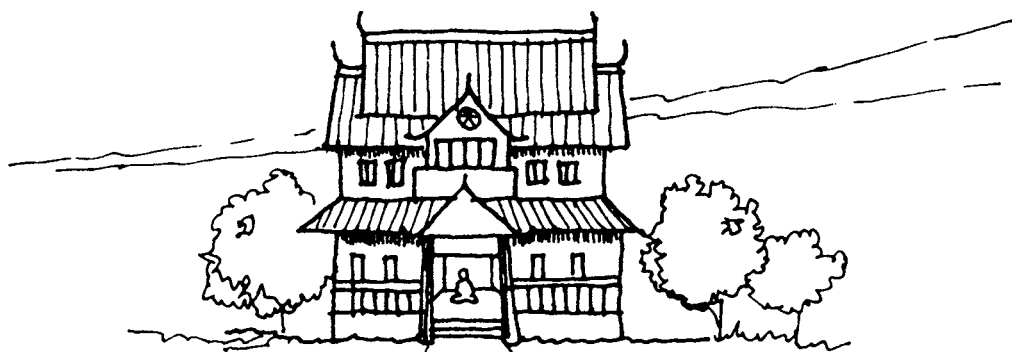
laziness

doubt

and perhaps regret about
getting involved at all.

It's not
an easy thing
that we have set about to do,
this
training and purification
of the mind.





THERE'S NO ONE ELSE WHO
CAN DO IT FOR US.

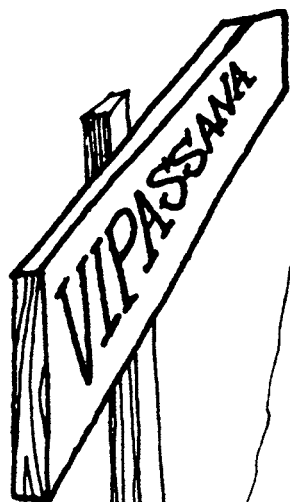
WE EACH HAVE TO DO IT FOR
OURSELVES.

BE AWARE, MOMENT TO MOMENT,
PAYING ATTENTION TO WHAT'S
HAPPENING IN A TOTAL WAY.

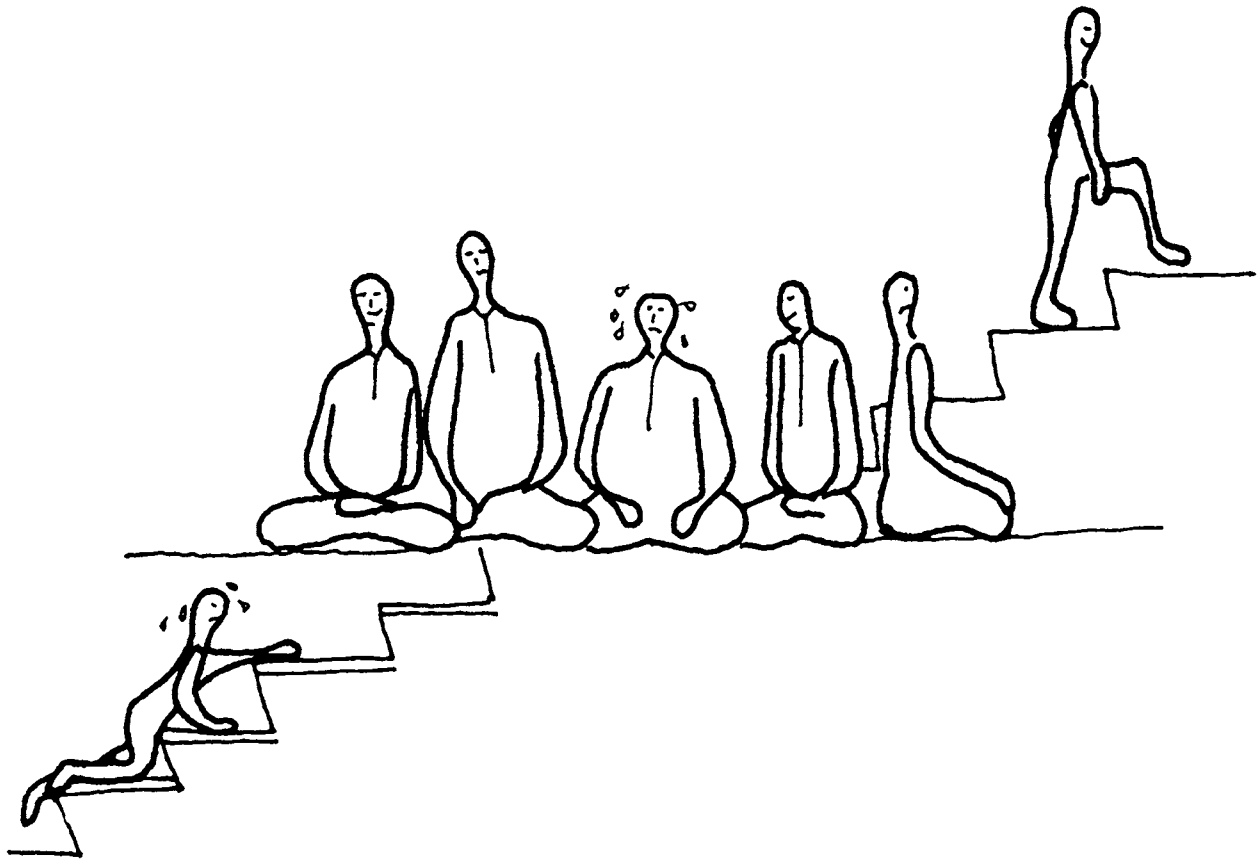
THERE'S NOTHING MYSTICAL
ABOUT IT, IT'S SO SIMPLE,

DIRECT &
STRAIGHTFORWARD;

BUT IT TAKES DOING.



THAT'S WHAT MEDITATION IS ALL
ABOUT.



The first step is
difficult for everyone.

the spiritual quest we are
embarking upon is a rare
and precious undertaking,
so be gentle yet persevering
through any beginning
difficulties.

Please
adhere
closely.

DAILY TIME SCHEDULE

4.00am. - WALKING

5.00am. - SITTING

6.00am. - BREAKFAST

7.00 am - ||| ||| |||

||| ||| - ||| ||| |||

||| ||| - ||| ||| |||

||| ||| - ||| ||| |||

||| ||| - ||| ||| |||

use the opportunity

of **RETREATS**

to the fullest :

don't waste
time or think
you've done enough.

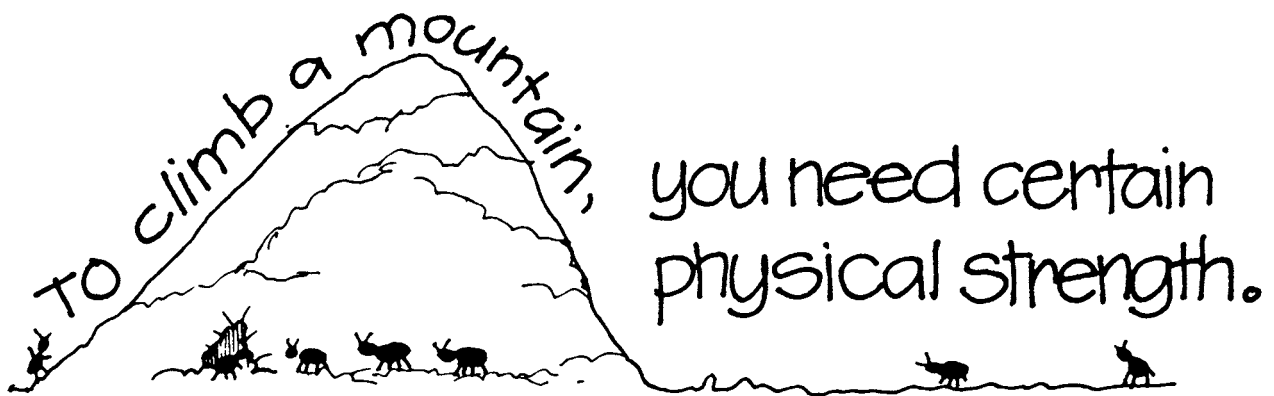
THE HIGHEST KIND OF HAPPINESS

is vipassana happiness,
the happiness of insight,
seeing how things are working.

It is a very happy state
when one begins to appreciate
with a beginner's mind
every moment as new,
as fresh.

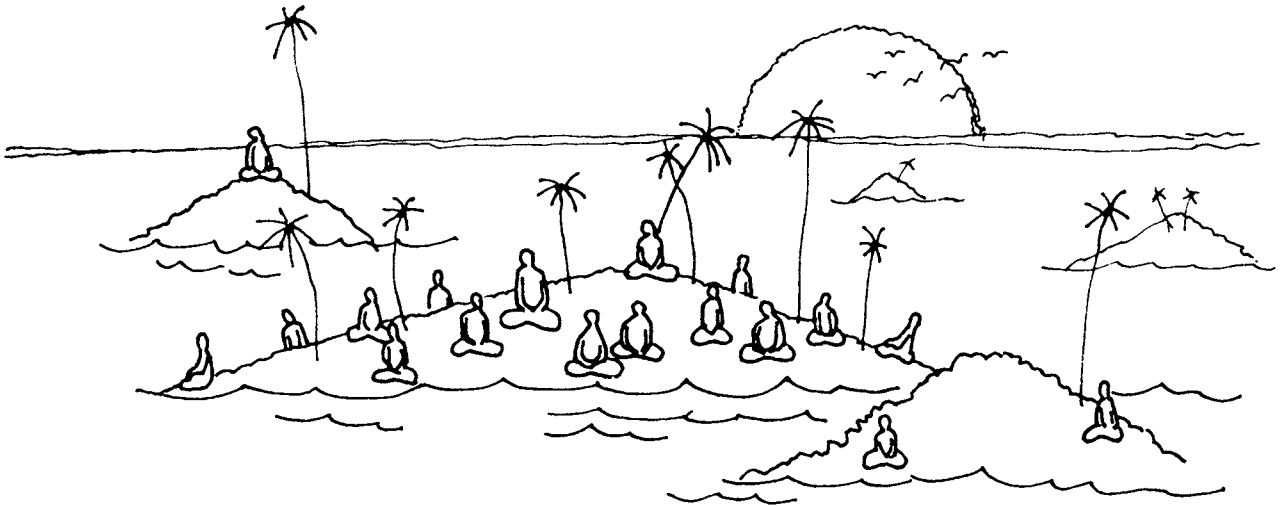
So there is a great delight
in existence which comes
from a beginner's mind,
from a deconditioned mind,
a mind that is experiencing
directly
rather than thinking about
everything.

The first days of a retreat may seem difficult because concentration is not well developed.



If you are not yet strong, in the beginning you will feel tired and uncomfortable. But as the body gets stronger, climbing becomes easier.

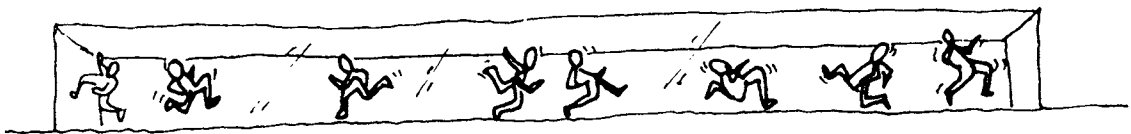
It is the same in meditation. As concentration is developed, it becomes less difficult to stay in the moment.



To

practise and understand the Dhamma
is a rare and precious thing.

Few people in the world are
presented with this
opportunity.

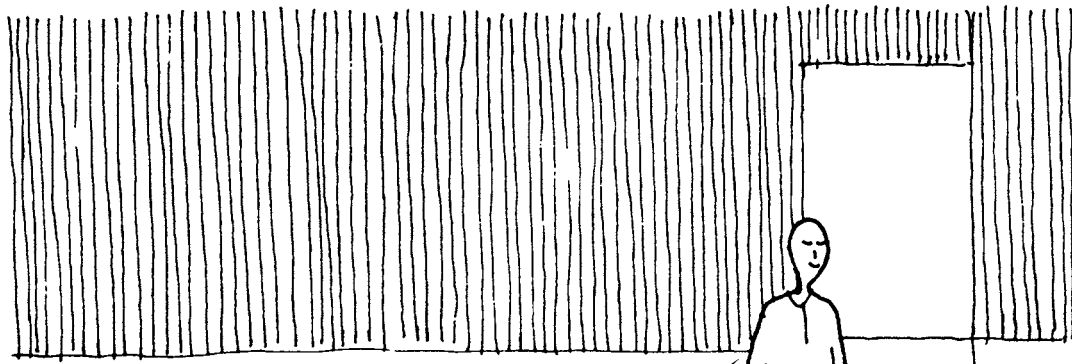


Most people are circling around,
driven by ignorance and desire,
unaware of the possibility
of getting off this wheel of samsara,
the wheel of greed and hatred.

The endless cycle of desire for sense pleasures keeps the mind in turbulence and confusion.

When we learn to let go, the lighter the mind becomes.

Then there is no disturbance, no tension, and we begin to free ourselves from our storehouse of conditioning, from our bondage to sense desires.



THE
DEVELOPING OF INSIGHT
MEANS
EXPERIENCING THE FLOW
OF IMPERMANENCE
WITHIN OURSELVES
SO THAT WE BEGIN
TO LET GO,
NOT GRASPING
SO DESPERATELY AT
MIND~BODY PHENOMENA.

NO ONE
CAN BE SURE WHEN THE
OPPORTUNITY FOR PRACTICE
WILL COME AGAIN.

THERE ARE VERY SPECIAL
CIRCUMSTANCES
FOR US IN THIS
ENVIRONMENT.

IT IS THE PERFECT PLACE TO
EXPLORE OURSELVES,
TO FIND OUT WHO WE ARE.

DON'T WASTE THE OPPORTUNITY.

What we're doing
in coming to an understanding
of ourselves
is the

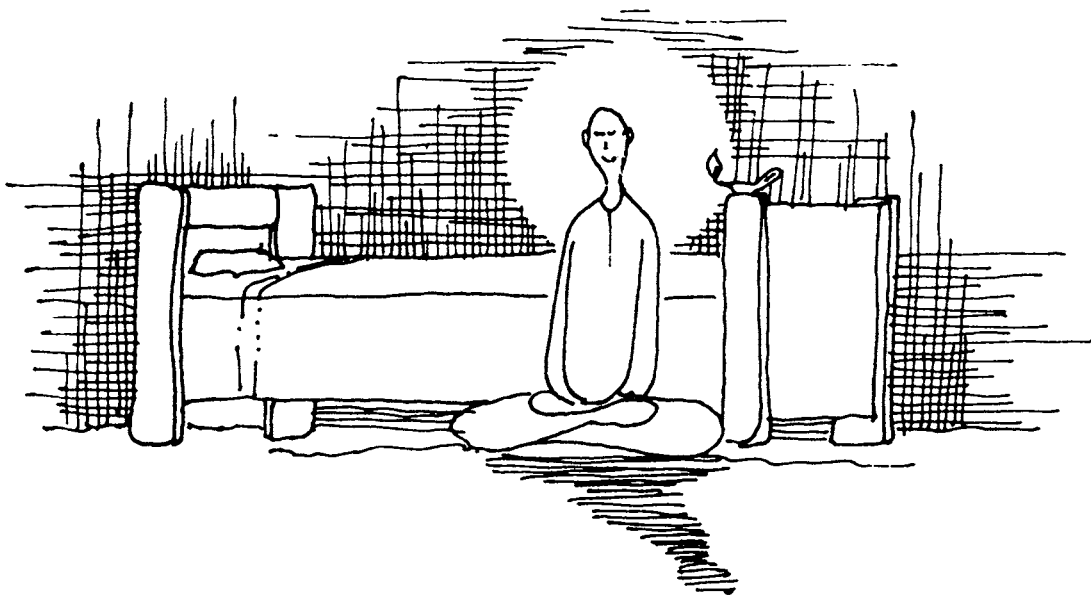
NOBLEST THING
that can be done.

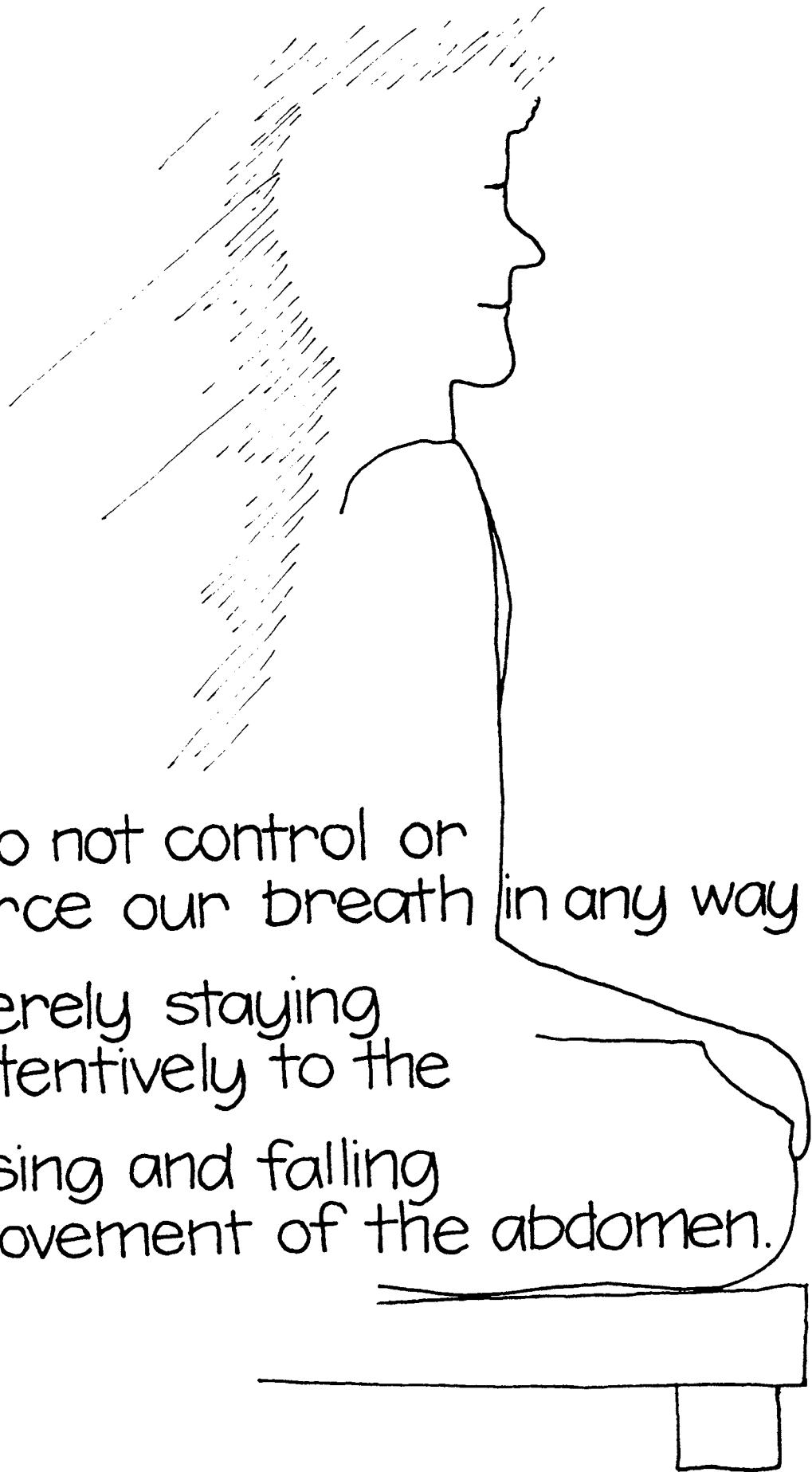
It is
the eradication from the
mind
of greed
of hatred and
of delusion.

It is

... DIFFICULT & RARE
and requires
great
impeccability.

Impeccability means
cultivating qualities
of mind
which bring about
totality and wakefulness
in every moment.





Do not control or force our breath in any way merely staying attentively to the rising and falling movement of the abdomen.

JUST

Keep your attention
on the
movement of the abdomen

not imagining

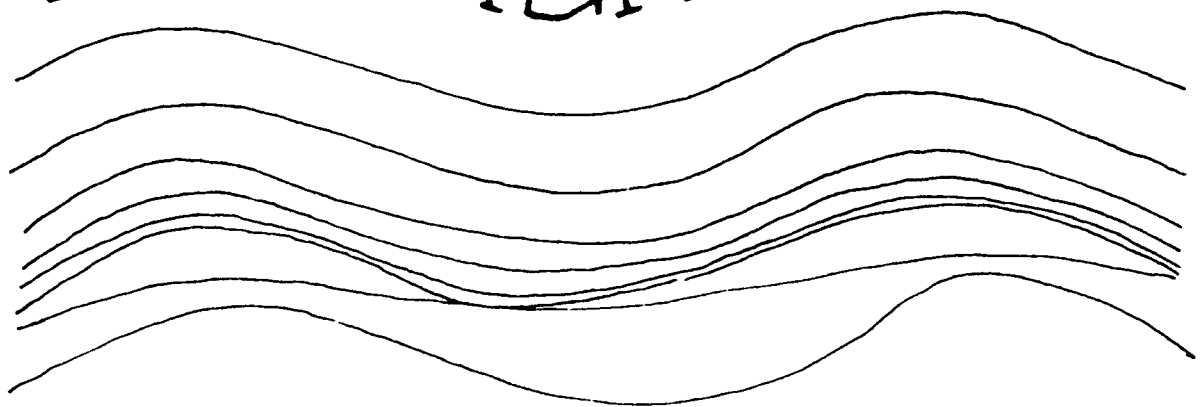
not visualizing anything

but just

experiencing

the sensation of the

MOVEMENT



IF THE HEART WANDERS OR
IS DISTRACTED,
BRING IT BACK TO THE POINT
GENTLY

AND EVEN
IF YOU DID NOTHING DURING
THE WHOLE OF YOUR HOUR
BUT BRING YOUR HEART
BACK, THOUGH IT WENT
AWAY EVERY TIME YOU
BROUGHT IT BACK, YOUR
HOUR WOULD BE
VERY WELL-EMPLOYED.

~ ST. FRANCIS DE SALES

Our rising & falling
may be.....

sometimes l - o - n - g

sometimes short

sometimes clear

sometimes not

sometimes deep

sometimes shallow

no matter what,

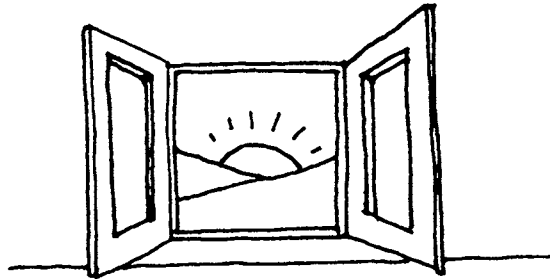
remember,

it is not a breathing exercise;

it is the beginning

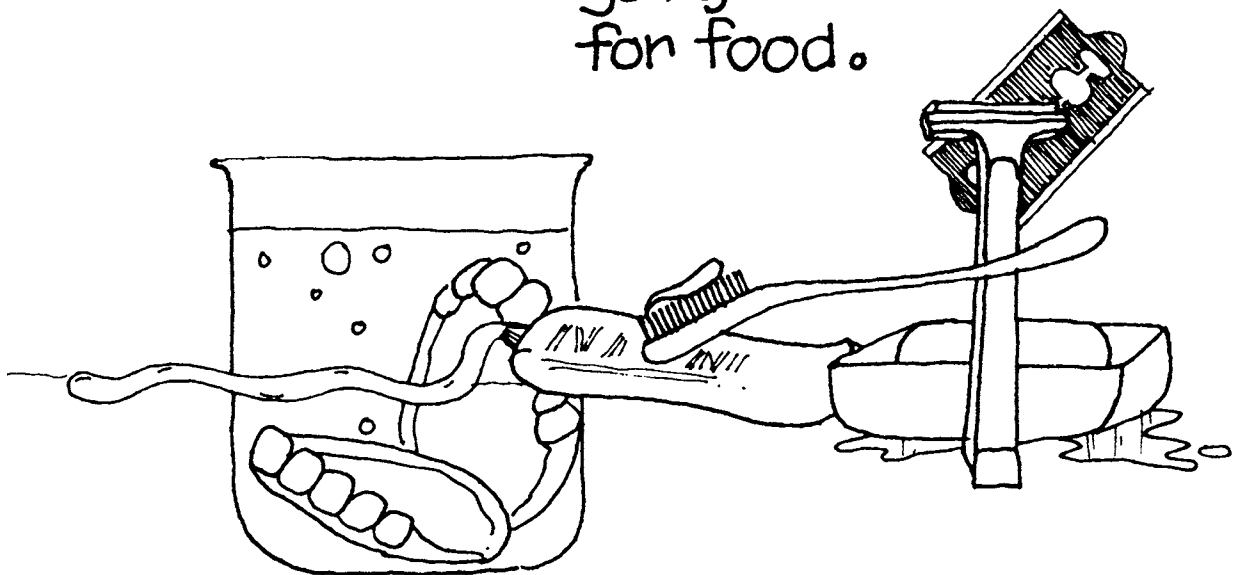
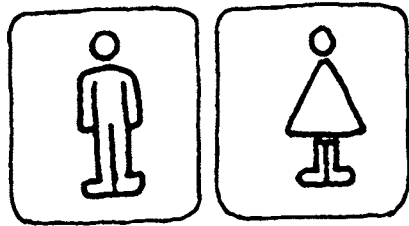
exercise in mindfulness.

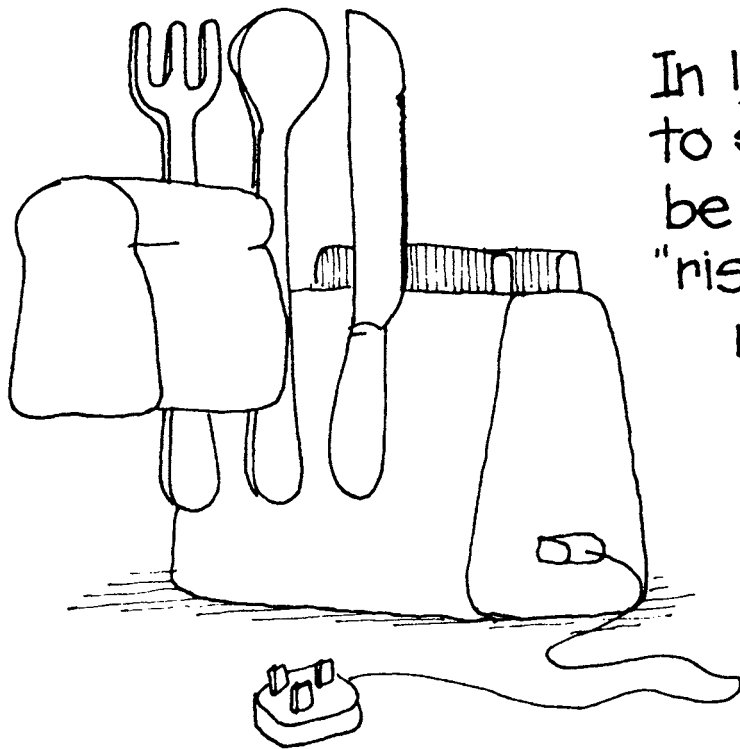
It is important to develop a steady penetrating awareness with regard to everything we do, from the time of waking up in the morning to the time of going to sleep.



Just upon awakening be aware of "rising-falling", and from that first moment be mindful of the actions involved in getting up

and washing, beginning to walk, going to sit and then in standing again and going for food.





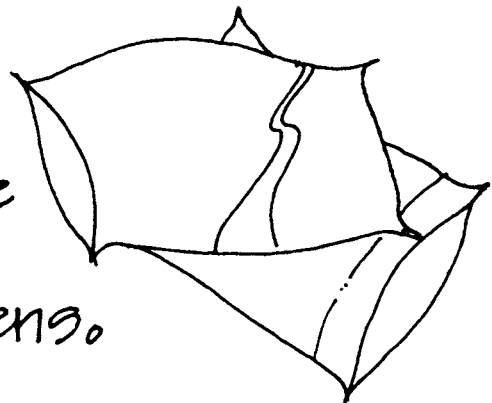
In lying down to sleep, be with the "rising-falling", until the last moment before sleep.

This kind of attention will be of great benefit in the meditation practice.

If there is the idea that the practice is only sitting and walking, and the rest of the time is not important, then in all those breaks we lose the momentum that has been building.

Cultivating a strong awareness in every action throughout the day helps the mind to remain concentrated and still.

It is this kind of determination and balance of mind out of which enlightenment happens.



seeing , seeing
intending , intending
moving , moving
touching , touching
lifting , lifting
opening , opening
putting , putting
closing , closing
feeling , feeling
chewing , chewing
tasting , tasting
swallowing , swallowing

Be aware of the whole sequence involved.

There is no one behind it, no one who is eating- merely a sequence of intentions, movements, taste, touch sensations. THAT'S WHAT WE ARE.

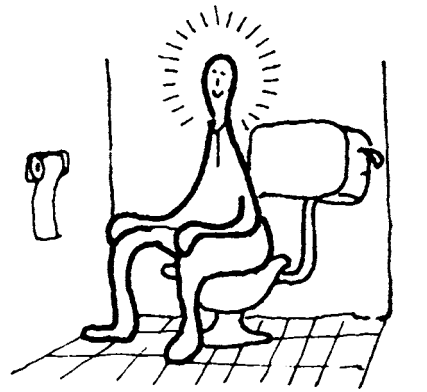
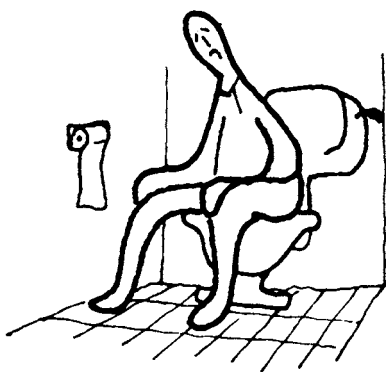
And being very mindful of the flow we free ourselves from the concept of self.

THERE

is no circumstance
at all which we should
consider unworthy
of awareness.

THE

sudden deep intuition
of TRUTH can happen
in a moment, when all
the factors of
enlightenment ripen
and come together
in the right balance.



"When I was in India, I lived on the second floor of an ashram.

I used to go up and down the steps many times a day, each time exploring the mechanism of climbing a step, how the knee has to work, how the weight shifts.

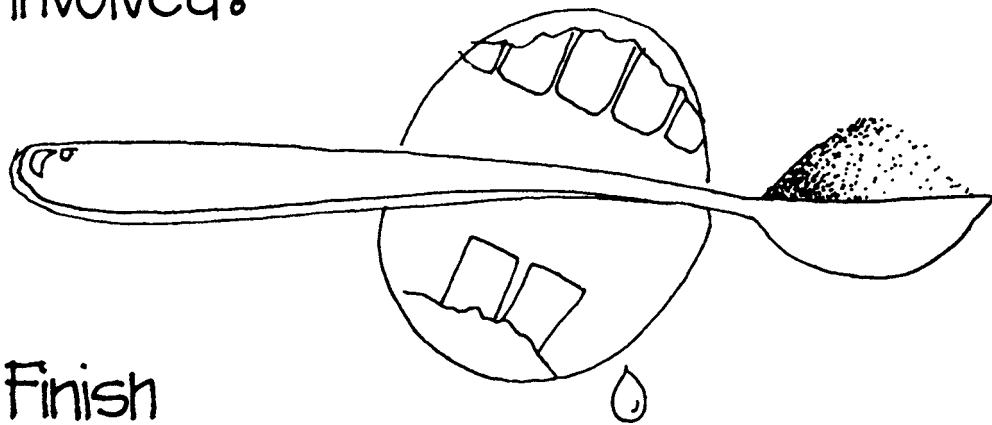
It's an interesting process.

In all of the activities, there should be that kind of interest.

Seeing, exploring how things are happening."

Joseph Goldstein

Usually we eat very unmindfully. Taste comes and goes very quickly. While food is still in the mouth, because of desire and greed for continuing taste sensations, the arm reaches for more, and generally we are unaware of the whole process involved.



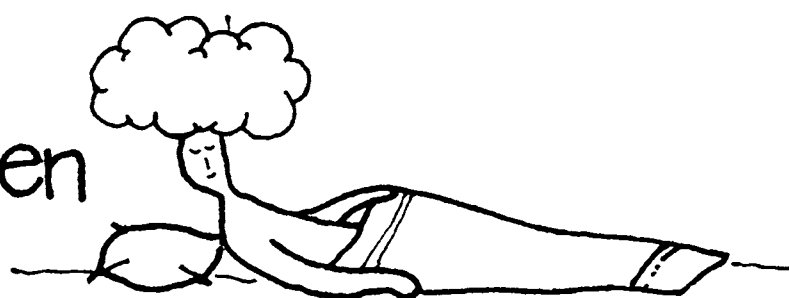
Finish each mouthful before reaching for another.

In this way we become sensitive to our bodies and how much food we need. It's very hard to overeat when you eat mindfully.

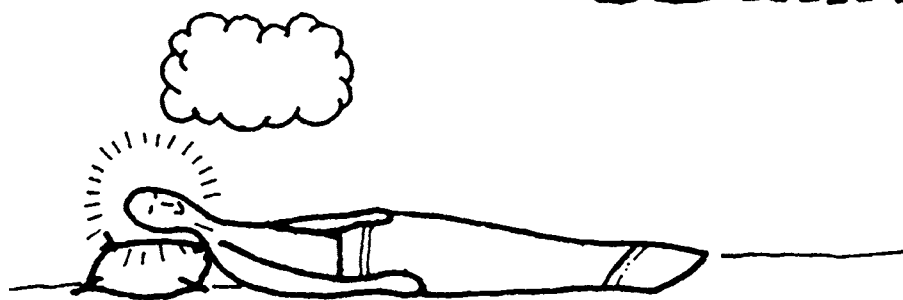
Incorporate the eating meditation into your daily practice so there is no gap in the continuity of awareness.

There is no knowing
when the clouds of ignorance
will be dispelled.

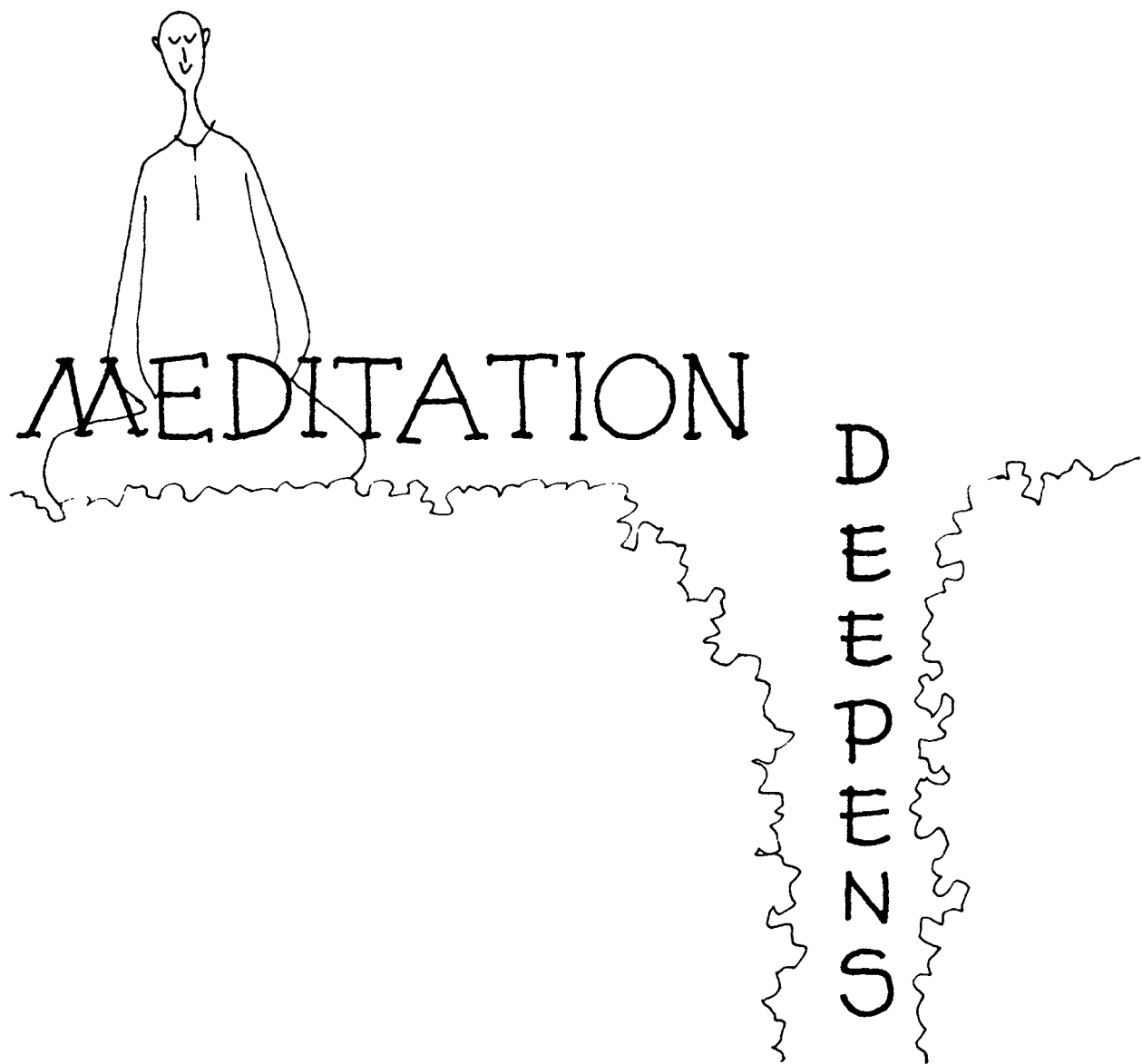
It can happen
even in the
process of
lying down to sleep.



BE MINDFUL!



In every single moment,
be watchful,
awake to what's happening.



through
the continuity of

AWARENESS

BARE ATTENTION

This is one quality of mind which is the basis and foundation of spiritual discovery.

Bare attention means observing things as they are,
without choosing,
without comparing,
without evaluating,
without laying our projections
and expectations on to
what is happening;

cultivating instead a choiceless
and non-interfering
awareness

An untrained mind is often
reactive, clinging to what is pleasant,
condemning what is unpleasant
grasping what is liked,
pushing away what is disliked,
reacting with greed and hatred.

'A TIRING IMBALANCED MIND'

As bare attention is cultivated
more and more
we learn to experience
our thoughts and feelings,
situations and other people,
without the tension of
attachment or aversion.

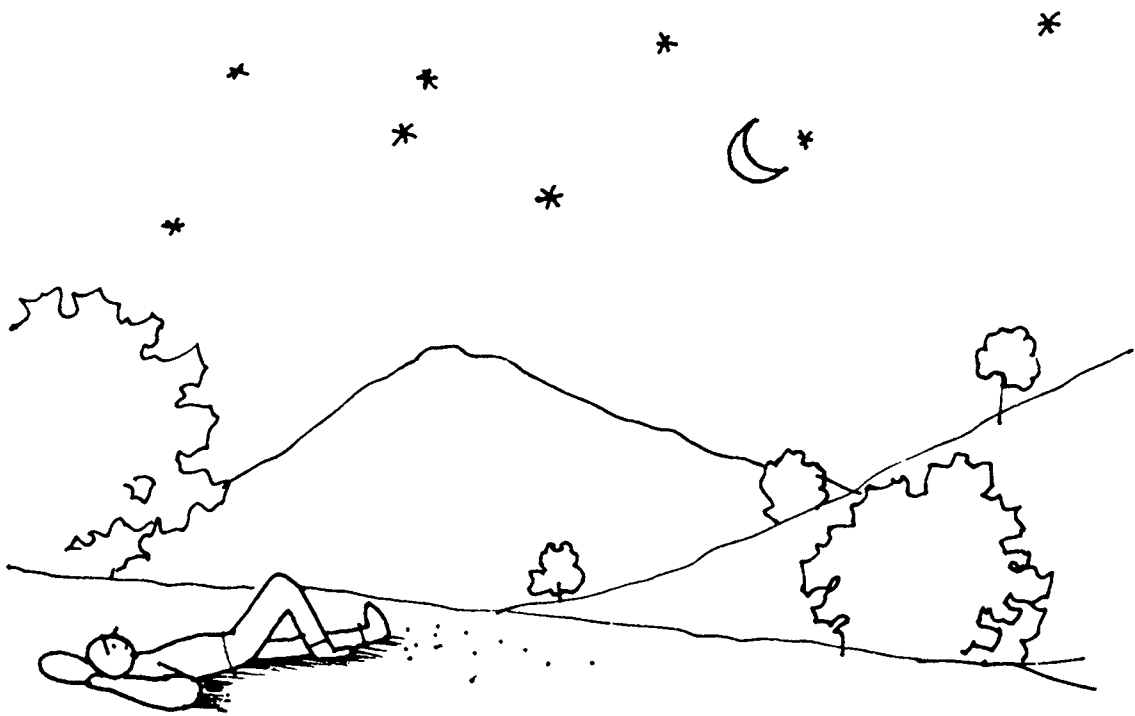
We begin to have a full and
total experience of what
it is that's happening
with a
RESTFUL & BALANCED MIND.

THE AWARENESS OF BARE ATTENTION
IS NOT LIMITED TO A CERTAIN TIME
OF SITTING IN THE MORNING AND
EVENING.

To think
that sitting meditation is the
time for awareness and the
rest of the day is not,
FRAGMENTS OUR LIVES
AND UNDERMINES A
REAL GROWTH OF UNDERSTANDING.

Mindfulness is applicable and
appropriate in each moment,
whether we are sitting,
standing,
lying down,
talking or
eating.

WE SHOULD CULTIVATE
THE STATE
OF BARE ATTENTION *
ON ALL OBJECTS,
ON ALL STATES OF MIND,
IN ALL SITUATIONS.

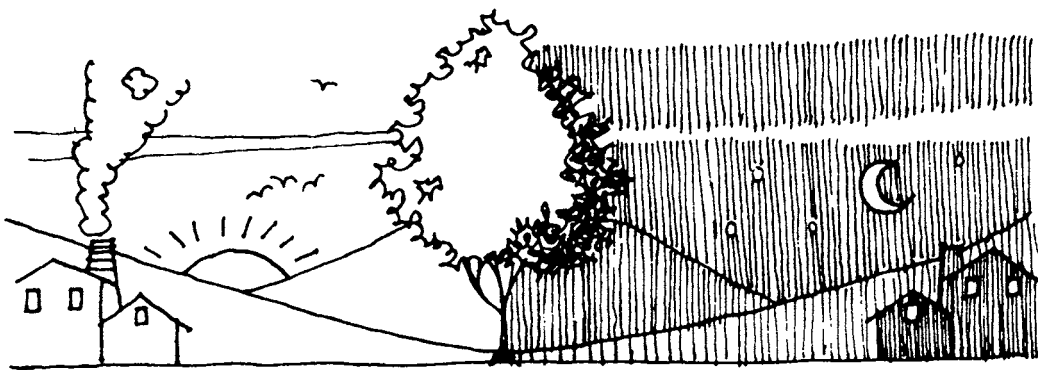


Every moment should be
lived completely and
wholeheartedly.

In this period of training, everything is slowed down so we have the chance to carefully examine what's happening.

When mindfulness is well-developed, you can do things quickly as well. But this is a time for training. There is no hurry.

Do everything slowly, with silence and awareness.



From the moment you get up, through everything done in the day, be very mindful, make it all meditation.

There is
great value in slowing down
all our activities.

no hurry

no place to go

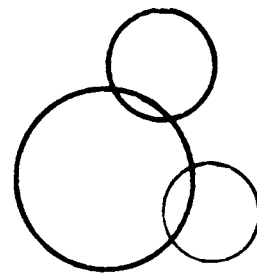
nothing else to do

but just a

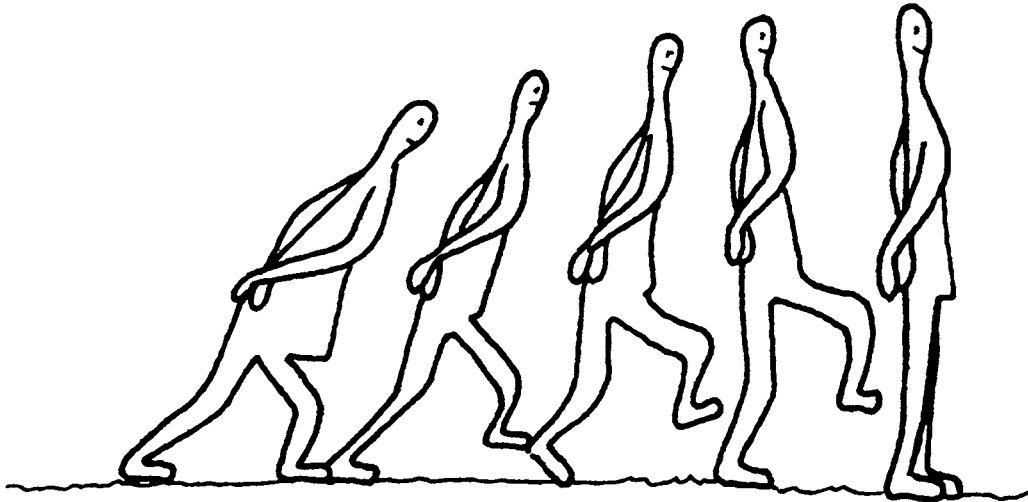
SETTLING BACK

INTO THE

MOMENT



HASTEN SLOWLY



Hasten in the sense
of being continuous
and unrelenting
in our effort, but do so
with poise and equanimity.

Persistent and full of effort
yet very relaxed
and balanced.

EMERGING

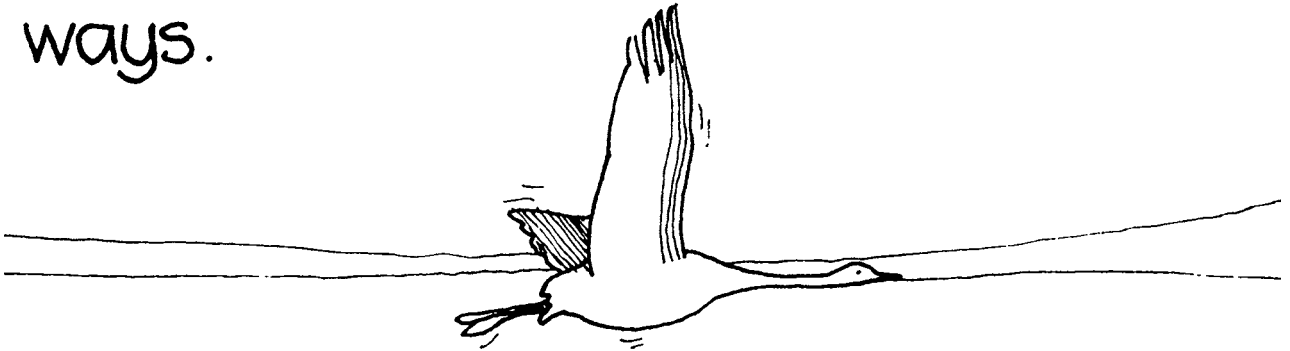
FROM

THE DARKNESS
OF THE CAVE

INTO

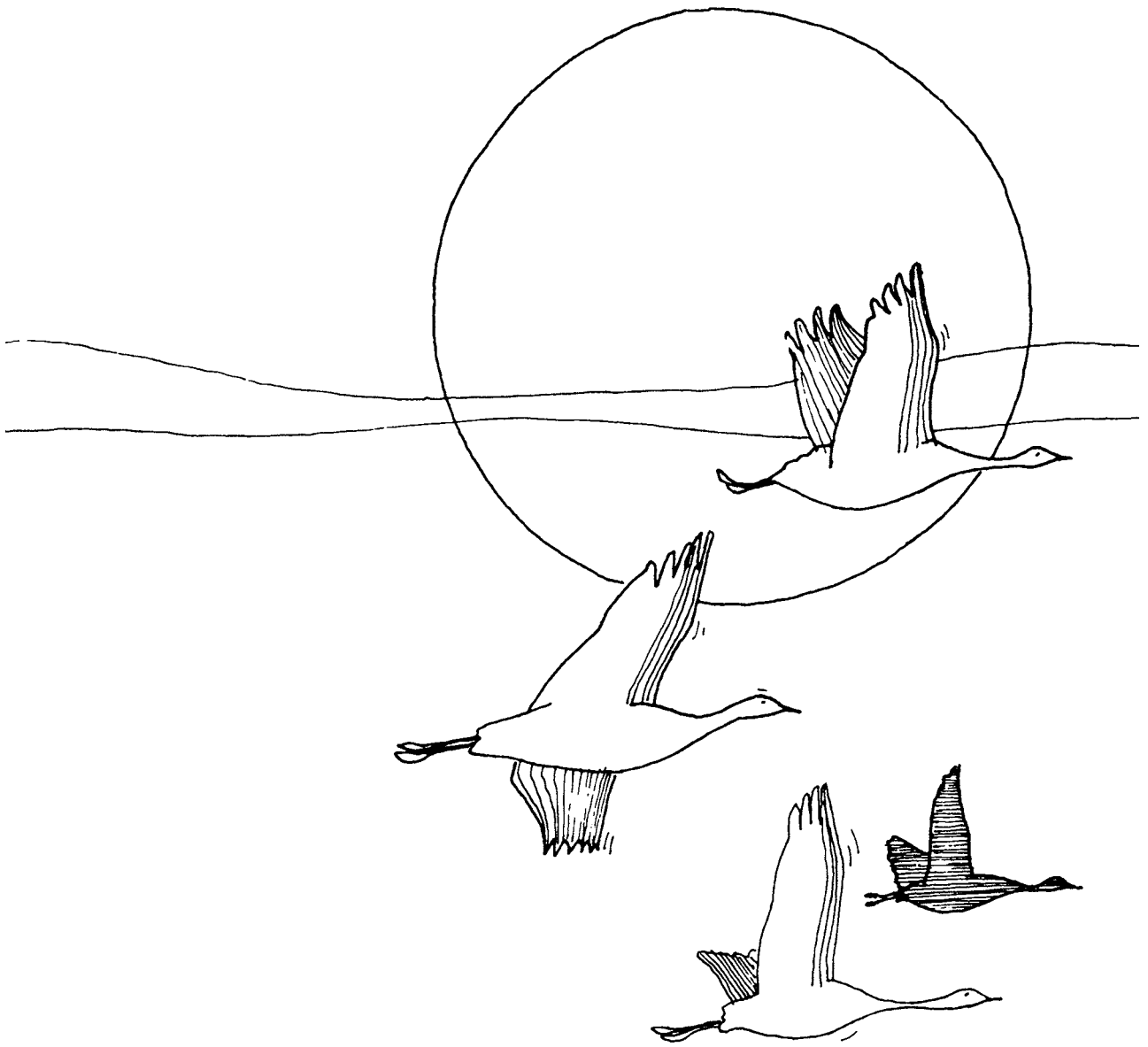
THE LIGHT OF
FREEDOM &
PEACE.

People progress in different ways.

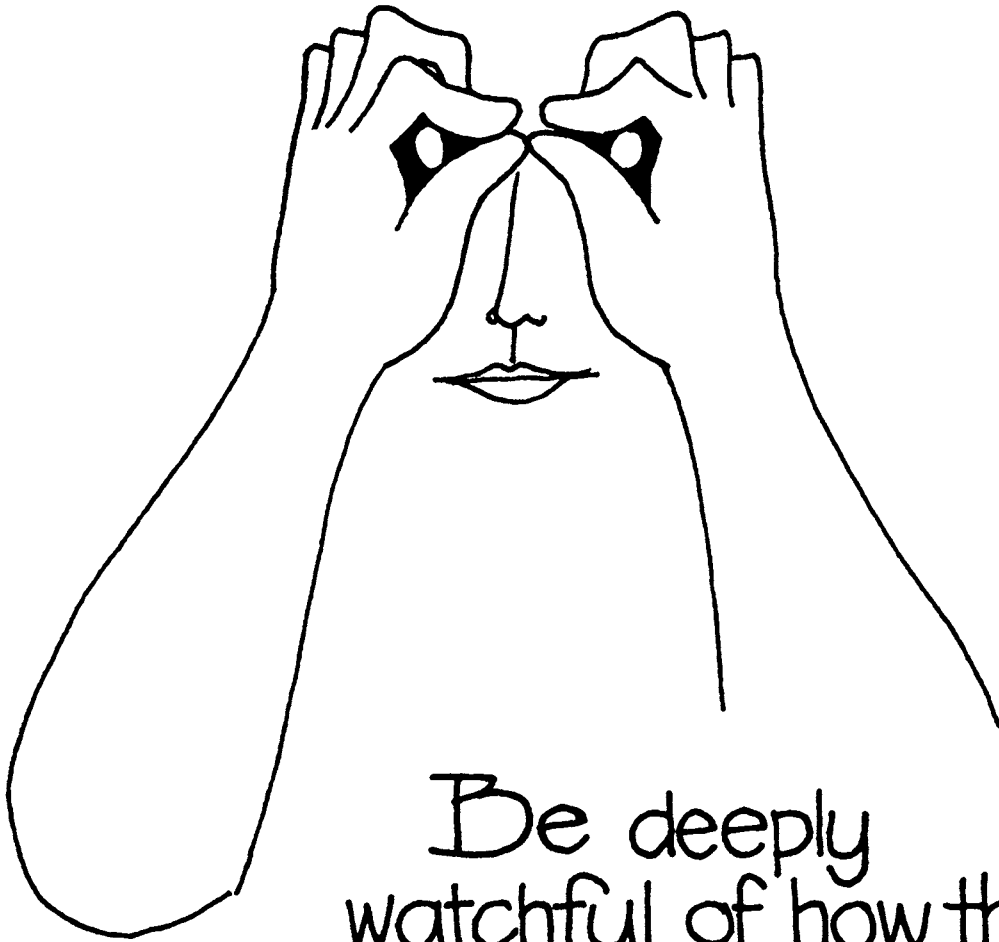


But no matter how, if we're facing in the right direction, all we have to do is keep on walking.

If it takes a year,
or sixty years
or five lifetimes,
as long as we're heading
towards LIGHT,
that's all that matters.



The whole development
of awareness
comes from
experiencing things
with a silent mind,
NOT WITH OUR
THOUGHTS &
CONCEPTS
about them.



Be deeply
watchful of how thoughts
arise out of nothing
and pass away into
nothing.

Or probe into pain, get on the
inside of it.

Exercise the mind in a
fearless way, not thinking about
things but with silent awareness.

At times during
the practice it may seem
as if nothing much is
happening except

a lot of pain

restlessness

agitation &

doubt.



But, in fact,
every moment of

AWARENESS,

every moment of

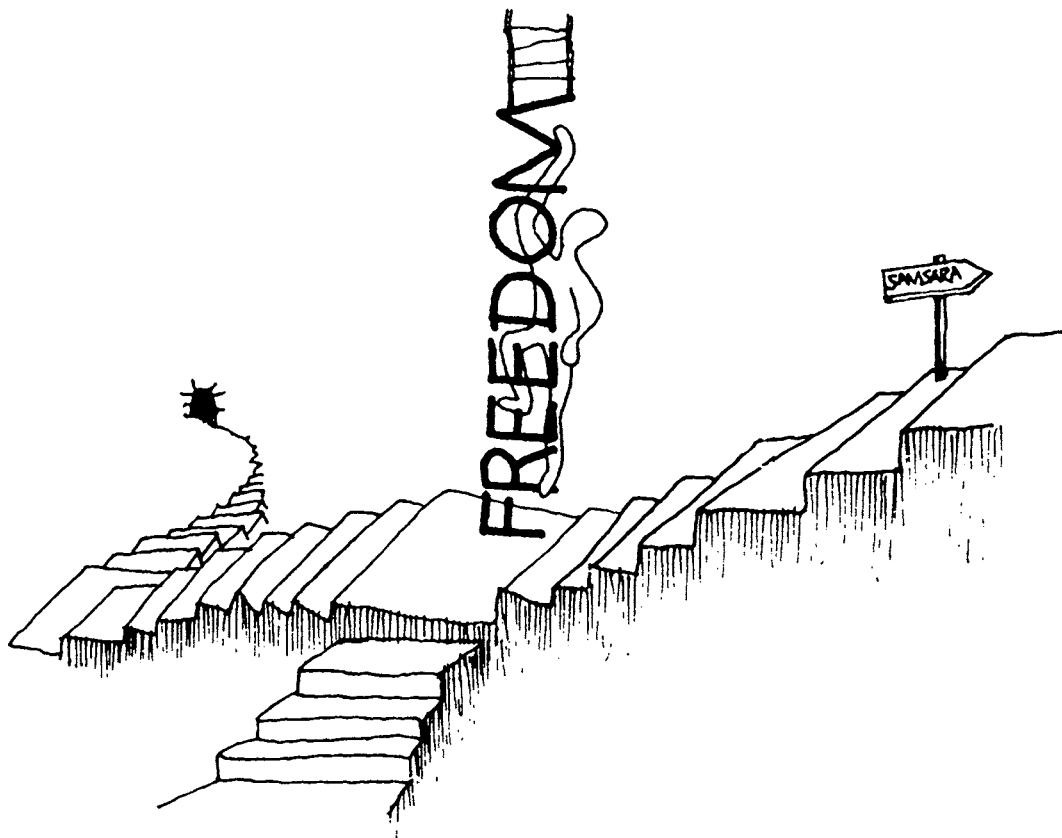
MINDFULNESS

helps to weaken the chain
of our
attachments .

All we need
is to be facing
in the

DIRECTION OF FREEDOM

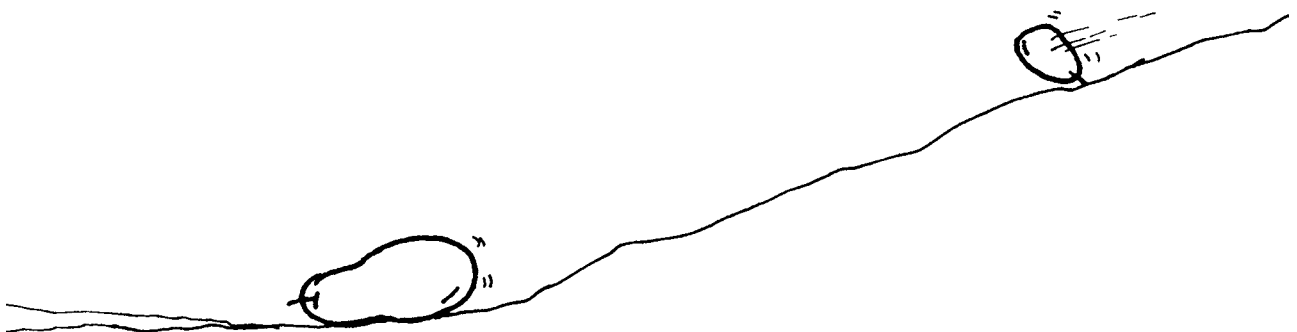
not going backwards,
not going towards
more darkness.

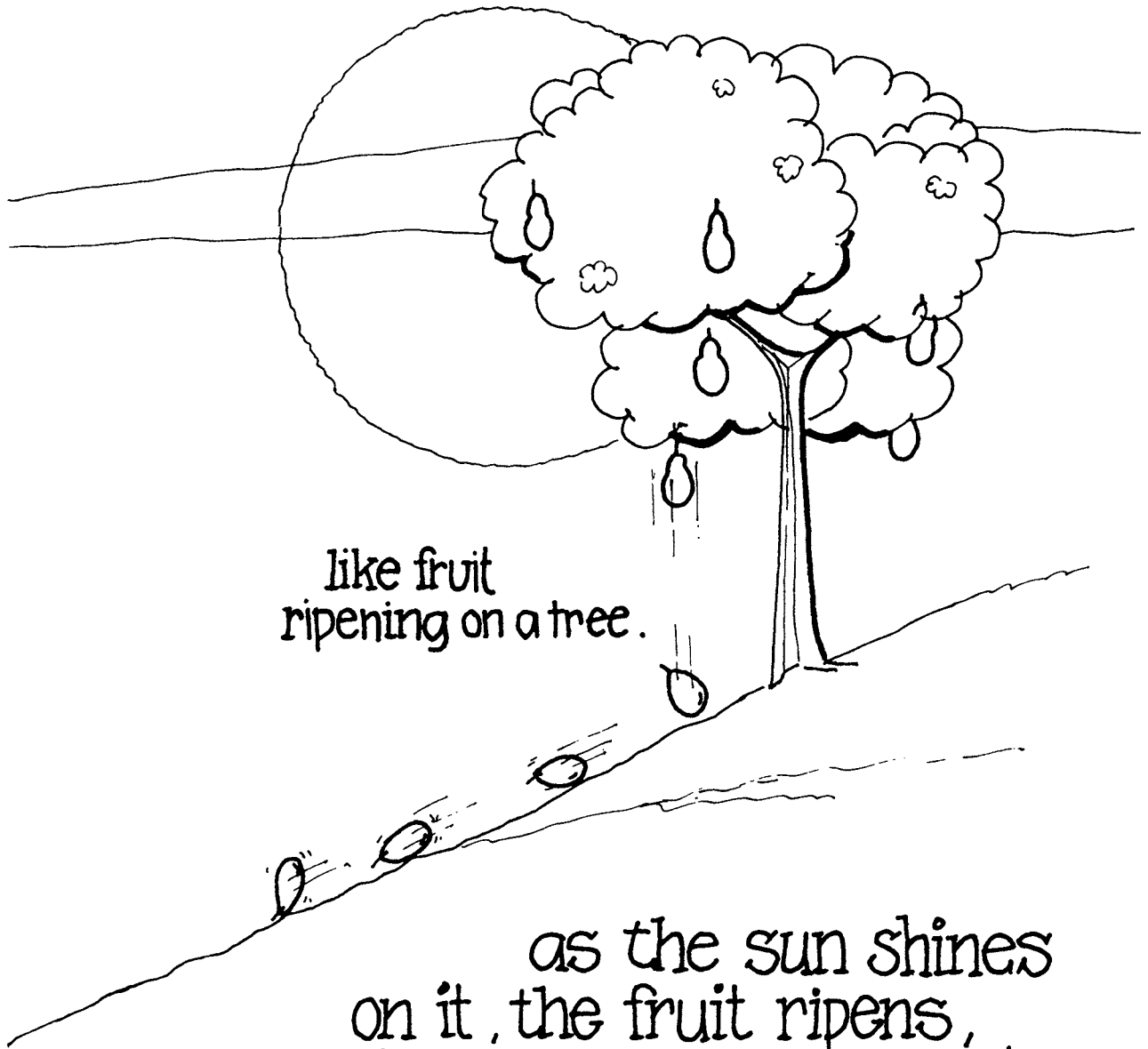


be gentle with
yourself.

be persevering.

though it may not
be apparent to you,
there is a
great transformation
taking place.





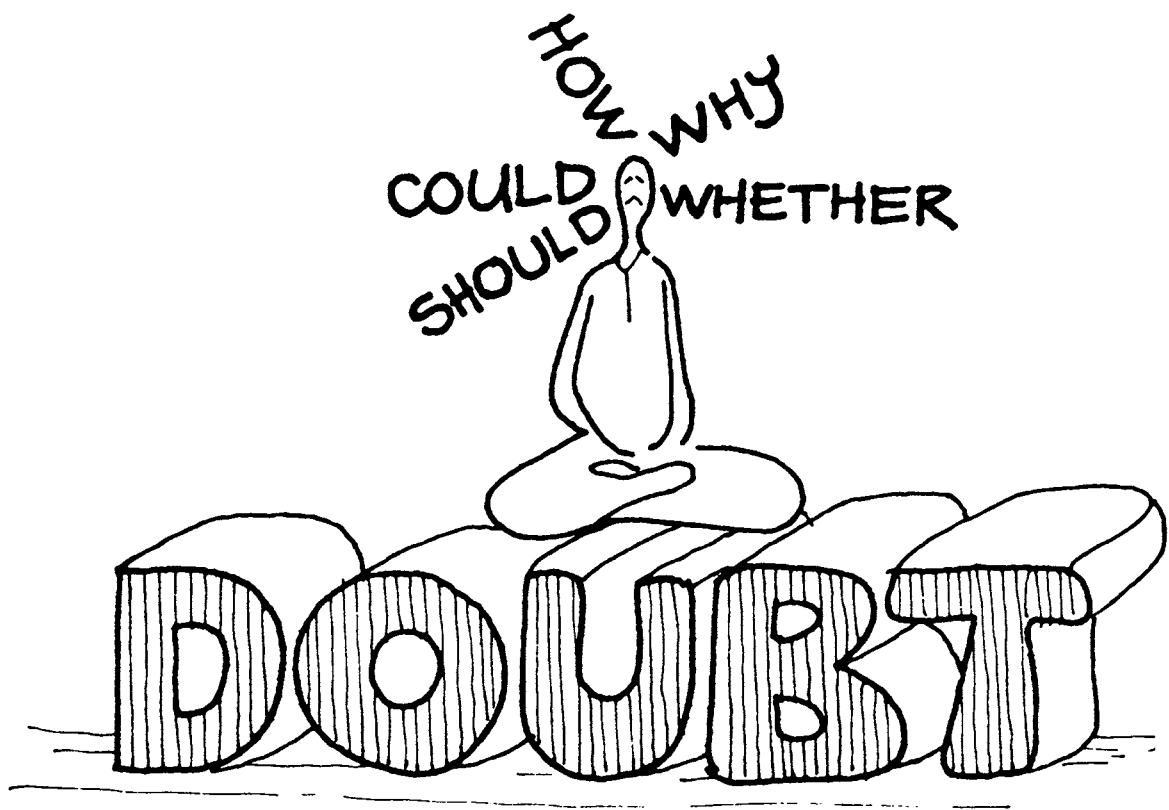
like fruit
ripening on a tree.

as the sun shines
on it, the fruit ripens,
although from one day to
the next, the process
may be imperceptible.

in the same way, the changes
and ripening in our mind are also
going on.

One of the biggest obstacles on the path is the doubting mind.

Until we see through it, doubt incapacitates the mind,



blocking our effort for
CLARITY

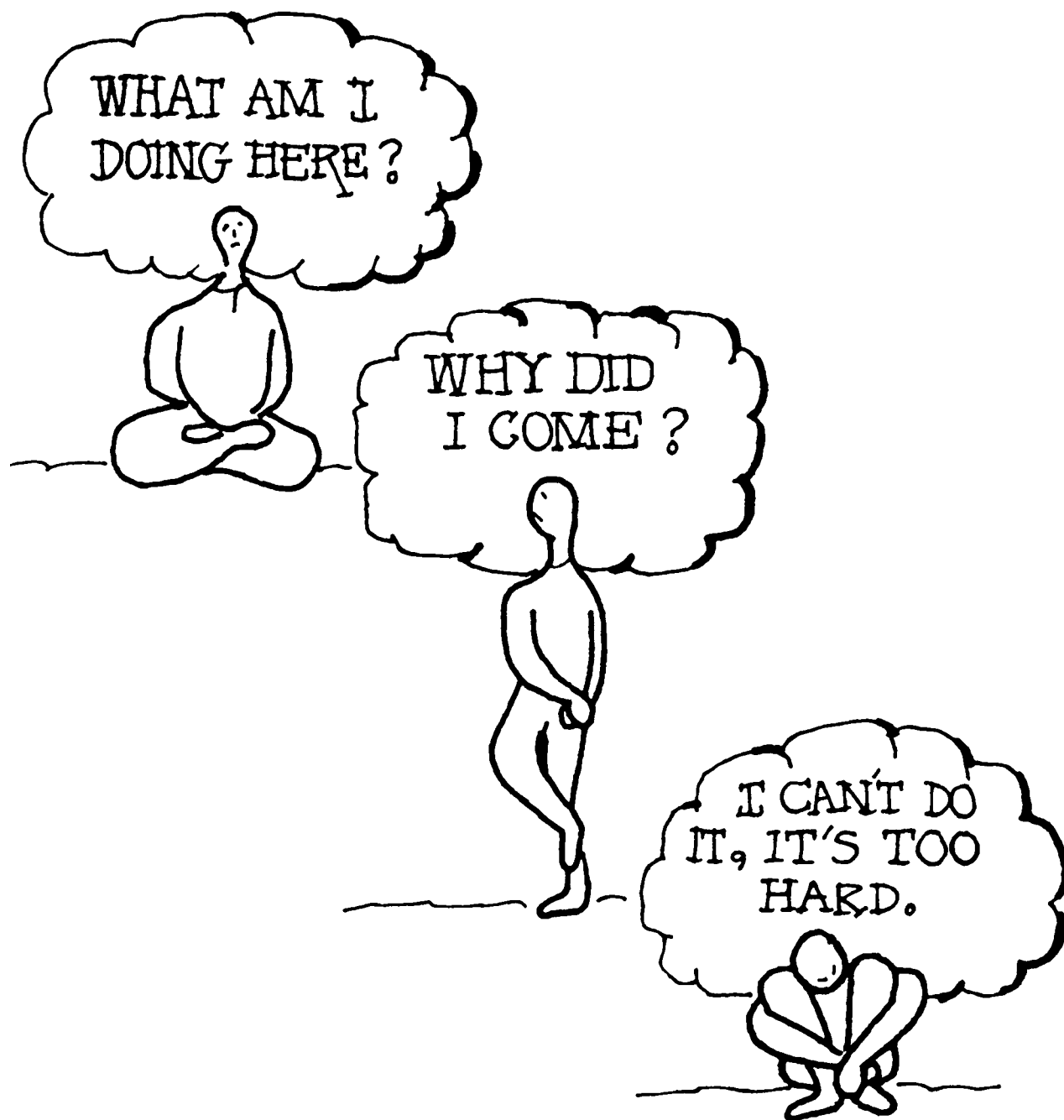
DOUBT
usually arises
about

WHAT ONE IS DOING

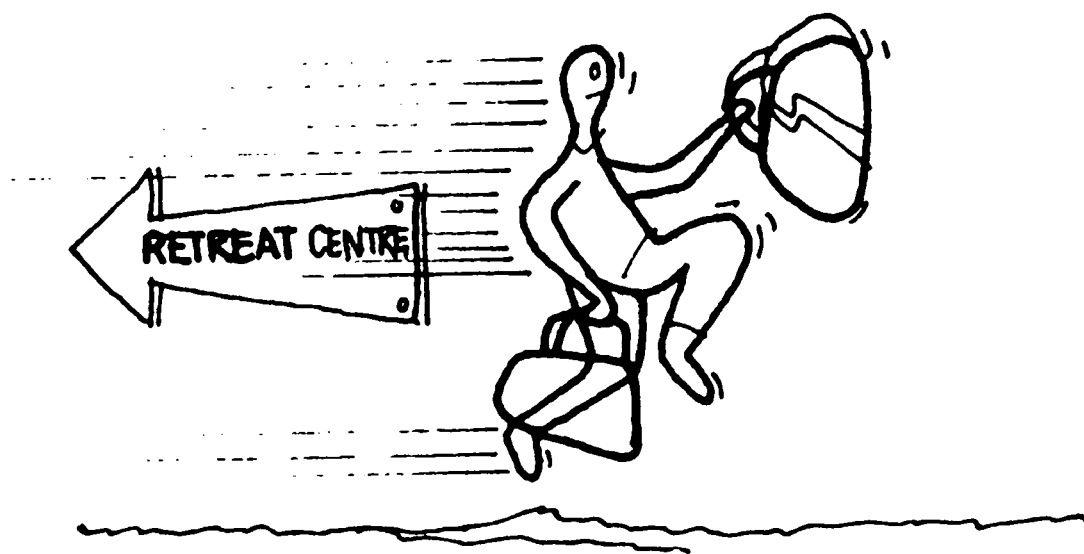
and
about

ONE'S ABILITY
TO DO IT.

PERHAPS SINCE YOU'VE
BEEN HERE
THE THOUGHT HAS COME,



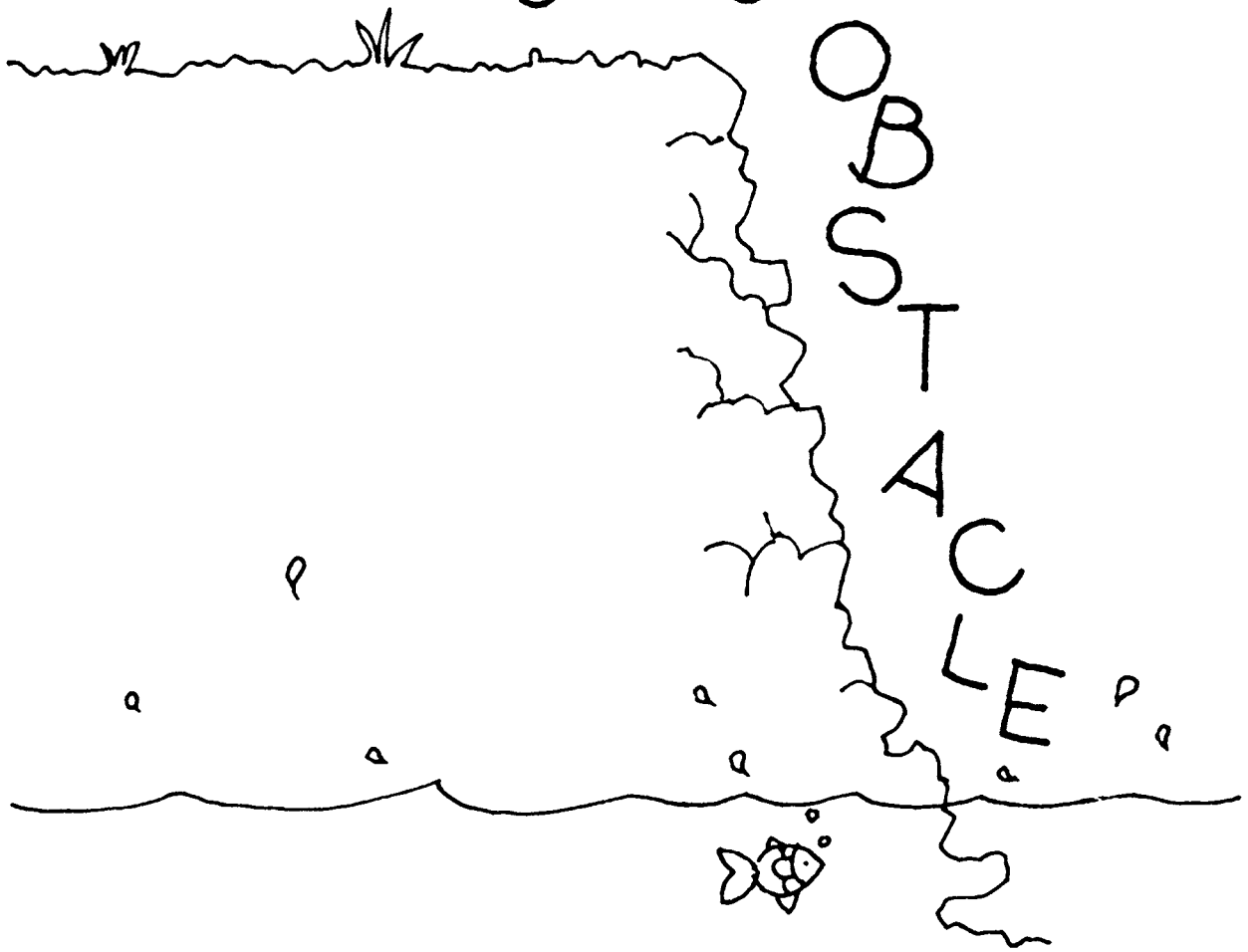
THIS IS
THE DOUBTING MIND,
A
VERY BIG
OBSTACLE
ON
THE PATH.



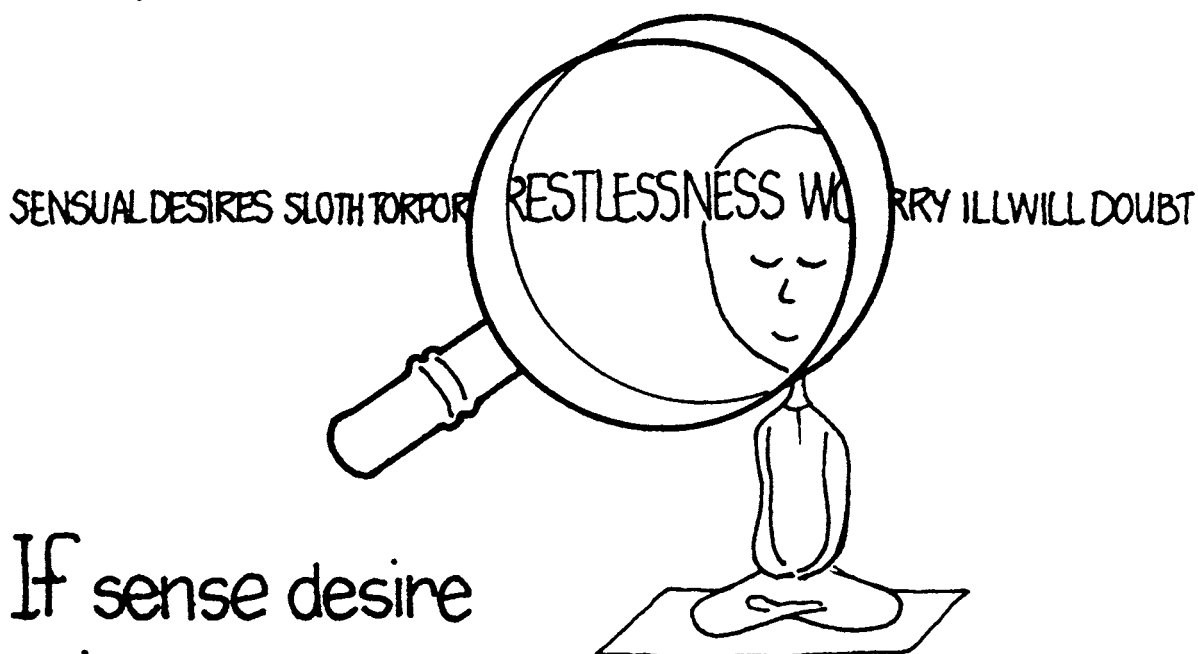
RECOGNITION

is the most powerful,
most effective way
of

overcoming any



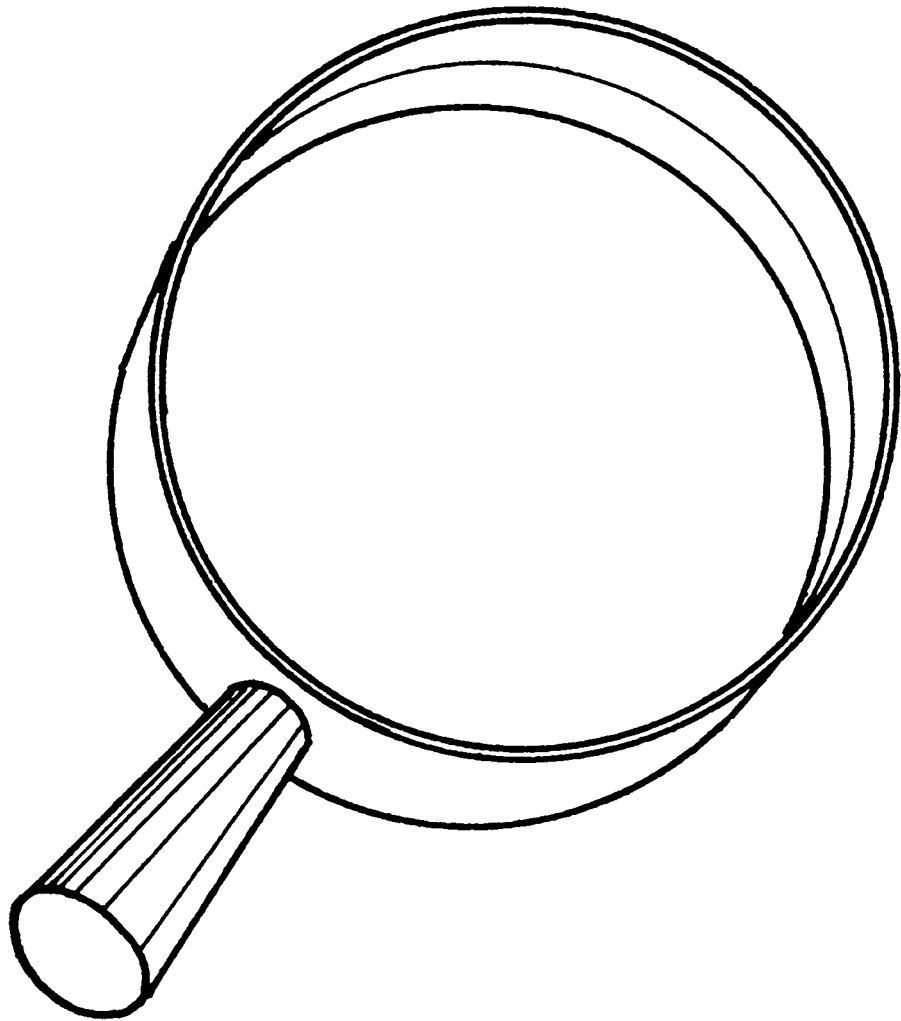
One of the ways to deal with **HINDRANCES** as they confront us on the Path is to recognise them, to see them clearly in each moment.



If sense desire arises, know immediately that there is desire in the mind.

Try recognizing immediately the particular obstacle that has arisen—be it anger, sloth, restlessness or doubt.

RECOGNITION
LEADS
TO
MINDFULNESS



Be patient
with everyone but above
all, with ourselves.

Let us not
be disheartened by our
own imperfections but
always rise up with fresh
courage.

There is no better means
of attainment to the spiritual
life than by continually
beginning again and never
thinking that we have done
enough.

PATIENCE

means

staying in a state of balance

regardless

of what is happening,

staying easy,

relaxed

and alert.



PATIENCE

Do not be driven to action by our desires.

If we don't have the ability to be patient, every desire which comes into our minds compels us to action and we stay bound on the wheel of craving.

No one
is going to do it for us.

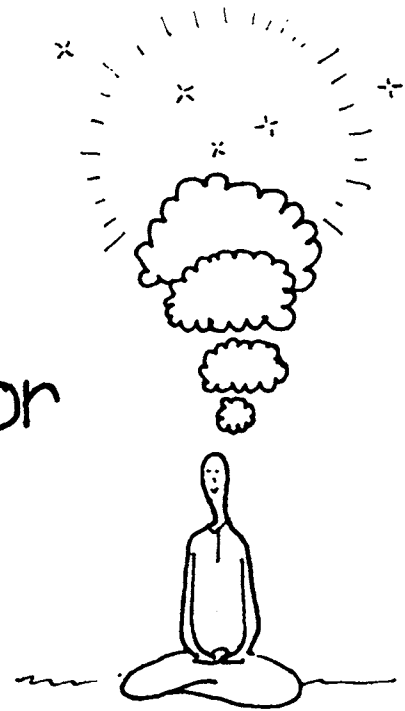
No one
can enlighten another
being.

The Buddha's enlightenment
solved his problem,
it didn't solve ours.....
except to point
out the way.

Each of us have to walk
the Path
for

OURSELVES

DO NOT
be discouraged by
wandering thoughts or
daydreams.



each time there is
awareness of the mind
wandering, gently bring it
back,

No matter how many times
this happens,
if each time the wandering
mind is brought back,
the

HOUR WILL BE WELL SPENT.

Thoughts
should not be treated
as obstacles or hindrances.

They are just another
object of mindfulness,
another object of meditation.

Don't let the mind become
lazy and drift along.

MAKE THE EFFORT
for a great deal of clarity
with respect to what's
happening in the moment.

To meditate upon thoughts is simply to be aware as the thoughts arise that the mind is thinking, without getting involved in the content :

not analyzing the thought and why it came, but merely to be aware that at the particular moment "thinking" is happening.

It is helpful to make a mental note of "thinking, thinking" everytime a thought arises.

Observe without judgement, without reaction to content, without taking it to be mine or I, without identifying with it.

Try to be aware of the thought as soon as it arises, rather than some minutes afterward.

When they are noticed with precision and balance they have no power to disturb the mind.



In the sitting practice,
stillness of body is
a great help in
achieving stillness
of mind.

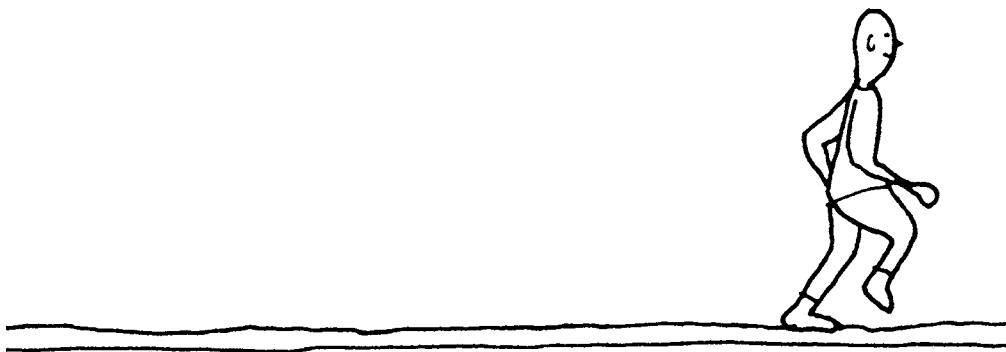
As a way of making
the concentration strong,
at the beginning
of some sittings
make a resolution
not to change position
for that hour.



The
first few times
might be
difficult,
but if the resolution
is

IMPECCABLE (flawless)

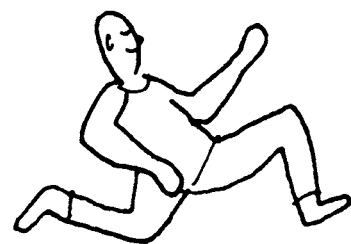
You can sit
and observe whatever
comes.

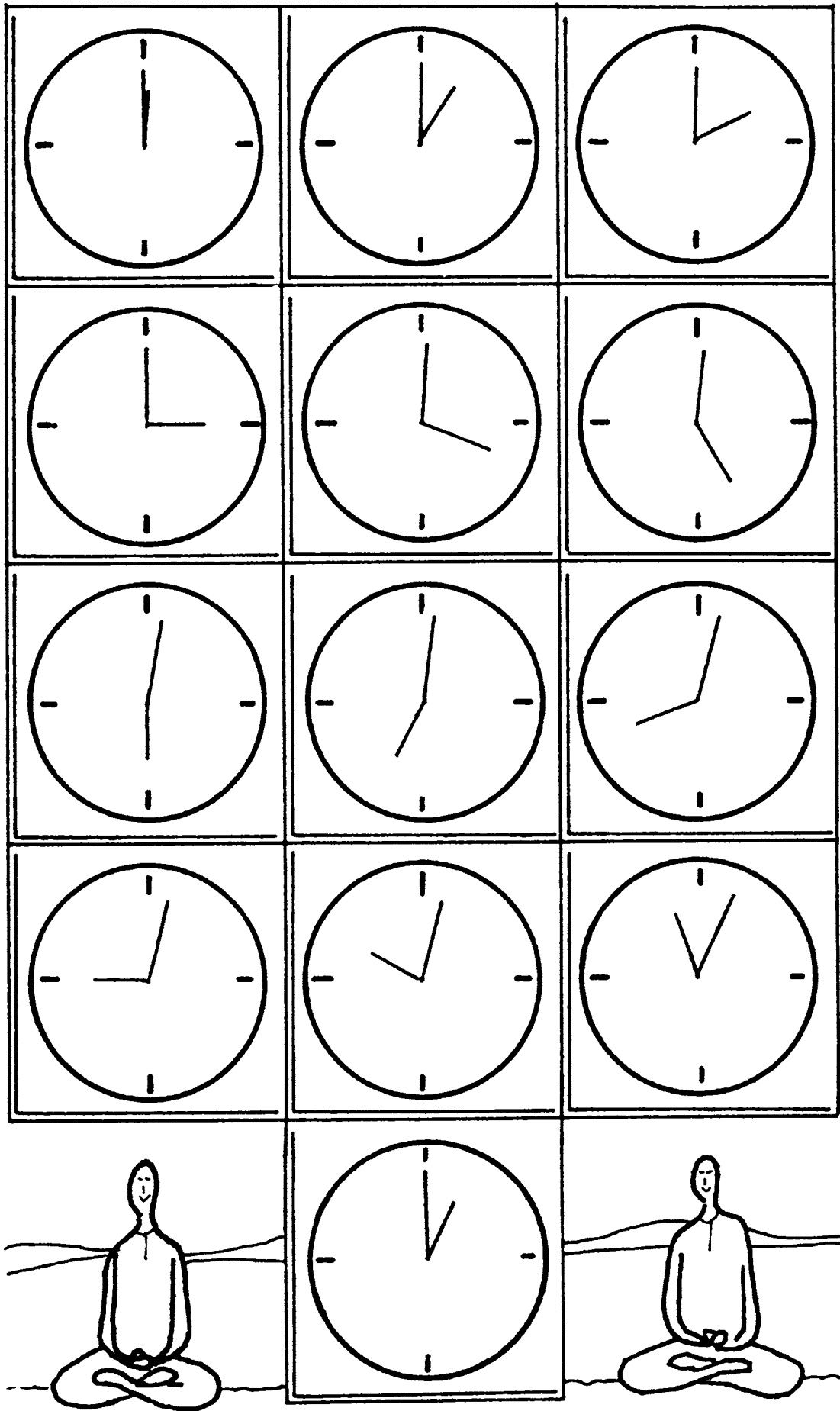


Even
if you find the mind
getting restless
or reactive
or tense
or filled with aversion
towards pain,
there's value in making
the resolution
and
FULFILLING
it.



Both the
CONCENTRATION and
EFFORT FACTORS
are greatly strengthened,
and
after the first few hour
sittings
you will find that it
becomes
easier to stay still.

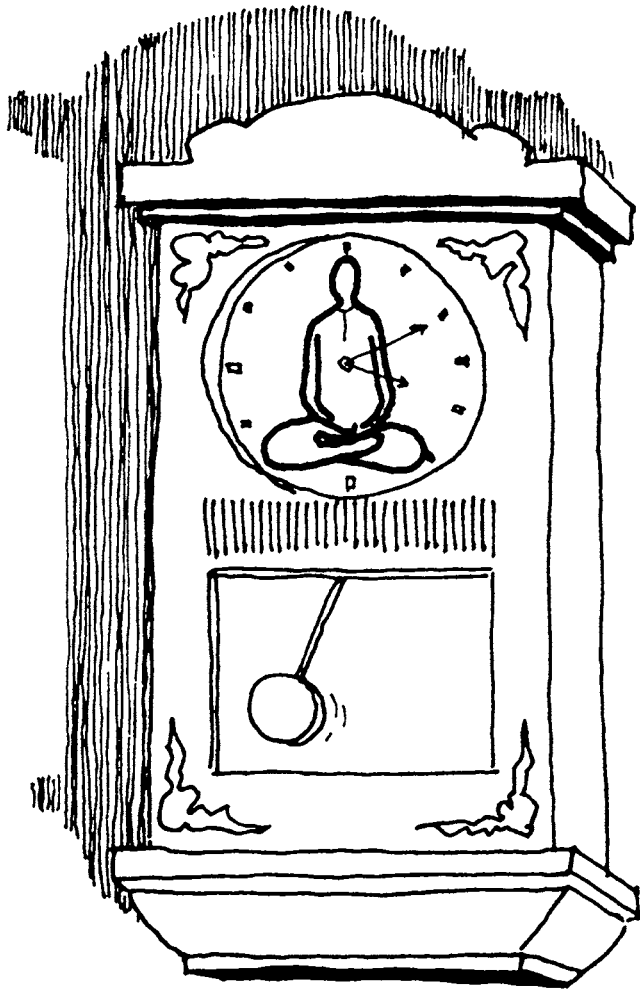




UNLESS

WE MAKE
THE EFFORT TO PERSEVERE
NOTHING HAPPENS.

EFFORT
IS THE ROOT
OF ALL
ACHIEVEMENTS,
THE
FOUNDATION
OF ALL
ATTAINMENTS.

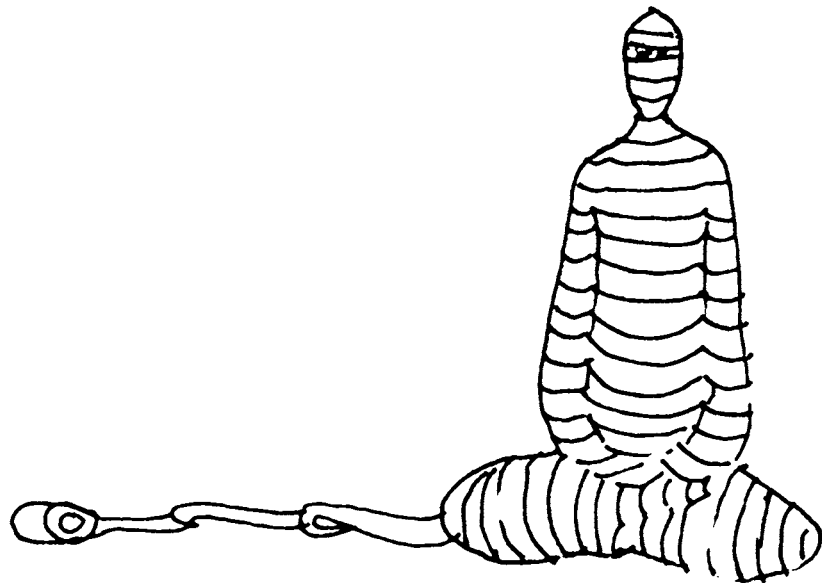


Make a resolution to spend an hour with complete non-movement.

This kind of resolution strengthens the mind in several ways - the effort and energy factors become very strong, and the stillness of body also strengthens the concentration and mindfulness.

BY

making the resolution
not to move for
an hour,
we cannot avoid
becoming aware of all
the
moments
of unpleasantness
and
our conditioned
reactions to them.



Restlessness and agitation ?

Be mindful of it .

Look at it , examine what that mind is all about , pay close attention to the quality of restlessness .

If ever you are sitting make it the object of awareness .

Sit and watch ,
"restless, restless" .

Observe without identifying with it .



To be aware.

Aware of how things
are happening.

To be wakeful
and balanced.

To be mindful.

Not clinging.

Not condemning.

Not identifying
with things

as being

I or self.

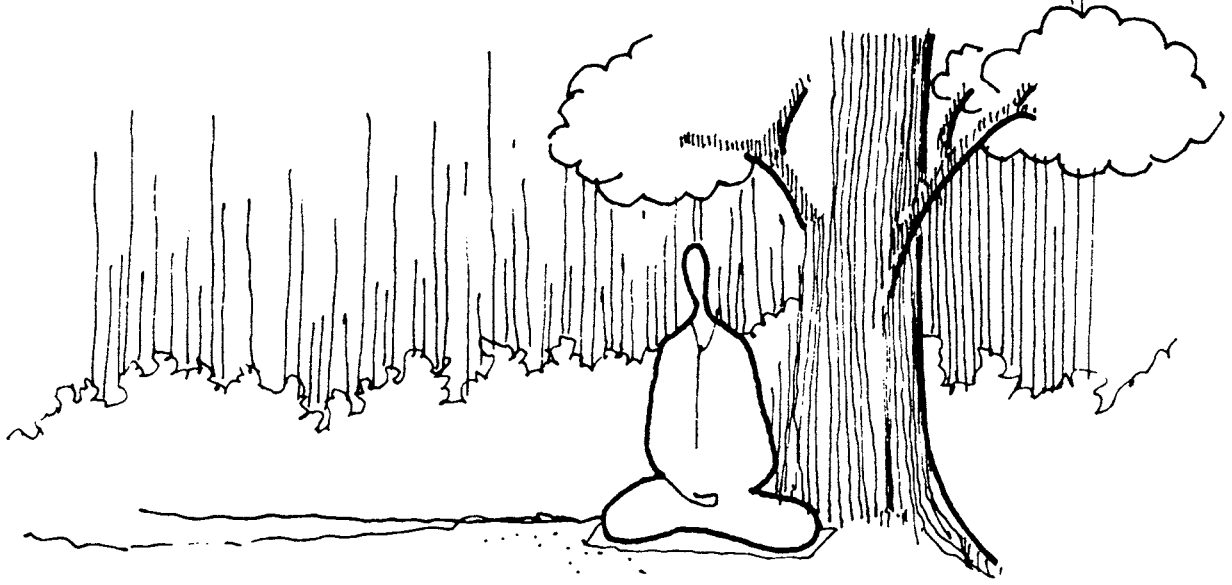
Moment to moment
freeing the mind from
defilements.



often
★ the late night
hours
are the
best for

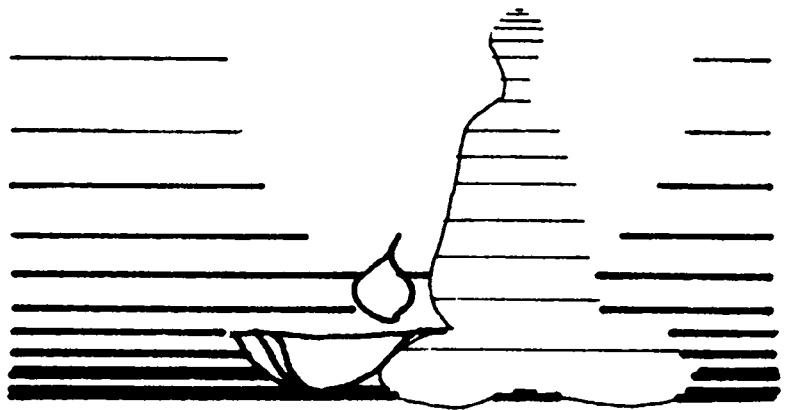


MEDITATION



If
late in the evening
you do not
feel sleepy

CONTINUE
THE
PRACTICE



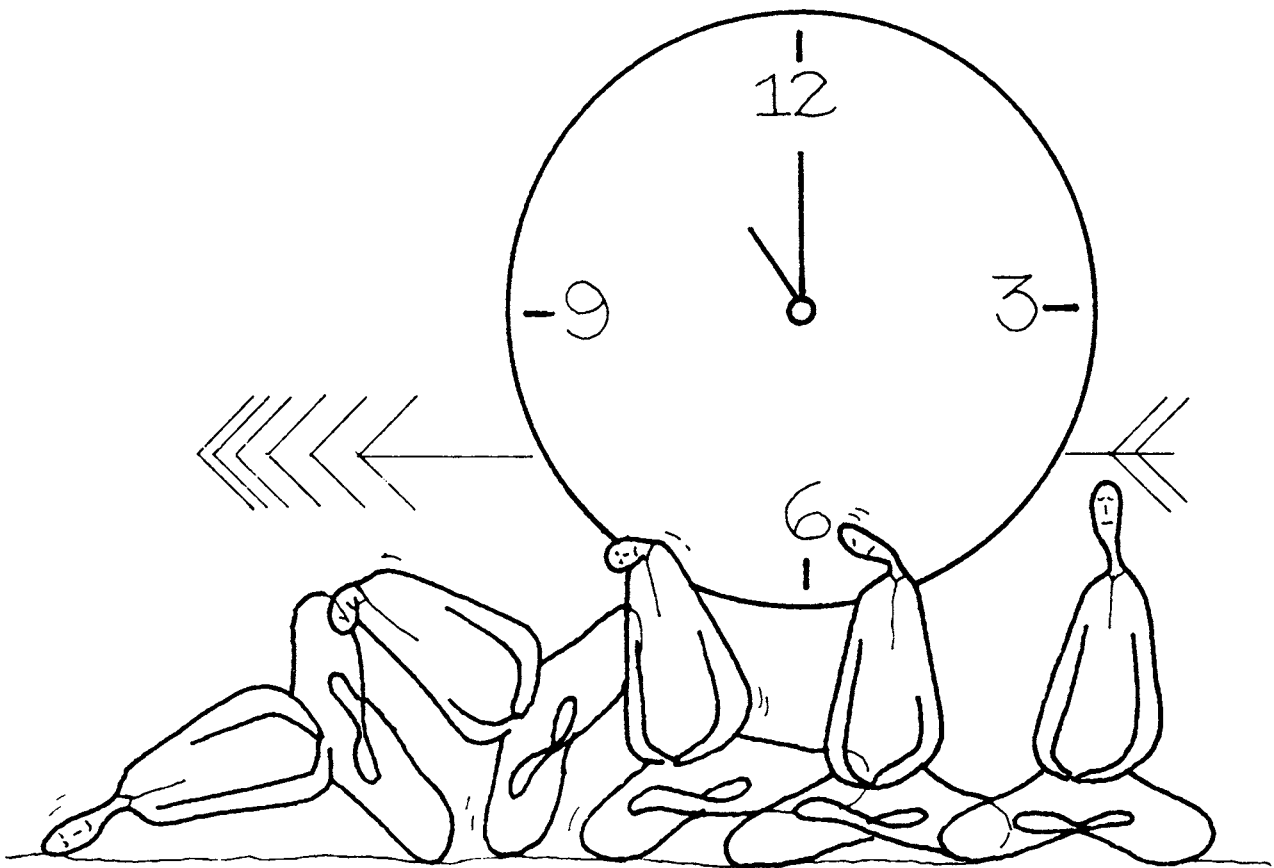
Sleep

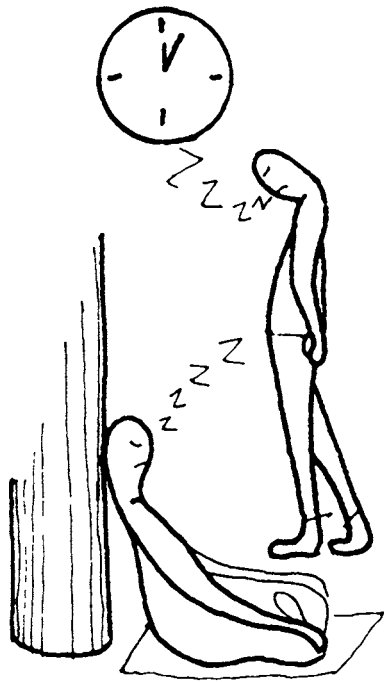
when you feel

REALLY TIRED.

not just out of

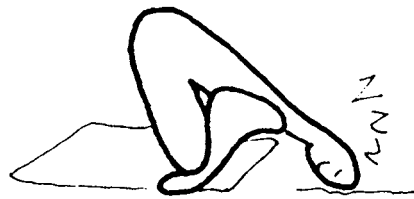
habit at a certain hour.





We should
NEVER
fall into the trap
of our
conditioning,
thinking that

if we don't get
seven or
eight hours
of
sleep, we're
going to be
exhausted.



That is simply an old habit
pattern.



make the effort
to overcome
sloth and torpor.

if
everytime
drowsiness
comes into the
mind,
we think,

"oh well, i'll take a ^{little} nap",

it makes the
factor stronger.

be resolute and energetic
in dealing with it.

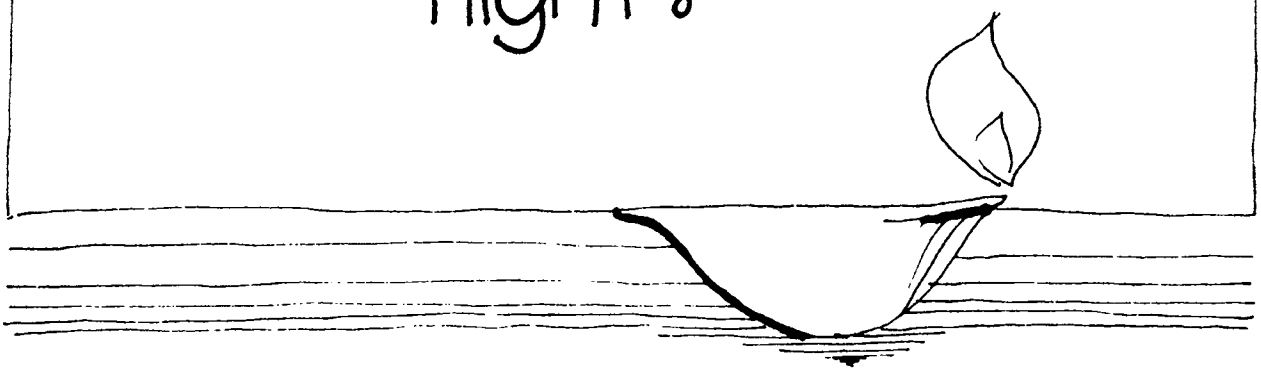
STAY SENSITIVE

to your changing needs
and

if you're not
feeling tired or sleepy

CONTINUE

the practice through the
night.



MODERATION

IN

EATING & SLEEPING

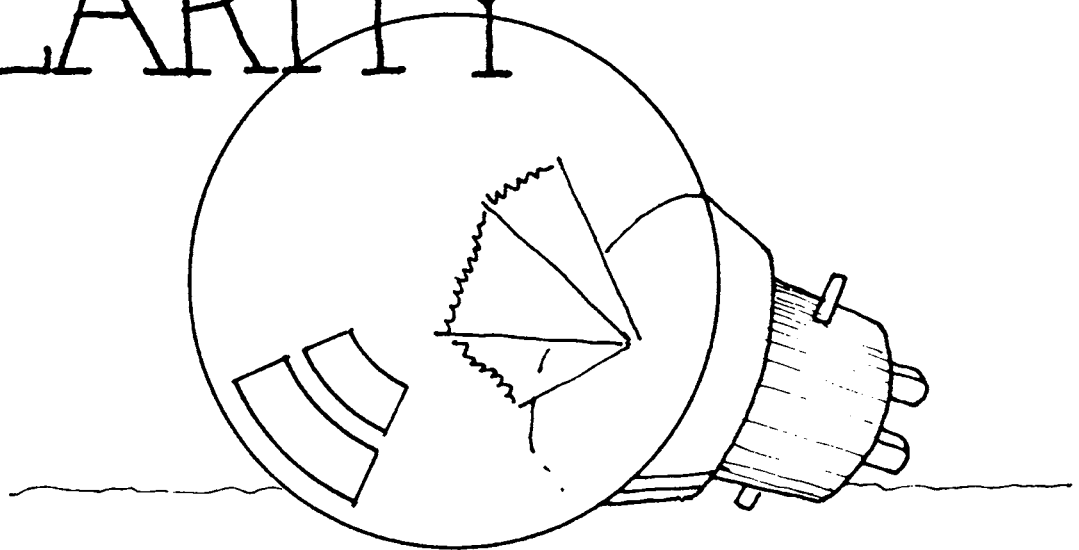
WEAKENS

THE FACTOR OF DESIRE

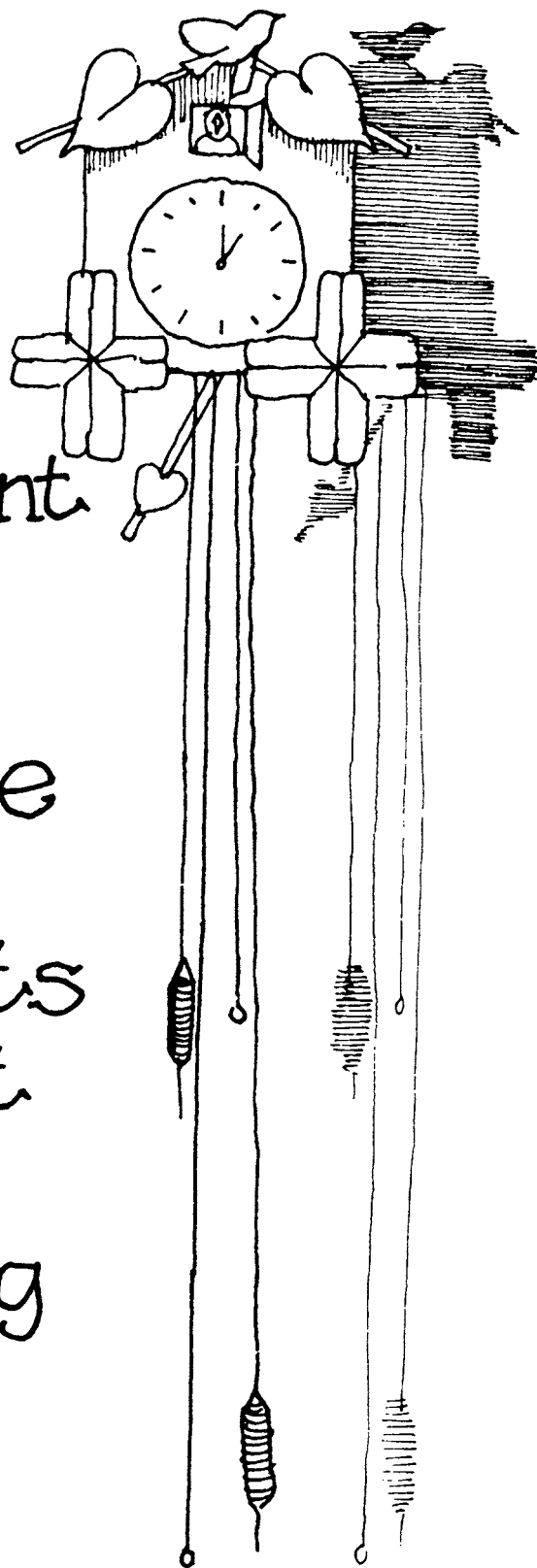
AND

BRINGS

GREATER
CLARITY

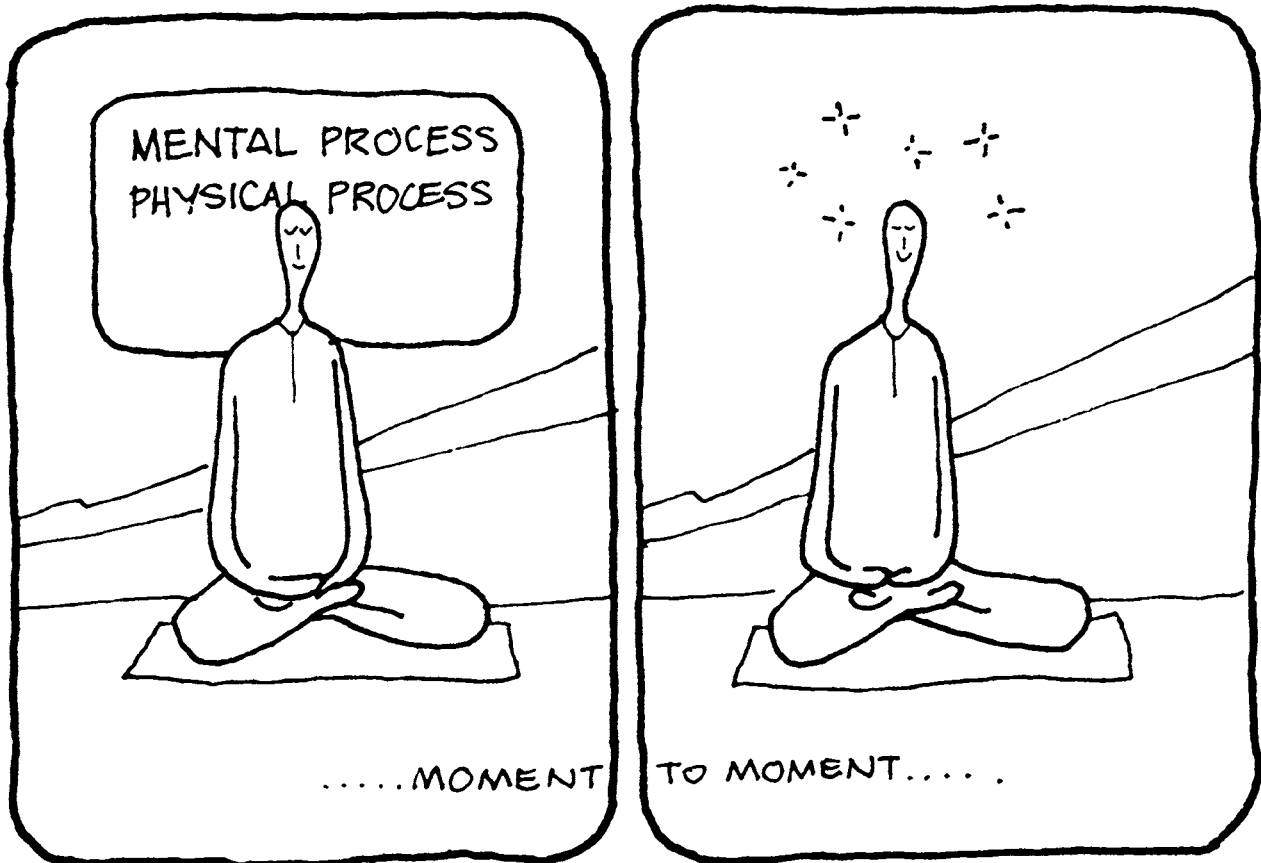


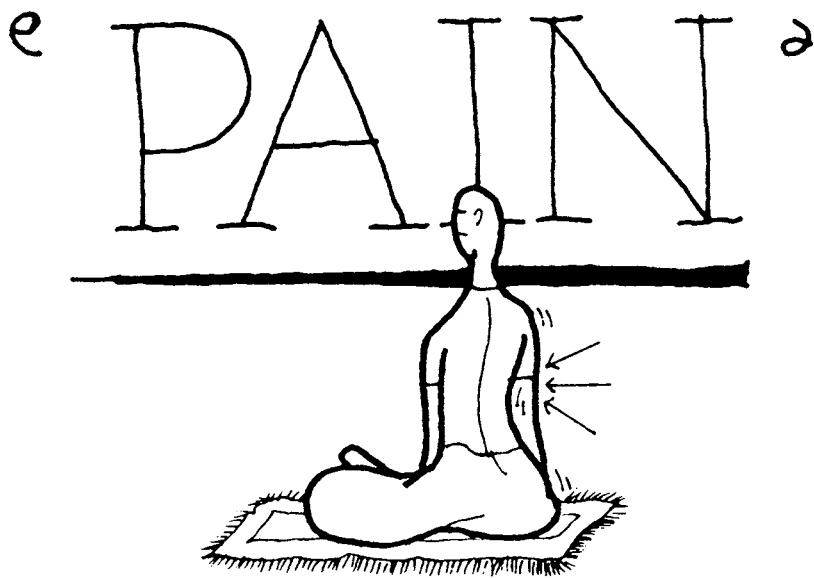
When
we can settle
back
into the moment
realizing
that
past and future
are
simply thoughts
in the present
then
we are freeing
ourselves
from the
bondage of



“ TIME ”

There is
NOTHING to hold onto,
NOTHING to grasp at,
because it is all changing
in
the MOMENT .



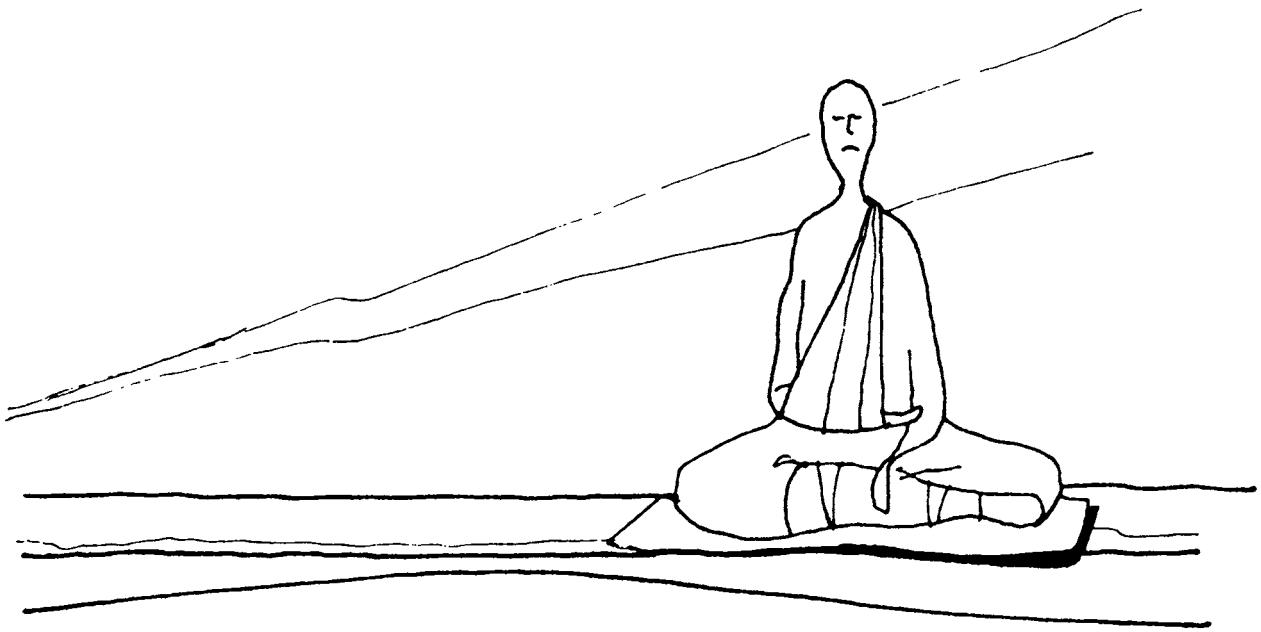


GENERALLY

our body reacts to every little discomfort or unpleasant feeling with a slight change in position.

We are usually unmindful of that whole process :

feeling a little discomfort, then a slight shift of posture .

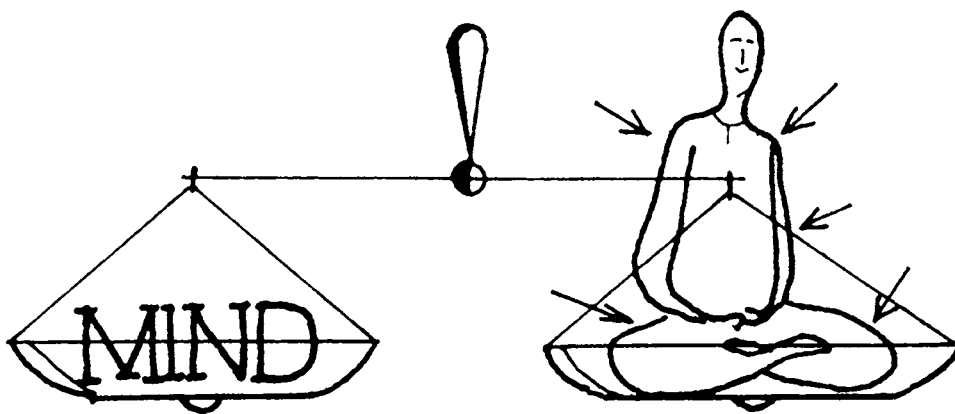


When there are strong painful feelings in the body the tendency is such that the mind and body tense in reaction to pain.

This is an expression of aversion, dislike, avoidance and it creates an unbalanced state of mind.

When
we find ourselves
tensing because of pain,
examine the quality
of unpleasantness carefully,
the quality of painfulness.

Become
MINDFUL
of that feeling
and the mind will naturally
come to a state of
balance.



When
the mind is silent,
relaxed and attentive,
pain is experienced
not as a solid mass
but as a flow,
arising and vanishing
moment to moment.

Sit with a relaxed
and calm mind,
observing the flow of
sensations,
without aversion,
without expectation

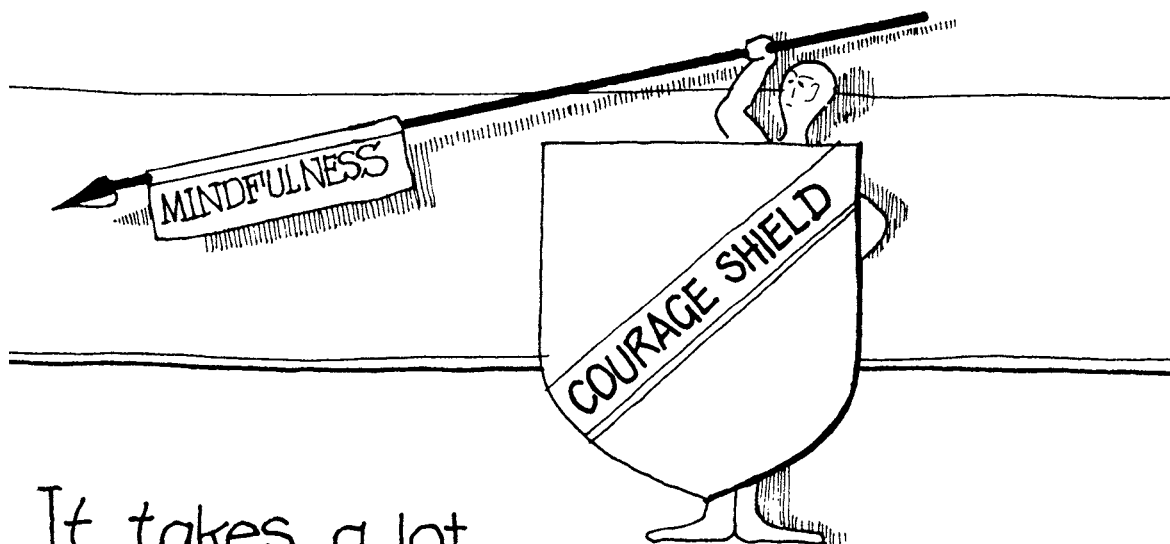
COURAGE

It takes courage to sit with pain, without avoiding or masking it;

just to sit and face it totally and overcome one's fear.

it takes courage to probe and by that probing discover the deepest elements of the mind and body.

It can be quite unsettling at first because many of our comfortable habits get overturned.



It takes a lot of courage to let go of everything that we've been holding onto for security.

To let go, to experience the flow of impermanence.

It takes courage to face and confront the basic and inherent security of this mind-body process.

To confront the fact that in every instant what we are is continually dissolving, vanishing; that there is no place to take a stand at all.

It takes courage to die. To experience the death of the concept of self; to experience that death while we are living takes the courage and fearlessness of an

IMPECCABLE WARRIOR.

PAIN

is a good object
of meditation.

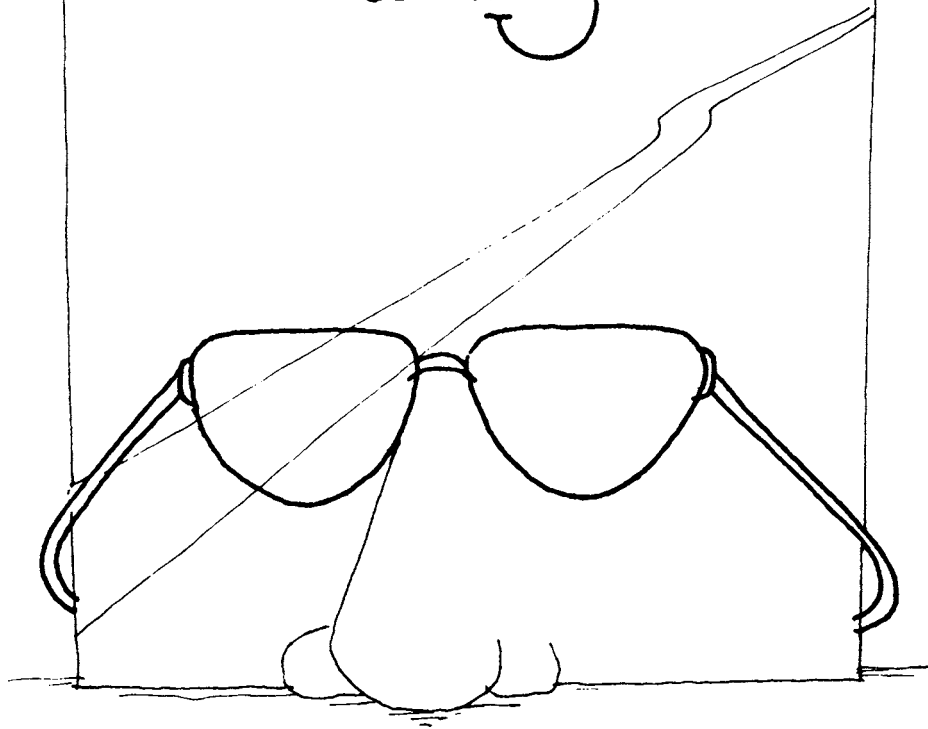


concentration
becomes strong whenever
there's a strong pain
in the body.

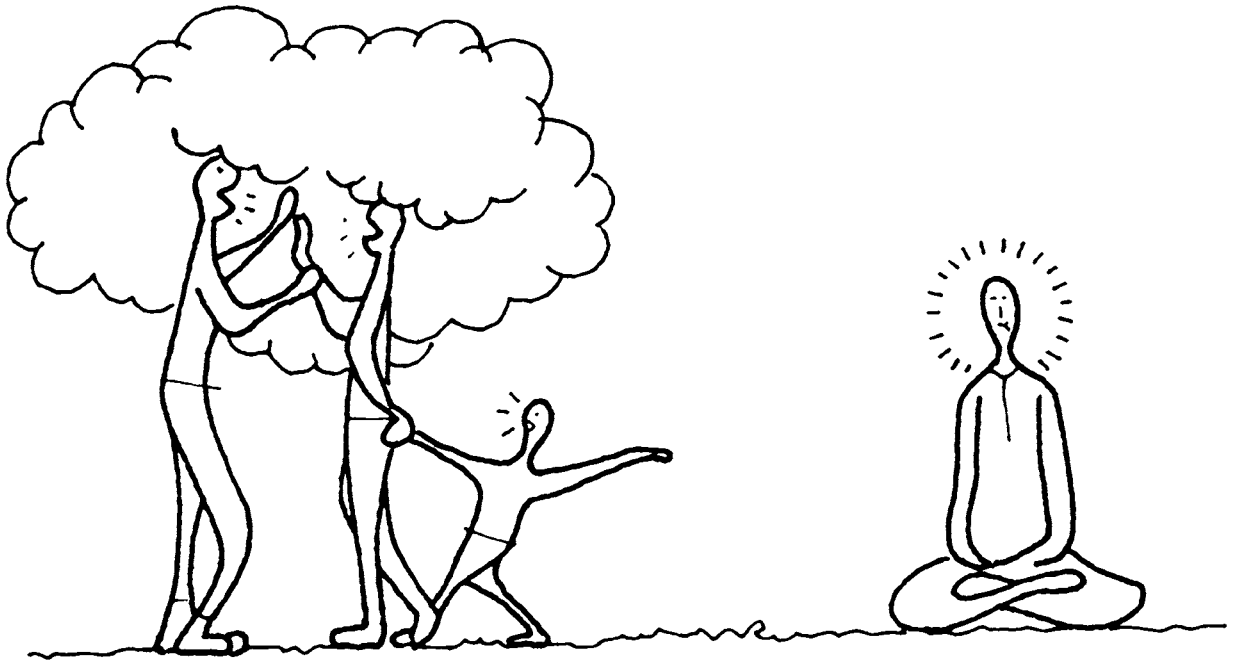
the mind stays on it easily,
without wandering very much.



INSIGHT
COMES FROM THE
REALIZATION THAT
OBSERVATION
IS GOING ON WITHOUT AN
OBSERVER,
WITNESSING
WITHOUT A
WITNESS.

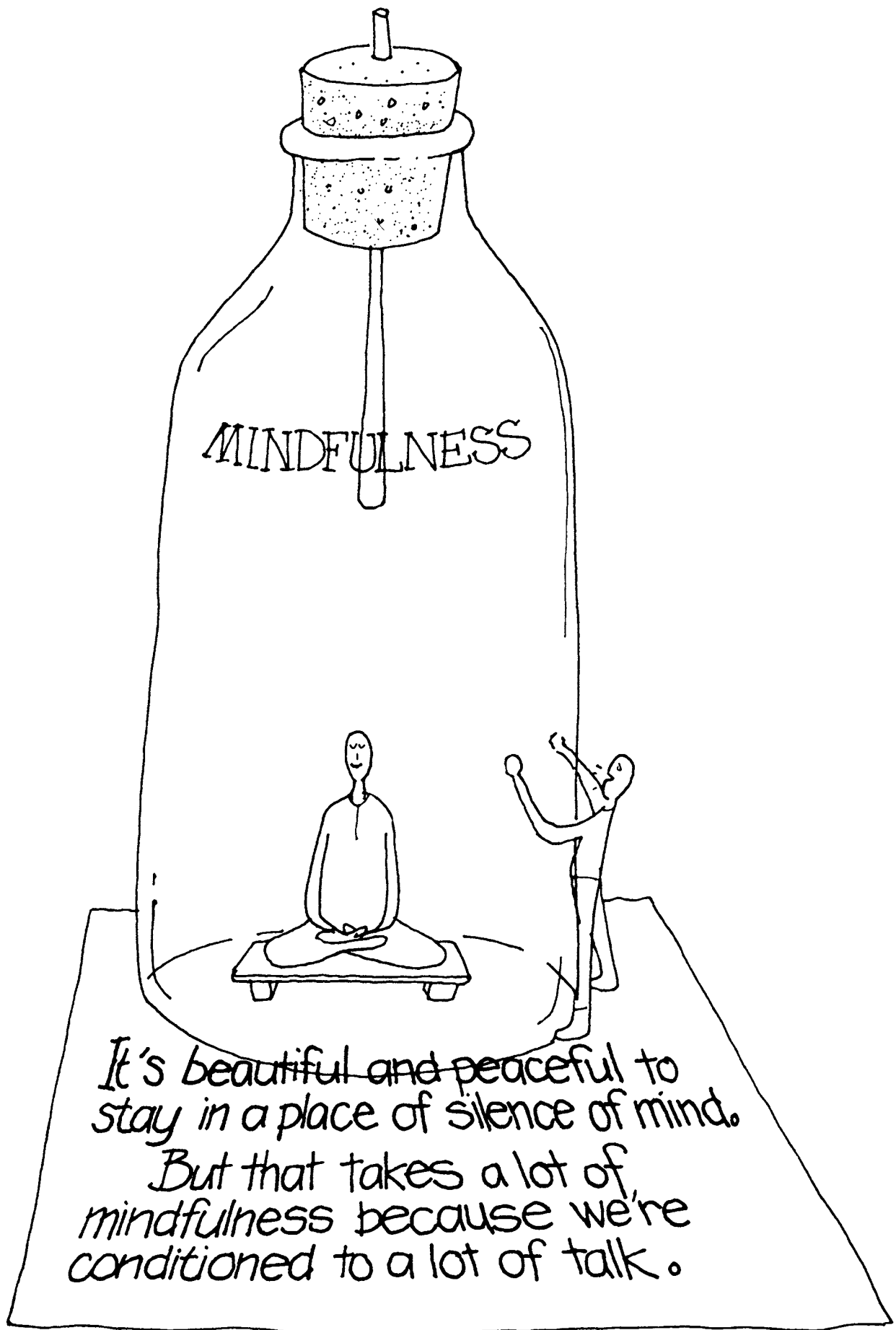


TALKING

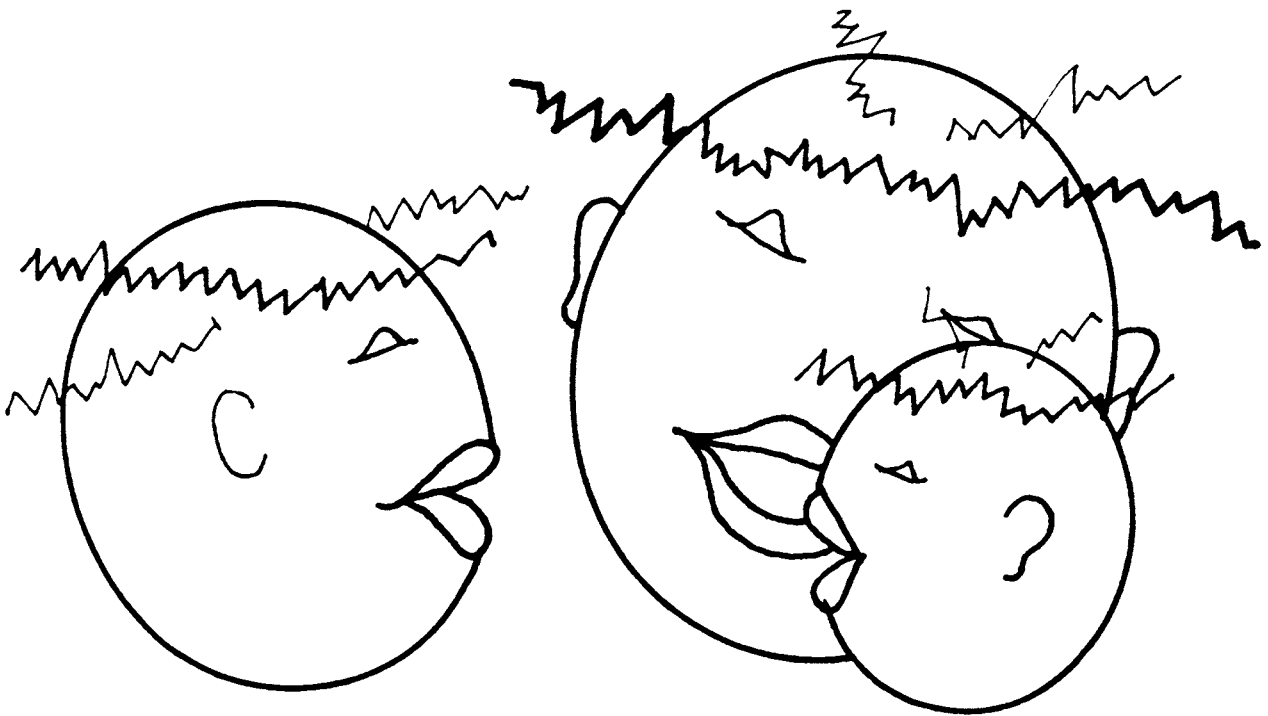


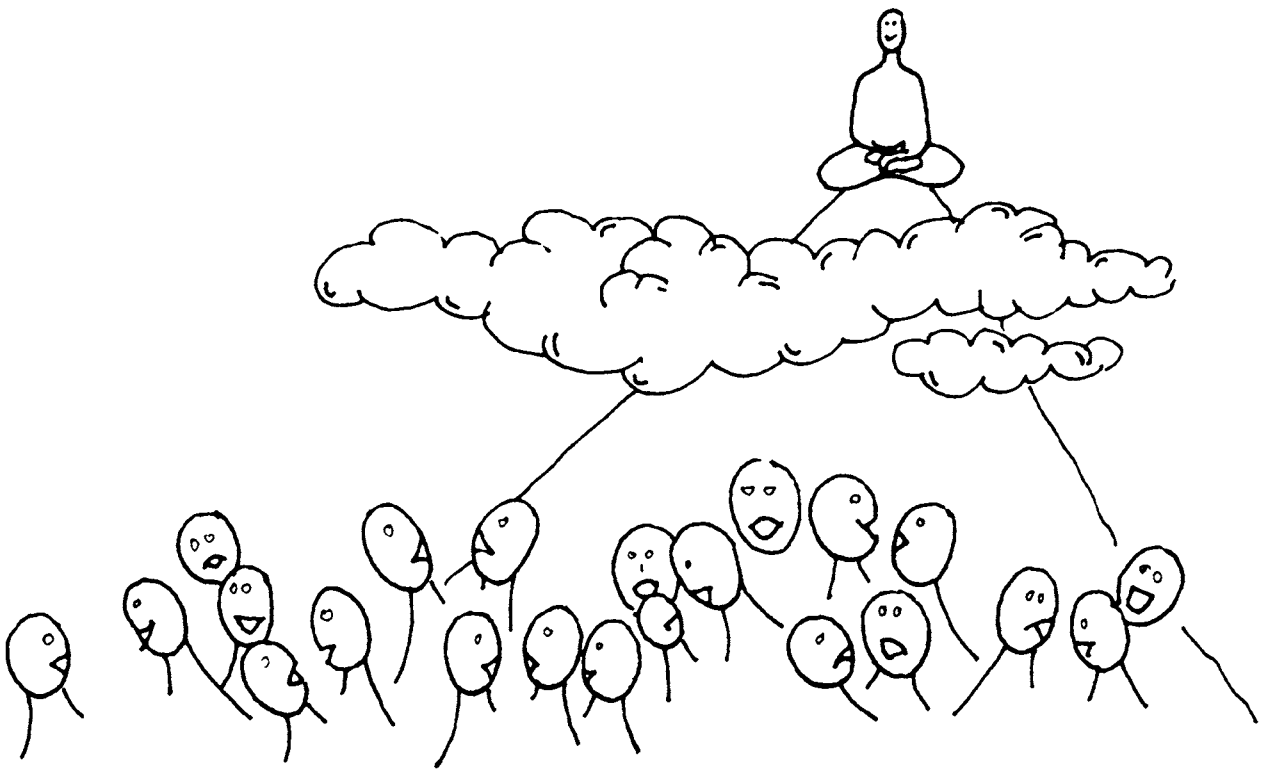
distracts our attention
and dissipates our energy.

It is of no wonder
we don't
often get a good look
at what's happening
in our minds.



A lot of talking
creates a spiralling downward.
We become restless ;
we start talking
then
it becomes even more
difficult to concentrate
and the mind becomes
yet more restless .





ALWAYS
renew the effort to maintain
SILENCE.

silence is an energy giver.
it creates a clarity in which
all the aspects of the mind
are clearly seen.

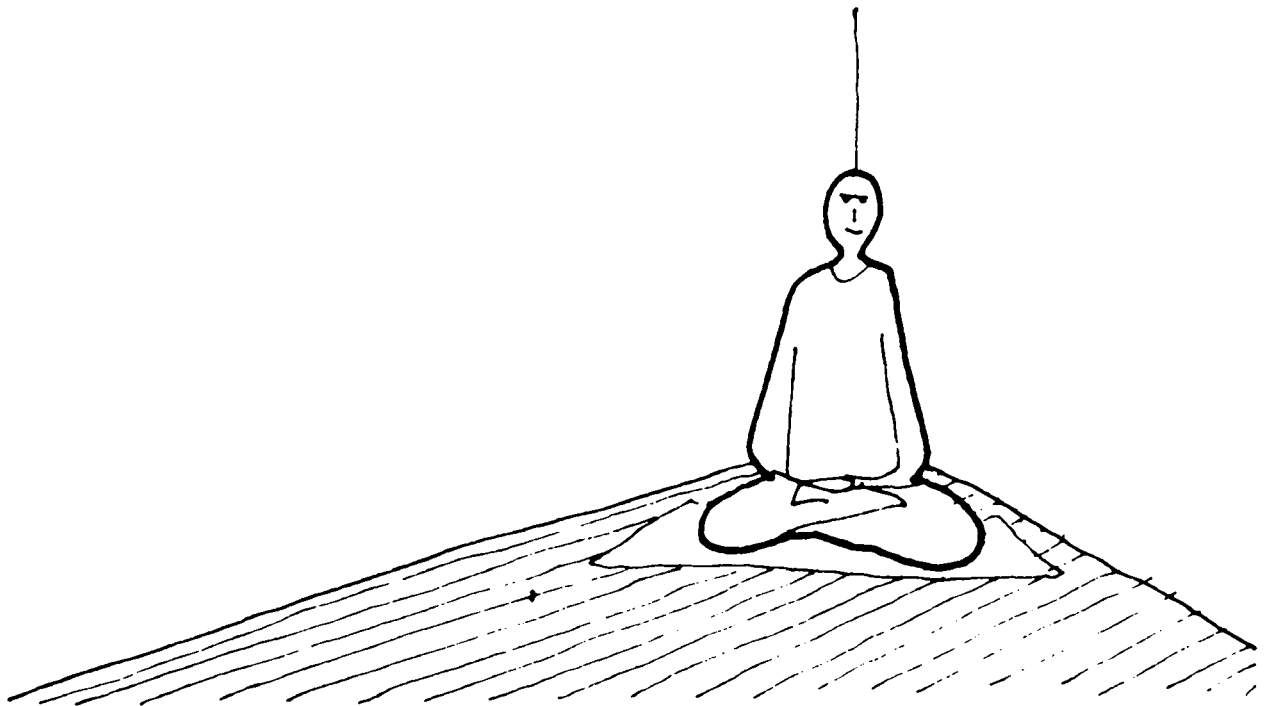


BY

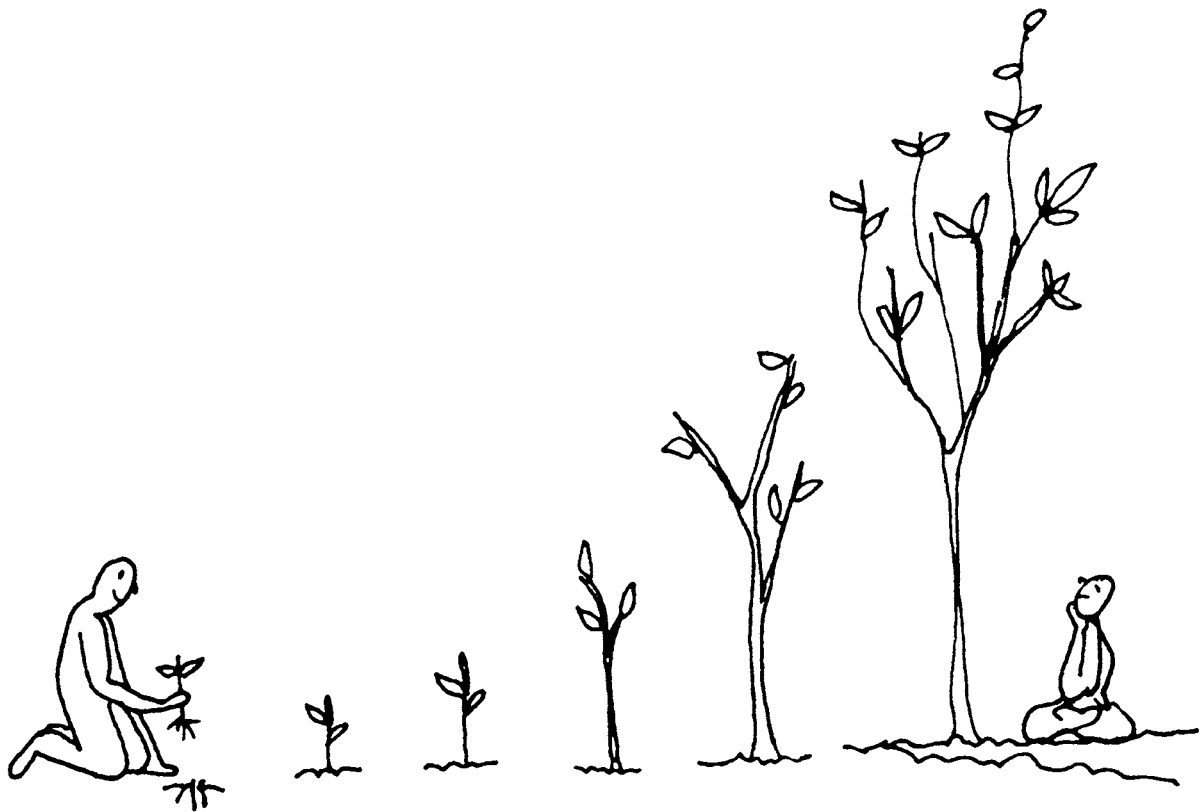
KEEPING
SILENCE

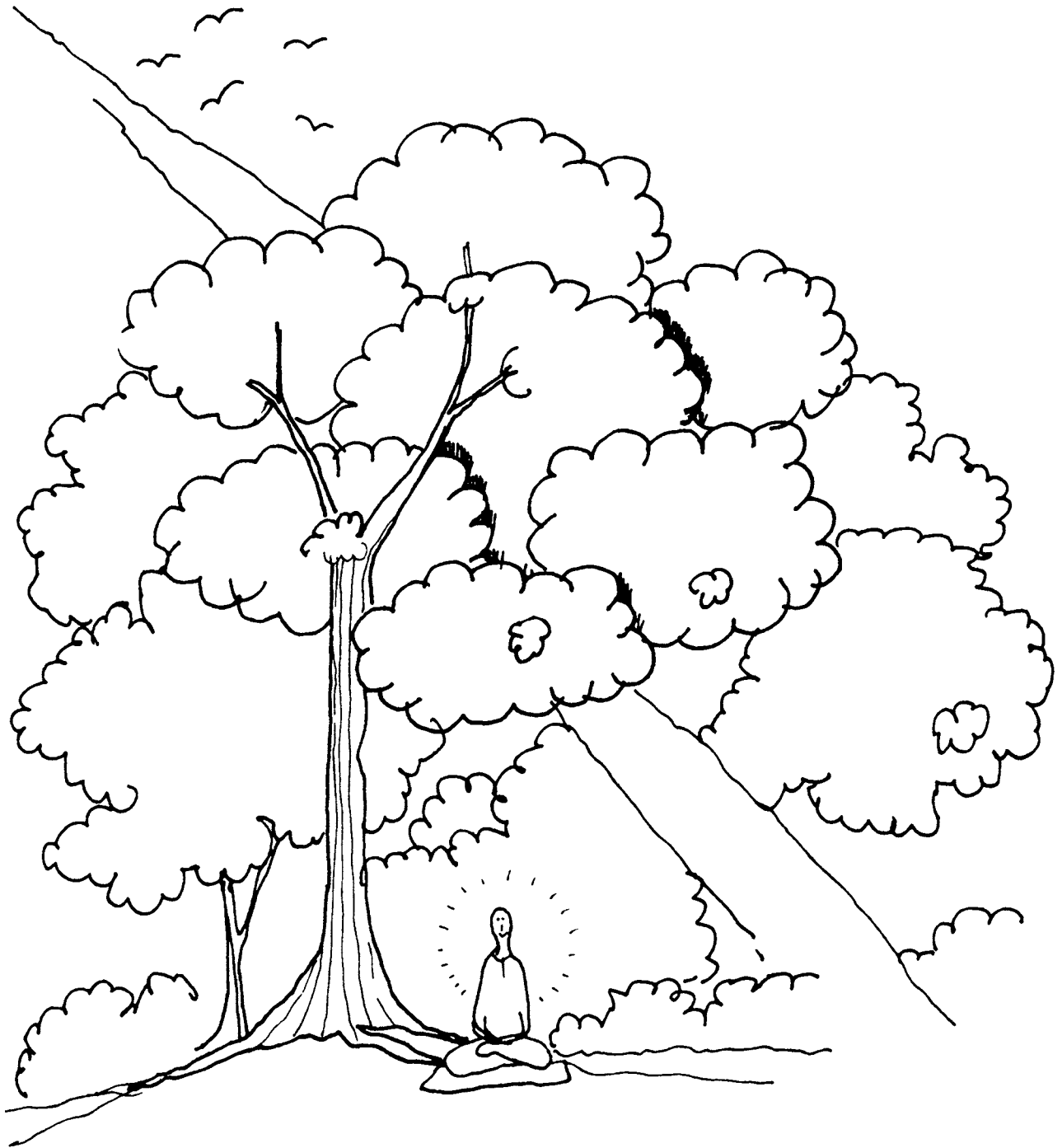
THE WHOLE
RANGE
OF
MENTAL &
PHYSICAL
ACTIVITY
WILL BECOME
EXTREMELY
CLEAR

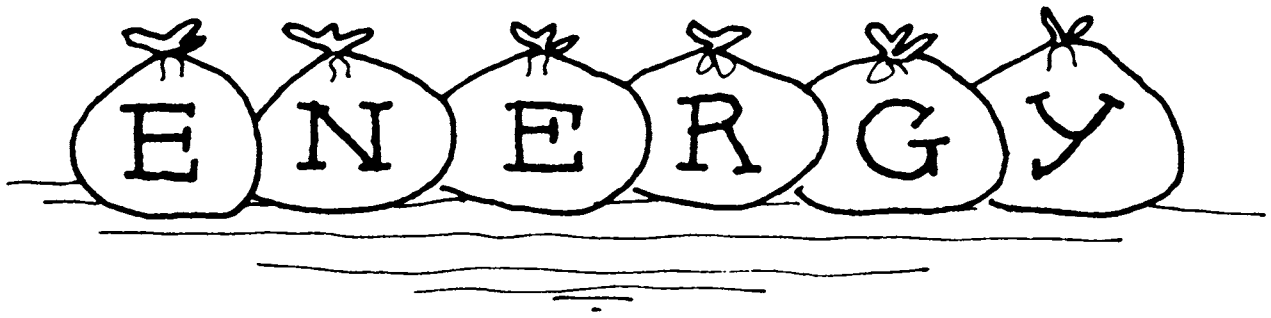
SILENCE
ENABLES
US
TO BE ATTENTIVE
TO
WHAT IS GOING ON,
TO
ALL THE UPS & DOWNS.



It is
in silence and work
that
TRANSFORMATION
is
brought to completion.

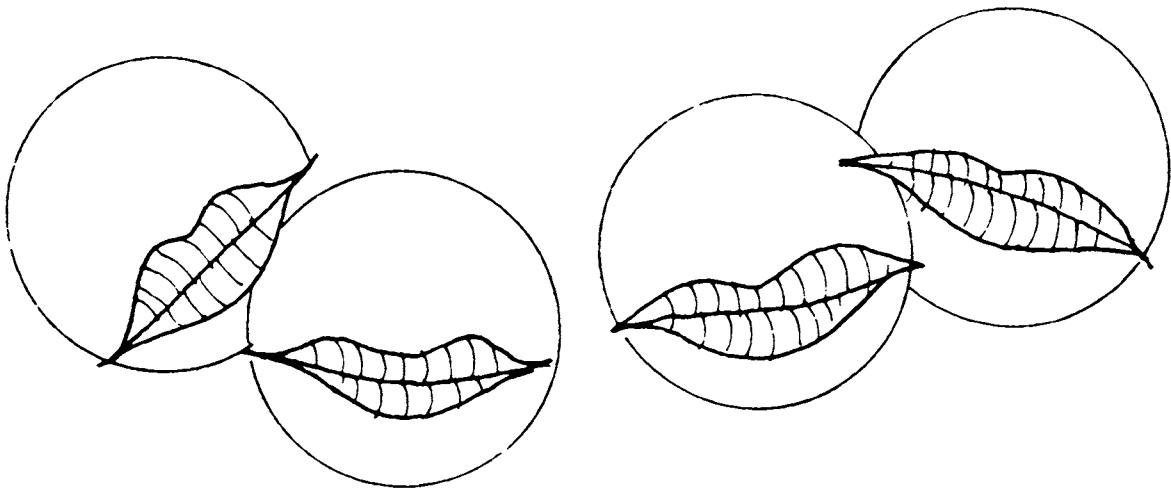






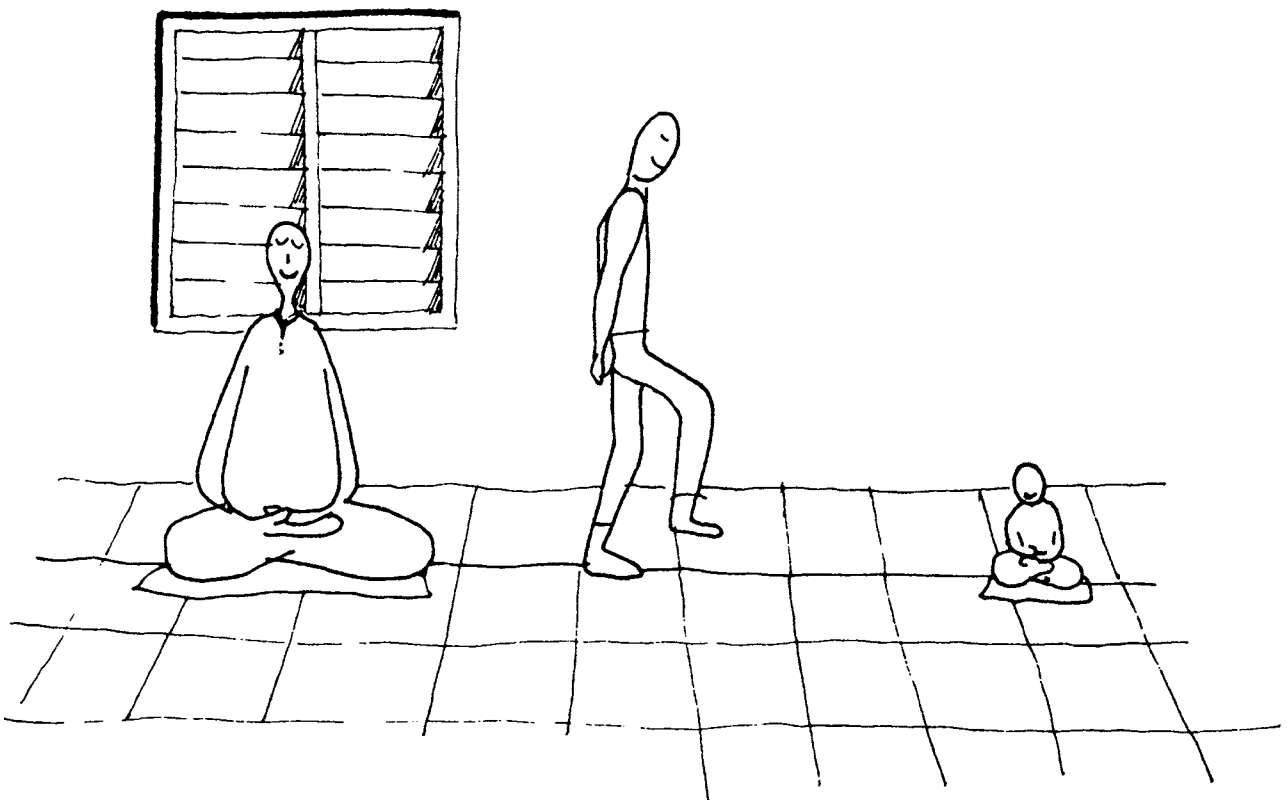
that is
conserved by not talking
can be used
for the development of

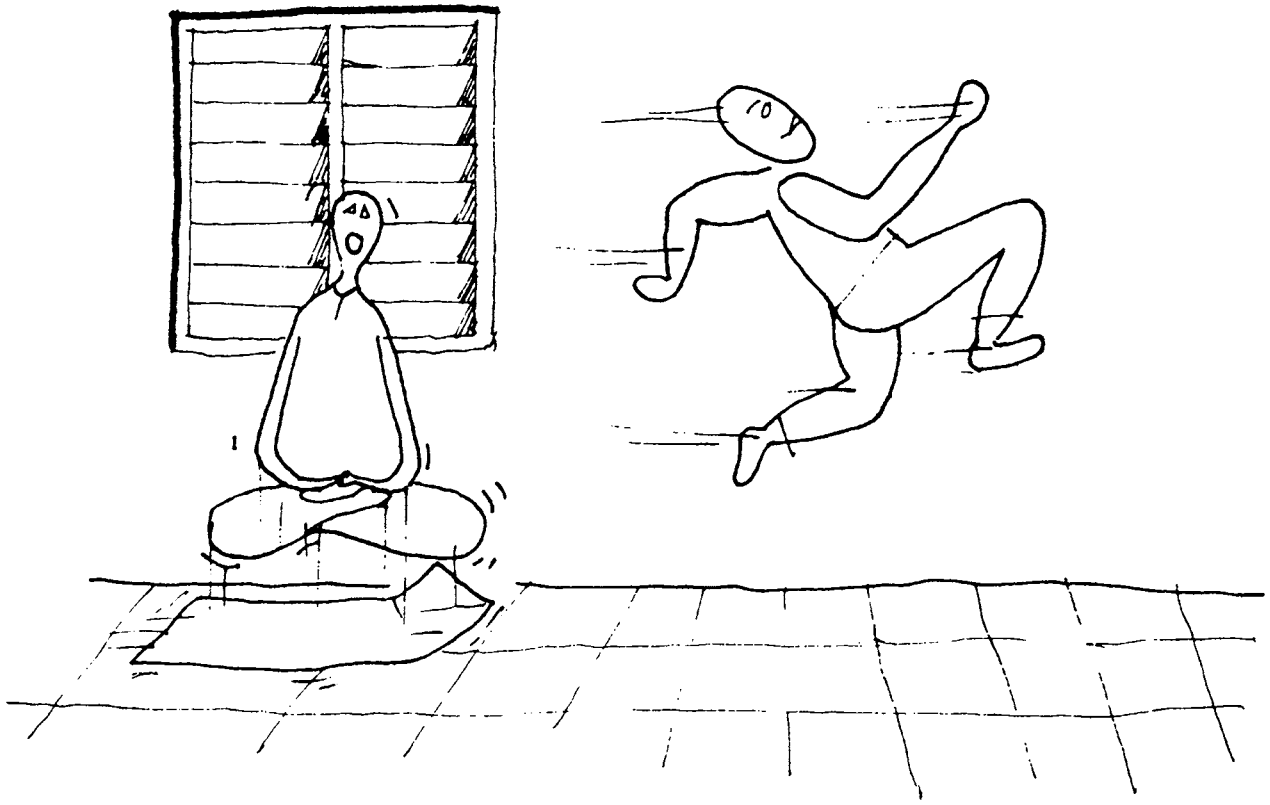
AWARENESS
&
MINDFULNESS



KEEPING
SILENCE AND
SLOWING DOWN
HELPS NOT ONLY
OURSELVES
BUT
EVERYONE
AROUND
US

in seeing
someone else
being
mindful,
we ourselves
become
more awake.

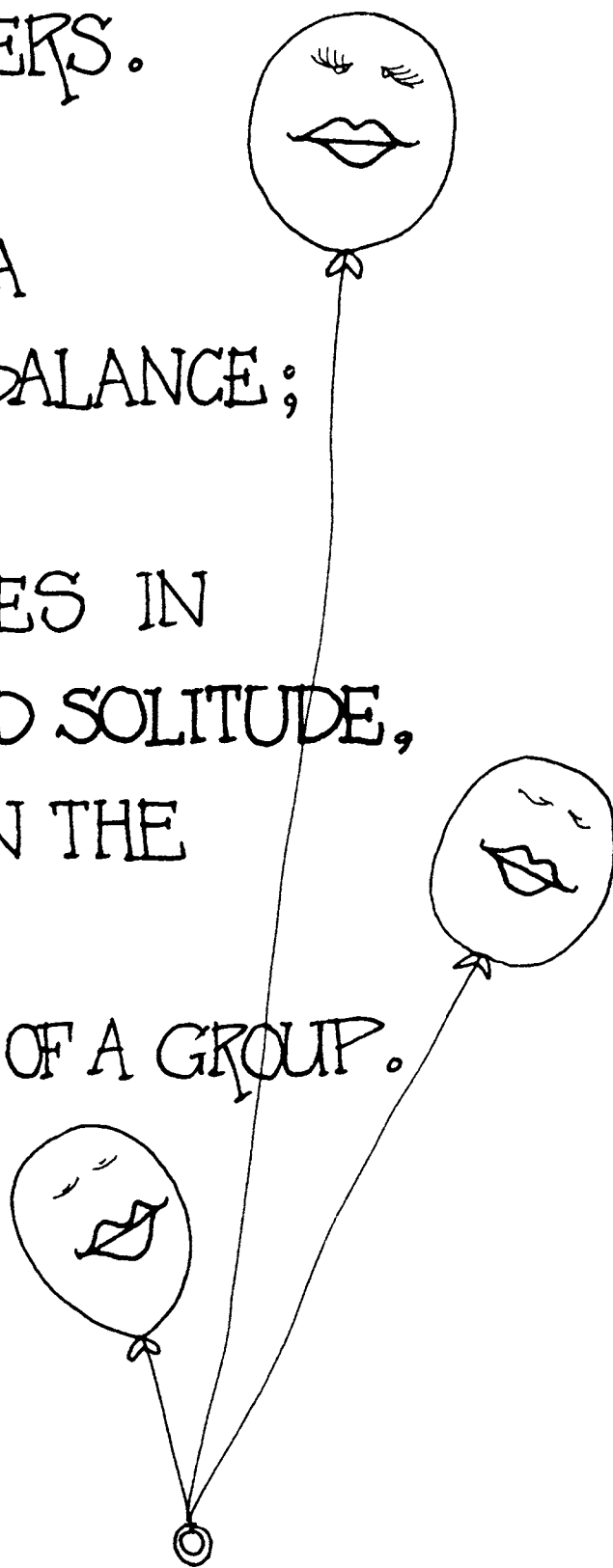




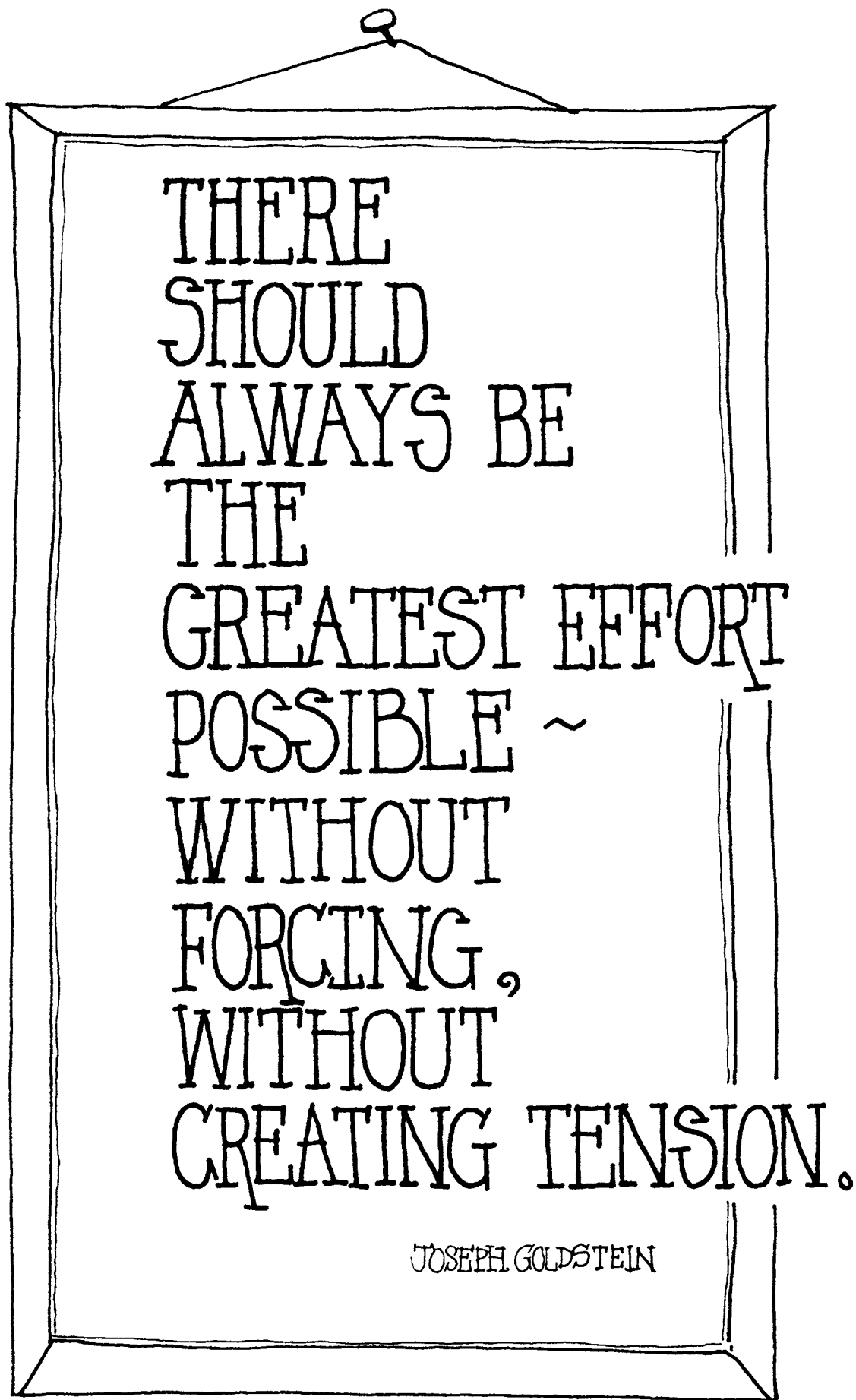
when we see
someone else
speeding
along,
it awakens
that in us .

BE AWARE
OF THE VALUE AND HELP
YOU ARE TO OTHERS.

A RETREAT IS A
BEAUTIFUL BALANCE;
WORKING
ON OURSELVES IN
SILENCE AND SOLITUDE,
YET BEING IN THE
SUPPORTIVE
ATMOSPHERE OF A GROUP.



Making effort,
rousing energy
and
creating solitude
around ourselves
will
intensify the
PRACTICE.



ENERGY

has to be aroused by
each one of us
to walk upon
the path of purification.

ENERGY

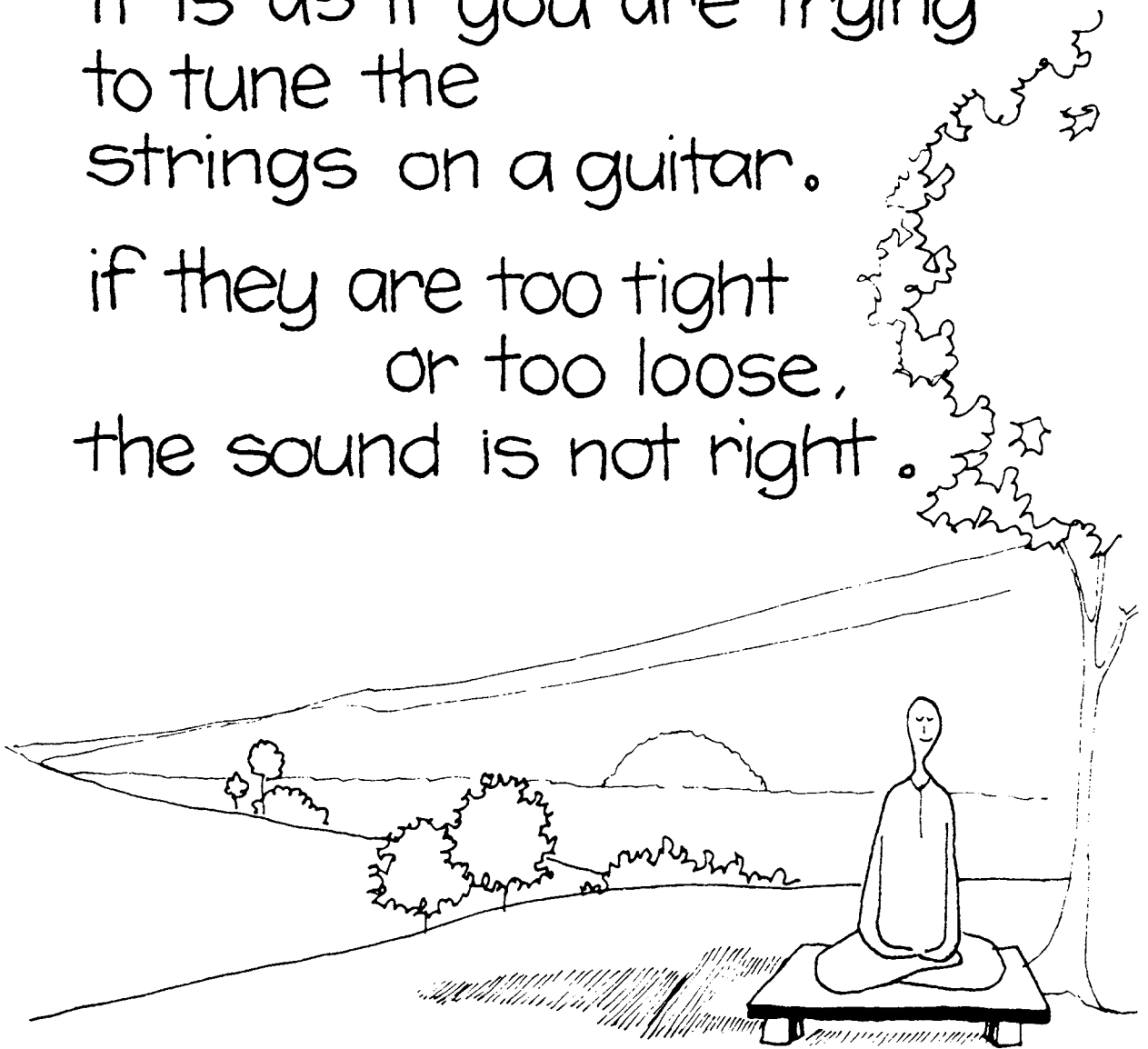
is a power factor ;
when it is cultivated
and developed
it overcomes
sloth,
torpor &
laziness of mind.

ENERGY

has to be balanced
with tranquility.

it is as if you are trying
to tune the
strings on a guitar.

if they are too tight
or too loose,
the sound is not right.

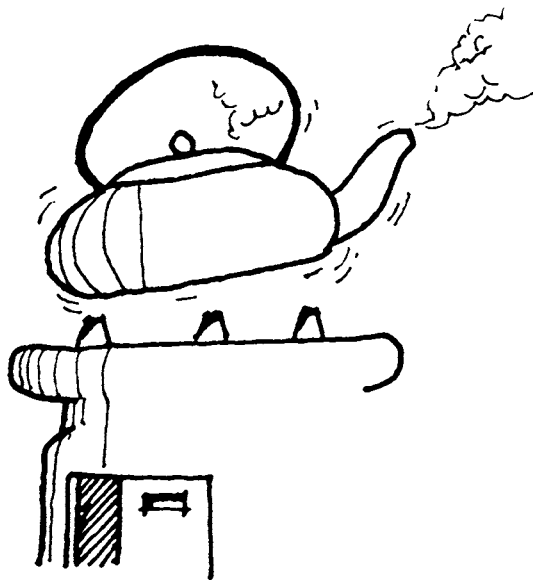
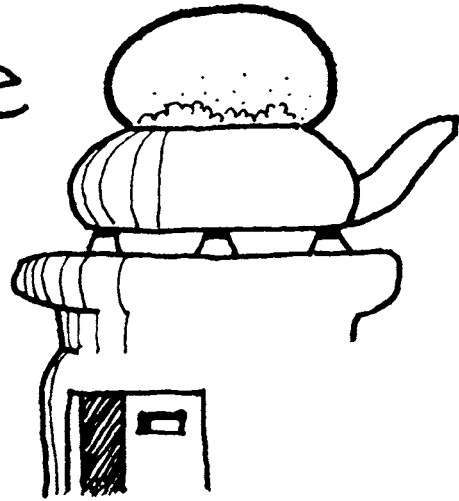


Even so
in our practice too,
we have to be
persistent & persevering
but with a
relaxed and balanced
mind,
making the effort

WITHOUT FORCING.

BEING
VERY TENSE AND ANXIOUS
IS A
GREAT HINDRANCE.

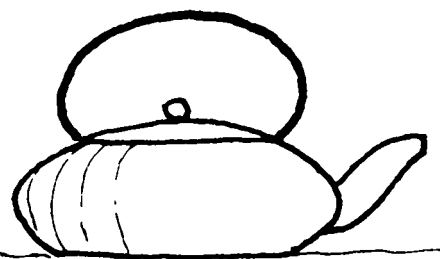
If we put a kettle on the stove and every few minutes take the lid off, it will take a longer time for the water to boil.



The water will heat up quickly if we just leave it as it is.

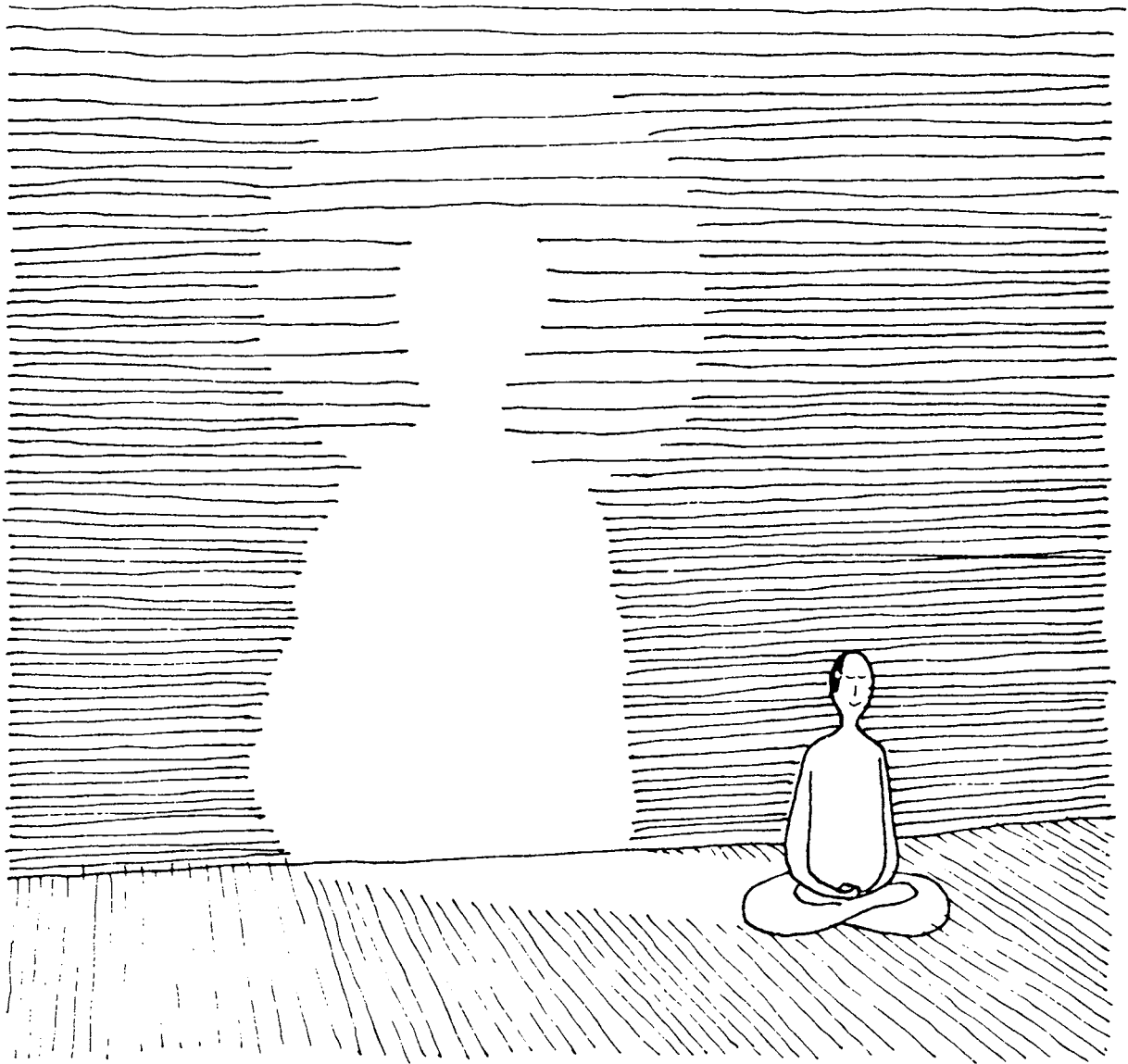
EVEN SO.....

.... By
being continuous
in our practice,
each moment
builds on the one
before,
and in a short time
the mind
will develop
an acute
strength and
penetrating power.



be gentle with yourself.
be persevering.

though it may not be apparent
to you,
there is a great
transformation taking place.

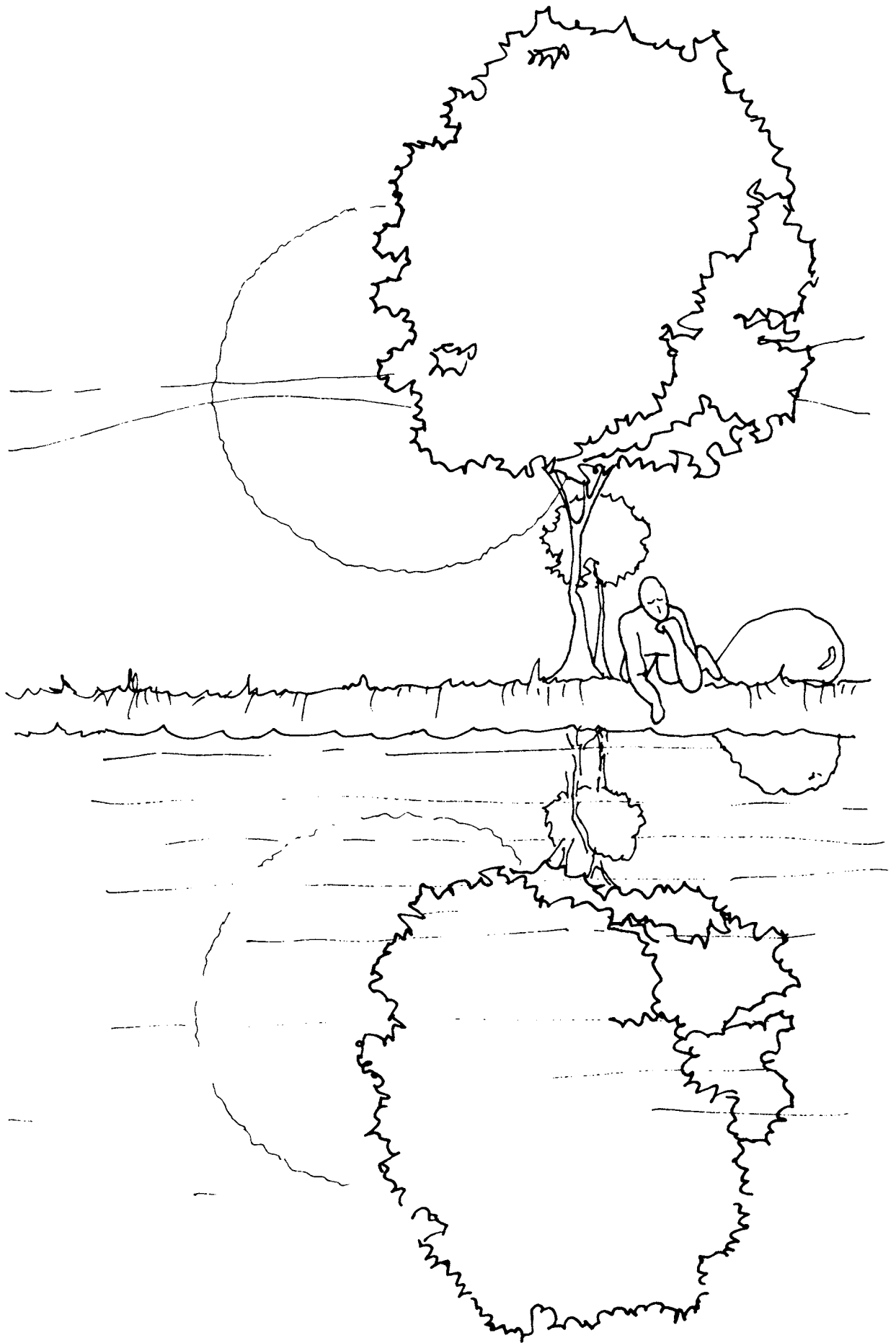




The mind can become very malleable.

If you work a piece of clay in making pottery, it becomes soft and easily shaped.

When the awareness and concentration are developed, the mind also has that kind of workability and flexibility.



QUESTION :

what should i do when i am getting uptight from trying too hard ?

ANSWER :

when you feel too much tension or forcing in the practice, go outside and look at the trees, look at the sky. it's so beautiful, so expansive.

go outside and walk around a bit in a more relaxed way, but still with awareness of what you are doing. in short time, the place itself will cool the mind.

The Buddha often recommended being in nature because of it's tranquility to the mind.

OFTEN

in forgetfulness of our destiny, we become over-involved in collecting things, in attachments and possessions, in wanting to become someone special.

we get involved in many of the activities of LITTLE MIND, taking our ambitions, our desires, ourselves, very seriously.

we lose the perspective of BIG MIND,
we lose the

PERSPECTIVE OF DEATH.

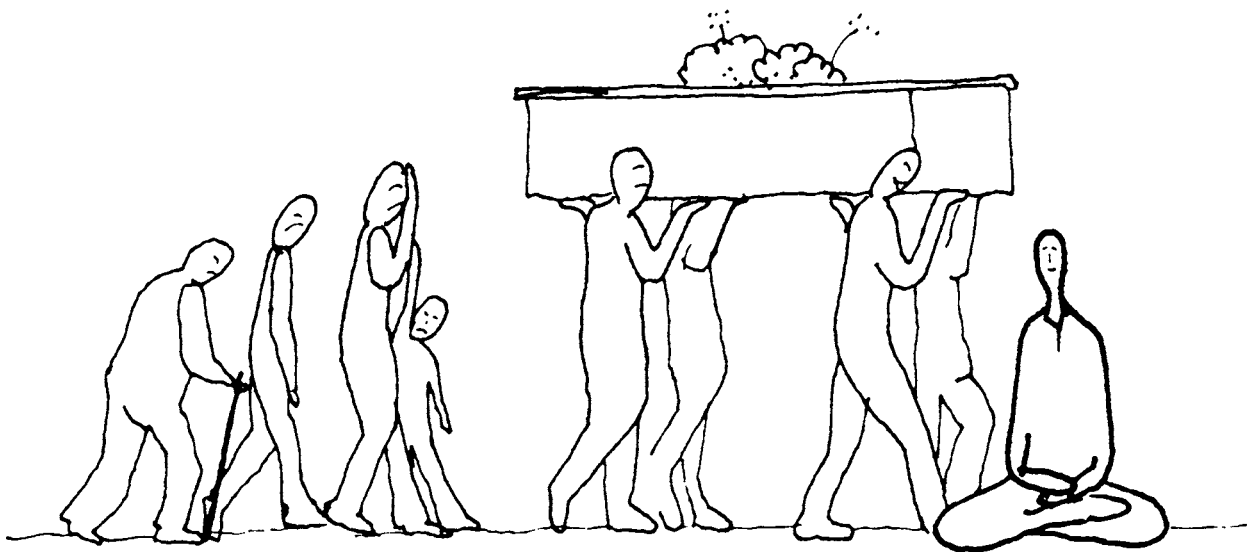


WE

ARE GOING TO DIE ALONE .
IT'S NECESSARY TO COME TO
TERMS WITH OUR BASIC
ALONENESS,
TO BECOME COMFORTABLE
WITH IT .

THE MIND CAN BECOME
STRONG AND PEACEFUL
IN THAT UNDERSTANDING
MAKING POSSIBLE A
BEAUTIFUL
COMMUNION WITH OTHERS .

if we take
DEATH AS OUR ADVISOR
we live each
moment with the
power and fullness
we would give to
our last
endeavour
on
earth.



When
we keep DEATH at
our fingertips we become
less involved, less compulsive
about the satisfaction or
gratification of various
desires in the moment.

When
not so clouded by desires
and fantasies, we're less
inclined to hold onto things
and more open to

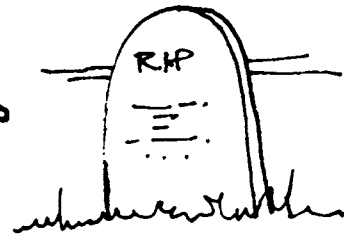
LOVE

&

GENEROSITY.

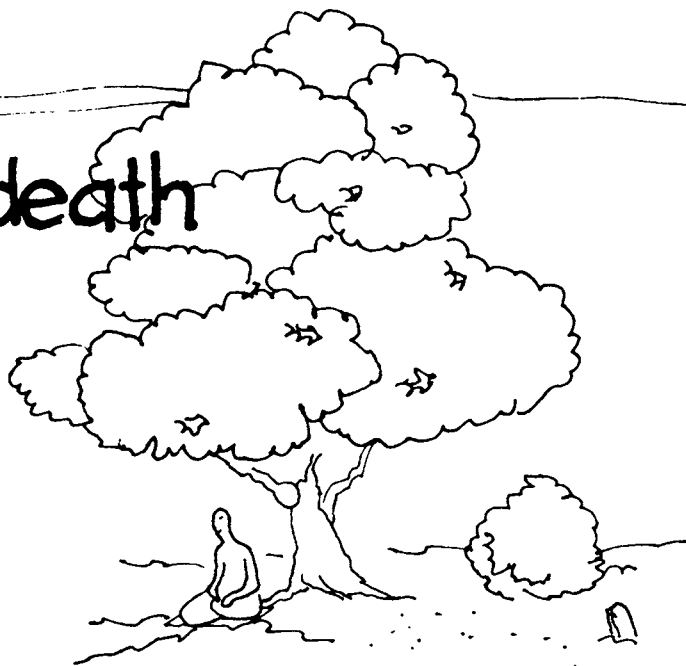
NO MAN,
THOUGH HE
SEES OTHERS
DYING ALL
AROUND HIM,
BELIEVES
HE HIMSELF
WILL

DIE .



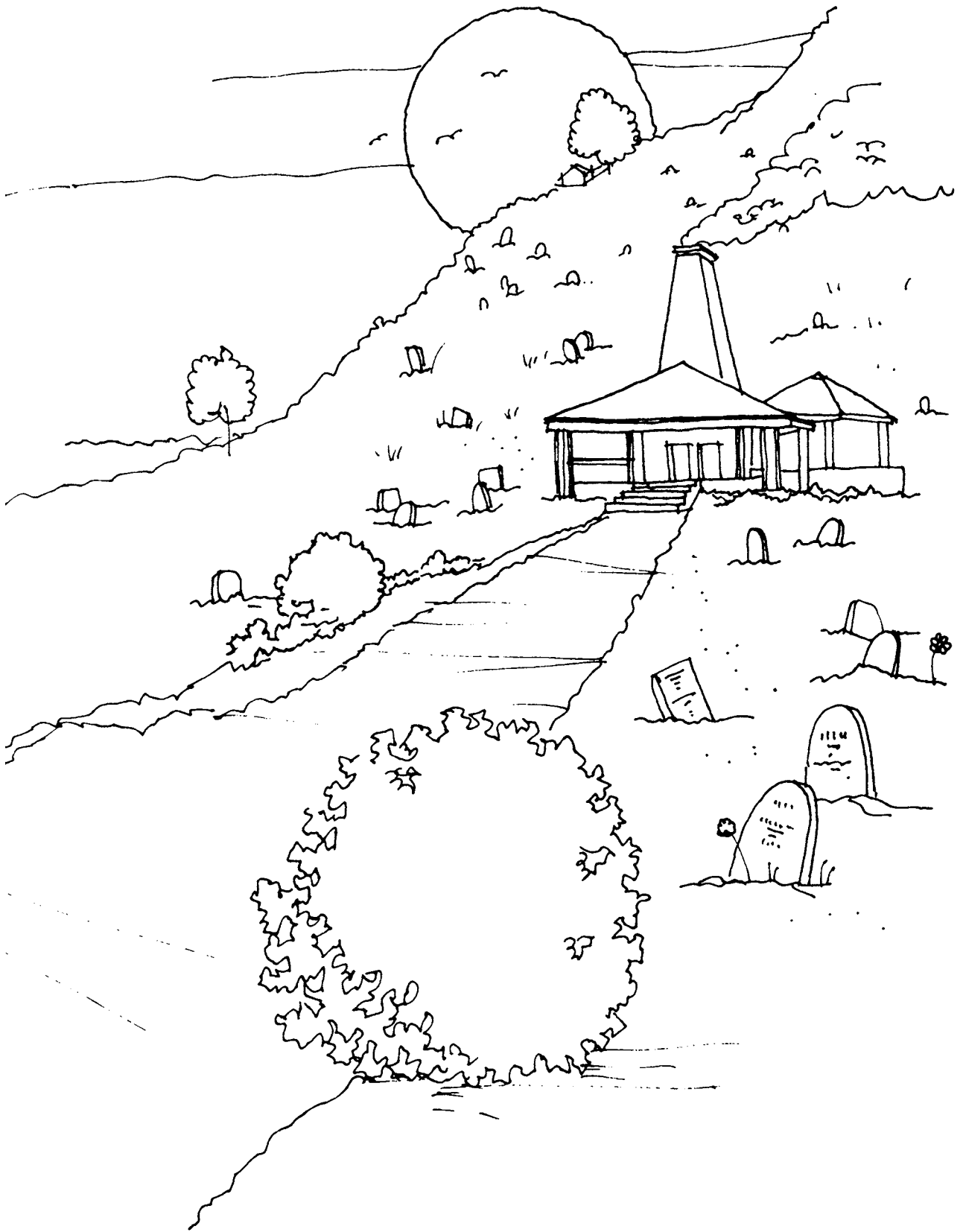
bhagavad-gita

The
awareness of death
provides the
space of clarity
in which we can
understand
the process
of who it is
that we are,
and who it is
that dies.



- JOSEPH GOLDSTEIN

"FROM THE WOMB TO THE TOMB,
FROM THE TOMB TO THE WOMB"



66 IDEAL 99

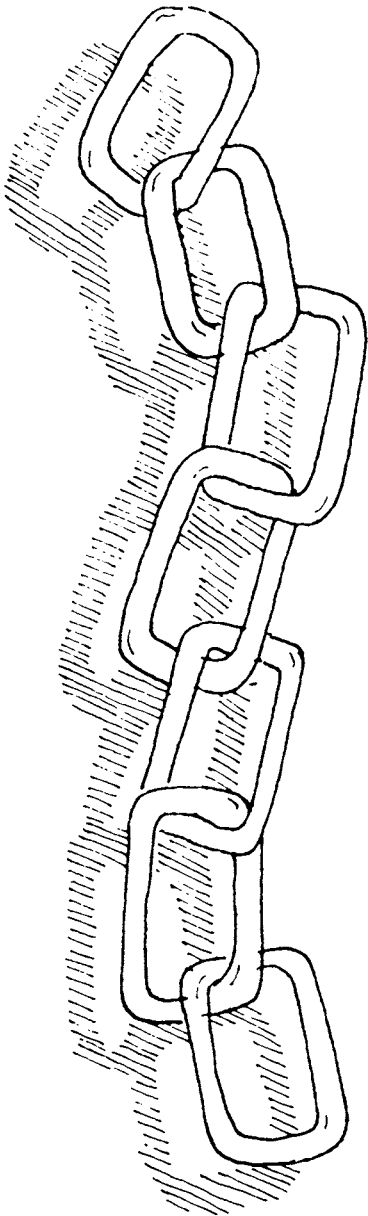
The biggest obstacles to settling back are attachments to self-images and concepts of who we are and how we want to be.

They complicate unnecessarily the very simple experience of what it is that's happening.

Often people on the spiritual path get trapped by an image.

An image of what they think it means to be a yogi or a meditator or a spiritual person, creating for themselves that struggle of trying to live up to a certain preconceived way of action or behaviour.

Attachment to view
is a
GREAT BONDAGE.



It keeps us
from seeing how
things are ;
it filters reality
through
the coloured
glasses of our
own
particular conditioning.

Views about oneself,
about practice,
about the teachings
of the Buddha.

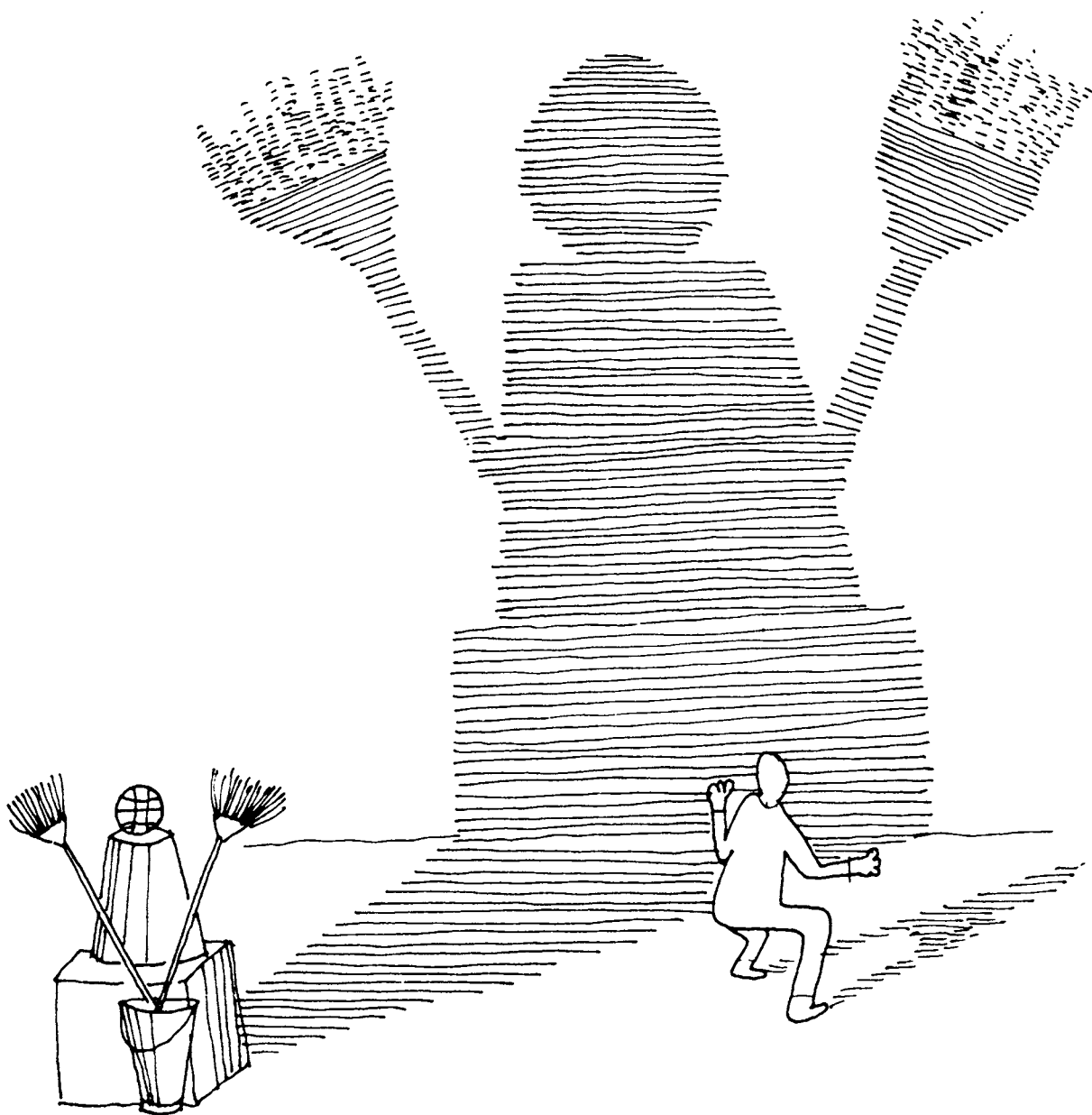
A FAMOUS PARABLE

In the cave is a row of people, chained in such a way that they can only face the back wall.

Behind the row of people is a fire and a procession of figures walking by engaged in all the activities of life.

The procession of figures casts shadows on the back wall of the cave. The people who are chained can see only the changing view of shadows, and because that is all they have ever seen, they take these shadows to be ultimate reality.

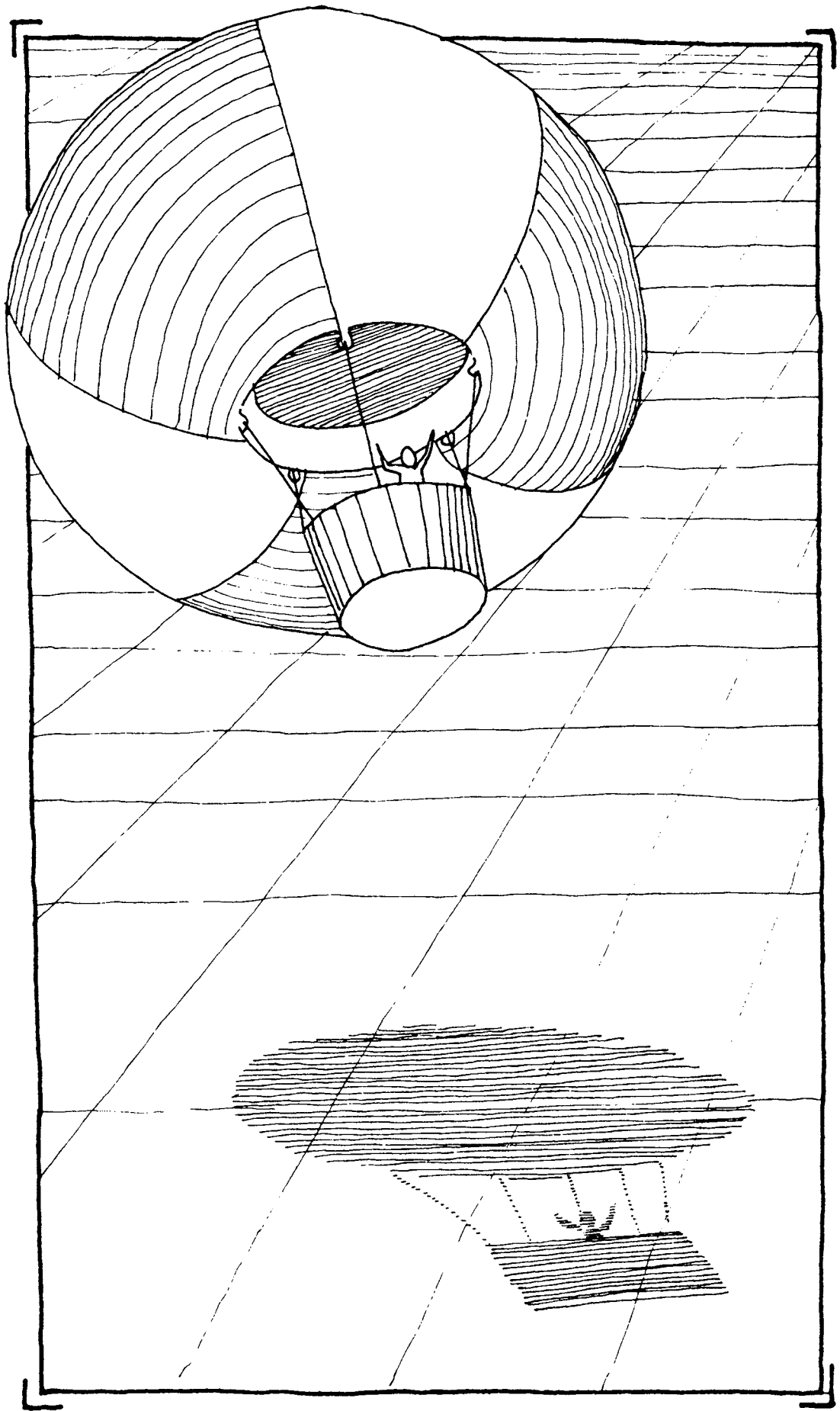
Sometimes a person who is bound in this way, through great effort, manages to loosen the chains and turn around. He or she sees the fire and the procession and begins to understand that the shadows are not the reality, but a mere reflection on the wall. Perhaps with further effort that person is able to cut the chains completely and emerge into the sunlight, into freedom.



Our predicament is similar to those people chained in the cave. The shadows are the world of concepts in which we live.

Chained through our attachments, we perceive the world through our ideas, our thoughts, our mental constructs, taking these concepts to be the reality itself.

Through
the practice of
mindfulness
of not clinging ,
not condemning ,
not identifying
with anything ,
the mind
becomes
lighter and freer .





IF A MAN IS CROSSING A RIVER
AND AN EMPTY BOAT
COLLIDES WITH HIS OWN SKIFF,
EVEN THOUGH HE BE
A BAD~TEMPERED MAN
HE WILL NOT BECOME VERY ANGRY.
BUT IF HE SEES A MAN IN A BOAT,
HE WILL SHOUT AT HIM
TO STEER CLEAR
IF THE SHOUT IS NOT HEARD,
HE WILL SHOUT AGAIN,
AND YET AGAIN, AND BEGIN CURSING
AND ALL BECAUSE
THERE IS SOMEBODY IN THE BOAT.
YET IF THE BOAT WERE EMPTY,
HE WOULD NOT BE SHOUTING,
AND NOT BE ANGRY.

IF YOU CAN EMPTY YOUR OWN BOAT
CROSSING THE RIVER OF THE WORLD,
NO ONE WILL OPPOSE YOU,
NO ONE WILL SEEK TO HARM YOU.

~ chuang tzu

LEARNING-TO-LET-GO

Sharing what we have is a beautiful way of relating to others.

Our friendships are much enhanced by the quality of generosity.

Even more significantly, the cultivation of non-greed becomes a strong force for liberation.

What keeps us bound is desire and grasping in our own minds.

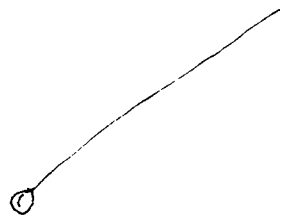
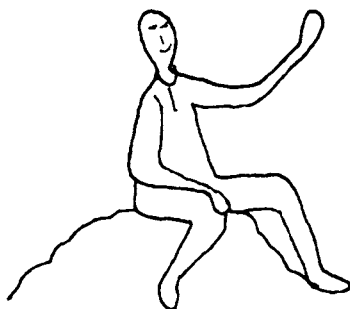
As we practise giving we learn to let go.

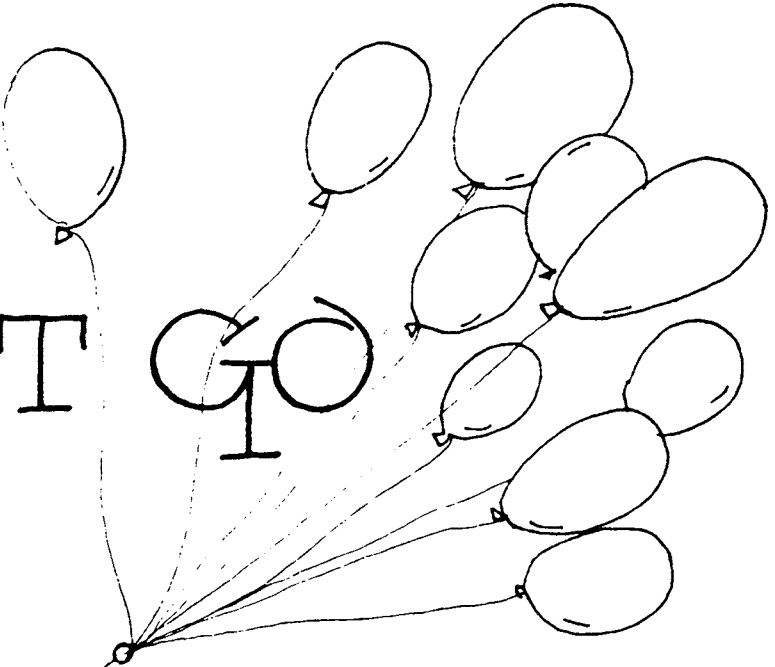
LET GO

of our pre-conceived
ideas of how things are,
of how we would
like things to be.

LETTING GO

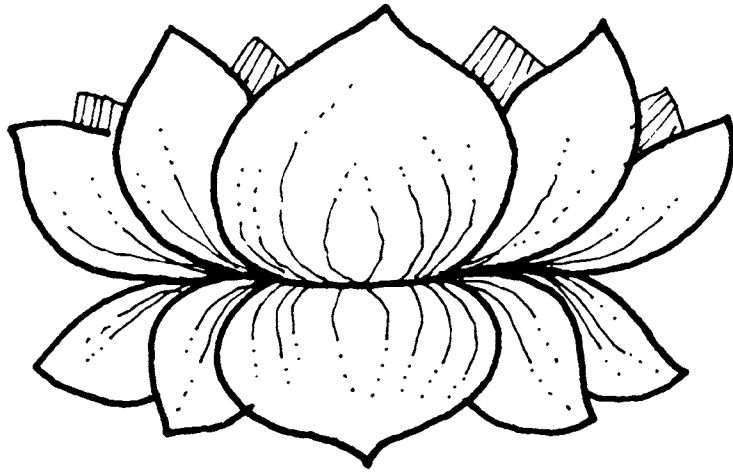
of the
attachment
to our cherished
opinions.





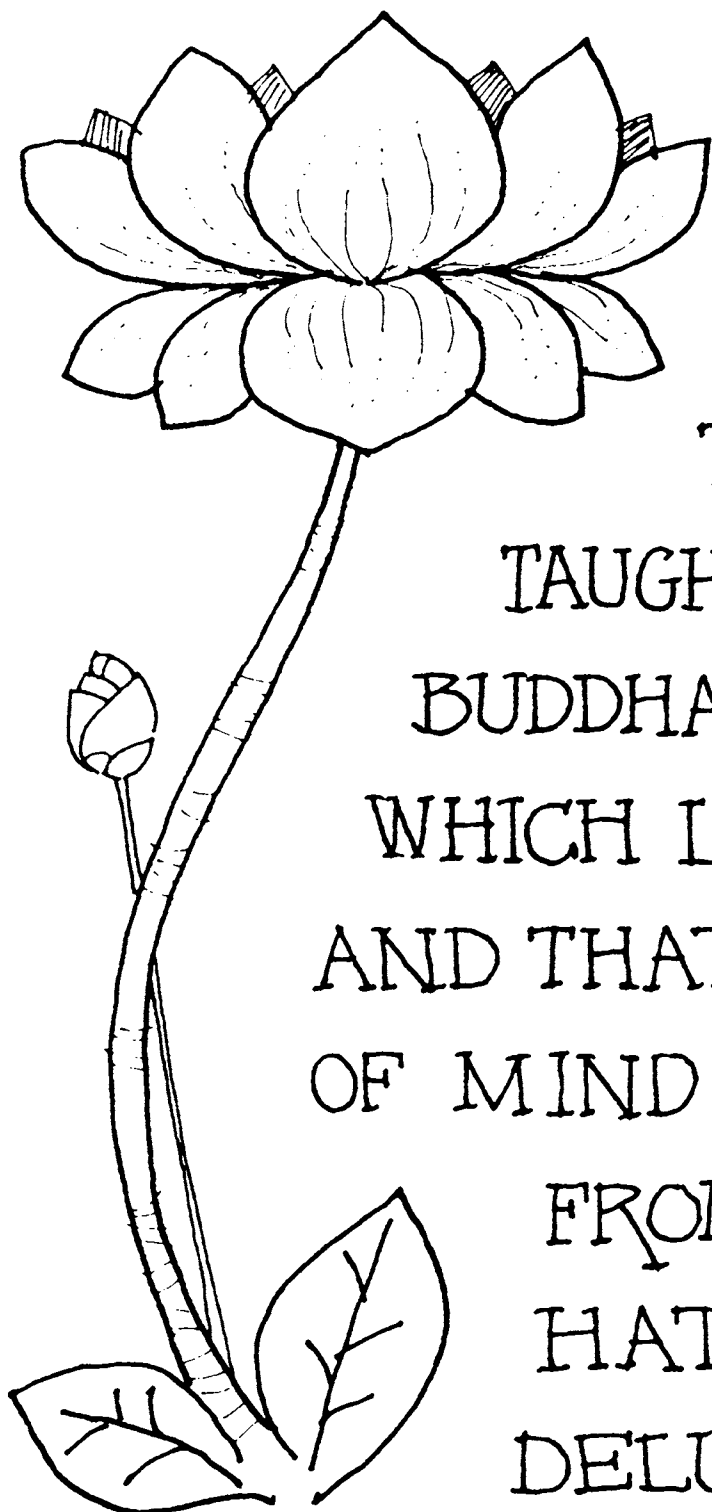
LET GO
of
views,
opinions and
ideas,
of all things

and the Dhamma
will be
revealed.



PURITY
DOES NOT EXIST
WITHIN
A TRADITION
OR
WITHIN A METHOD
OR
WITHIN
A RELIGION

o



THERE IS
ONLY ONE
BASIC PURITY
THAT WAS
TAUGHT BY THE
BUDDHA , THE PURITY
WHICH LIBERATES,
AND THAT IS PURITY
OF MIND, FREEDOM
FROM GREED,
HATRED &
DELUSION .

QUESTION :

How do we purify ourselves?

ANSWER :

The whole beauty of the practice is that the awareness itself is what purifies.

It is not establishing a certain program for oneself, "I'm going to be pure," which is somewhat a contradiction.

The awareness of what's happening in the moment is what purifies so that there's nothing to get or be, nothing special to do or have; just a sitting back with awareness.

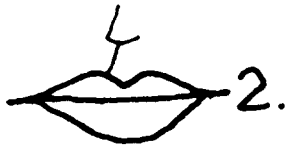
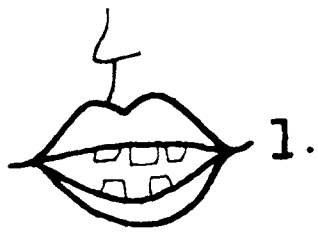
INSIGHT

AS BEING A SUDDEN,
WORDLESS UNDERSTANDING.
THIS KIND OF INTUITION
HAS A CERTAINTY ABOUT
IT BECAUSE IT'S NOT
THE PRODUCT OF SOME
THOUGHT OR IMAGE
BUT RATHER A SUDDEN
CLEAR PERCEPTION
OF HOW THINGS
ARE.

Volition / intention
is a common factor of mind
present in every moment
of consciousness.

It is the MENTAL URGE
or signal which precedes any
action. When it is predominant,
as they are between radical
changes of posture,
between
sitting and standing
standing and walking,
be mindful of them.

When we are mindful of volitions
and intentions, we then have the
freedom to choose whether or not
we want to act on them. As long
as we remain unaware of intentions,
actions will follow automatically.



When there is no mindfulness words come out before we are even aware that

there was an intention to do so.

It's all very mechanical.

But as the mindfulness gets sharper, we begin to be aware before talking.



The intention to speak arises and we're mindful of it.

Intentions are not always
thoughts in the mind,
not always words.

Sometimes they are experienced
just as an urge,
a signal that something is
about to happen.

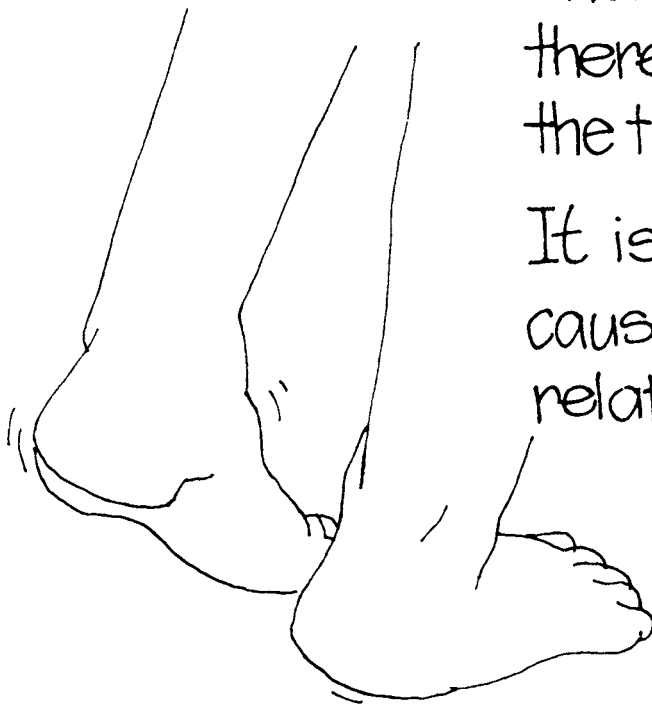
You need not be looking for words
or a sentence in the mind.

JUST BE AWARE OF THAT IMPULSE
TO DO SOMETHING.

And as you begin to notice how
this cause and effect relationship
is working in the mind and body,
the concept of self dissolves
into a simple and natural unfolding
of the elements.

For example,
In walking, there is an intention
to stop before stopping.
There is an intention to turn
before turning.

The foot by itself does not
make the turning movement.
It turns because of a preceding
volition.



There is no one
there, no one "doing"
the turning.

It is an impersonal
cause and effect
relationship.

But, if in starting to turn we are unmindful
of how it is that the process is happening,
it becomes easy to identify with the idea
that there's some "one" who is doing it.

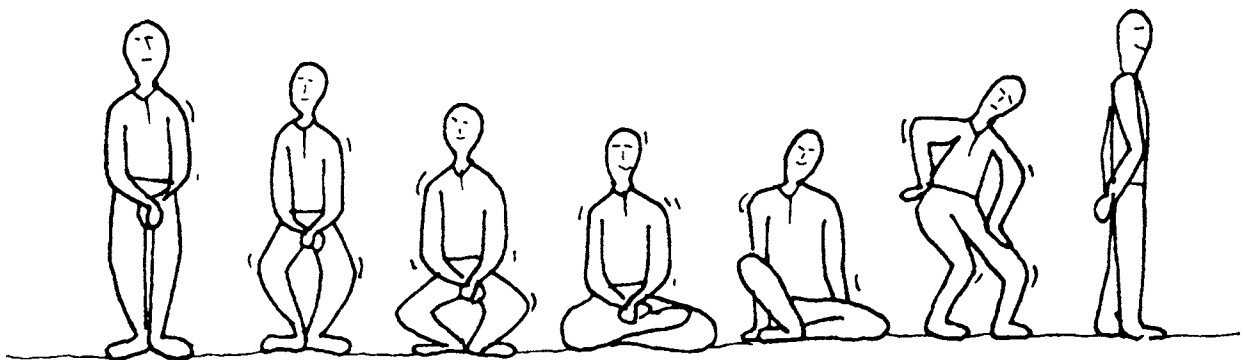
In sitting, intentions will be noticeable before each movement.

If you change position, there will be an intention to do so.

If you swallow, there will be a preceding intention.

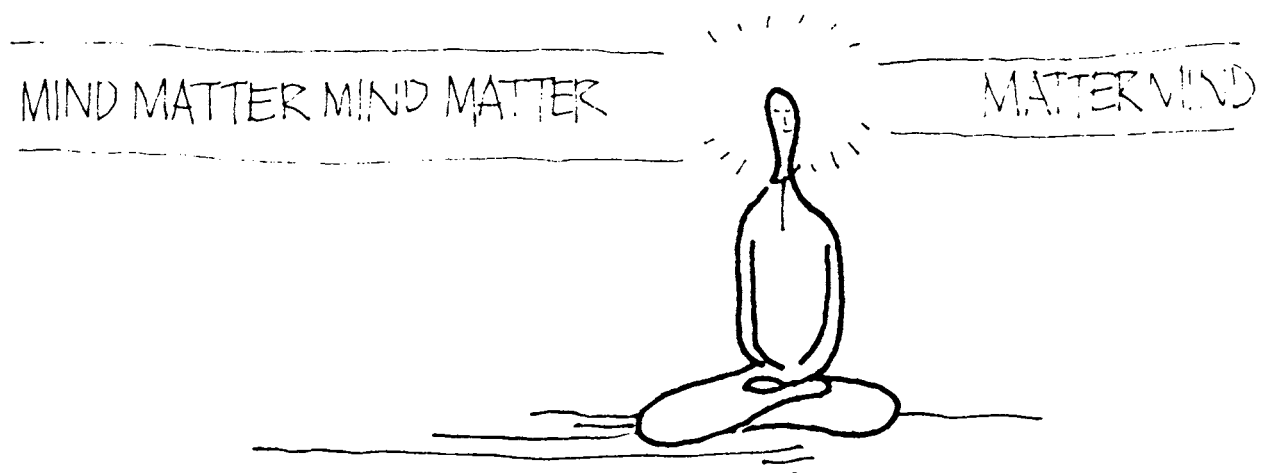
If you open your eyes there will be an intention to open.

ALL OF THESE SHOULD
BE NOTICED.



THERE IS
acting
without an actor,
doing
without a doer,
suffering
without anyone who suffers,

enlightenment
without anyone who gets
enlightened.



CLARITY

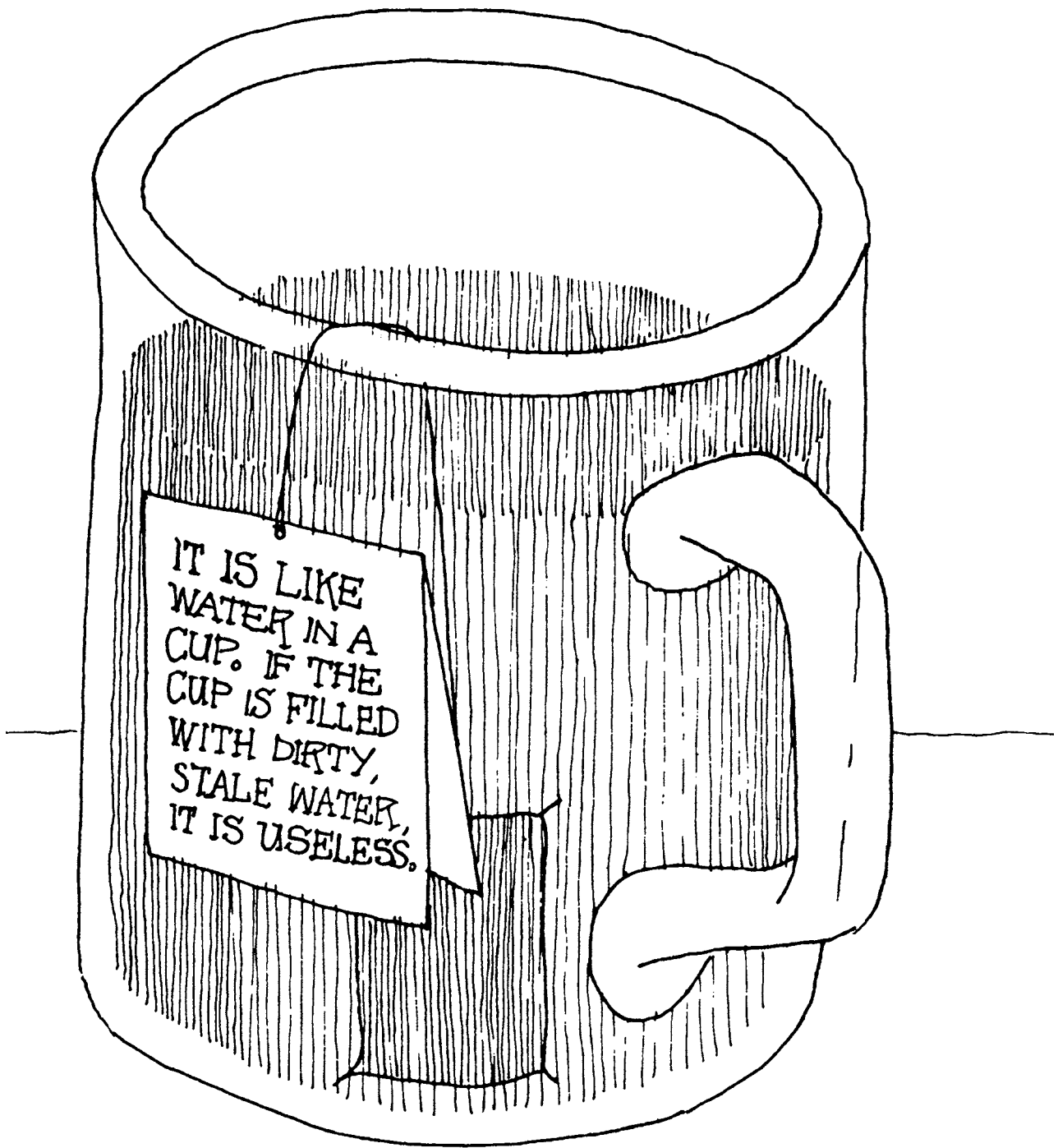
“not being
muddled or confused
about what is
happening.”

It's like a room in dim light: if we turn on a strong light, everything becomes sharp and clear.

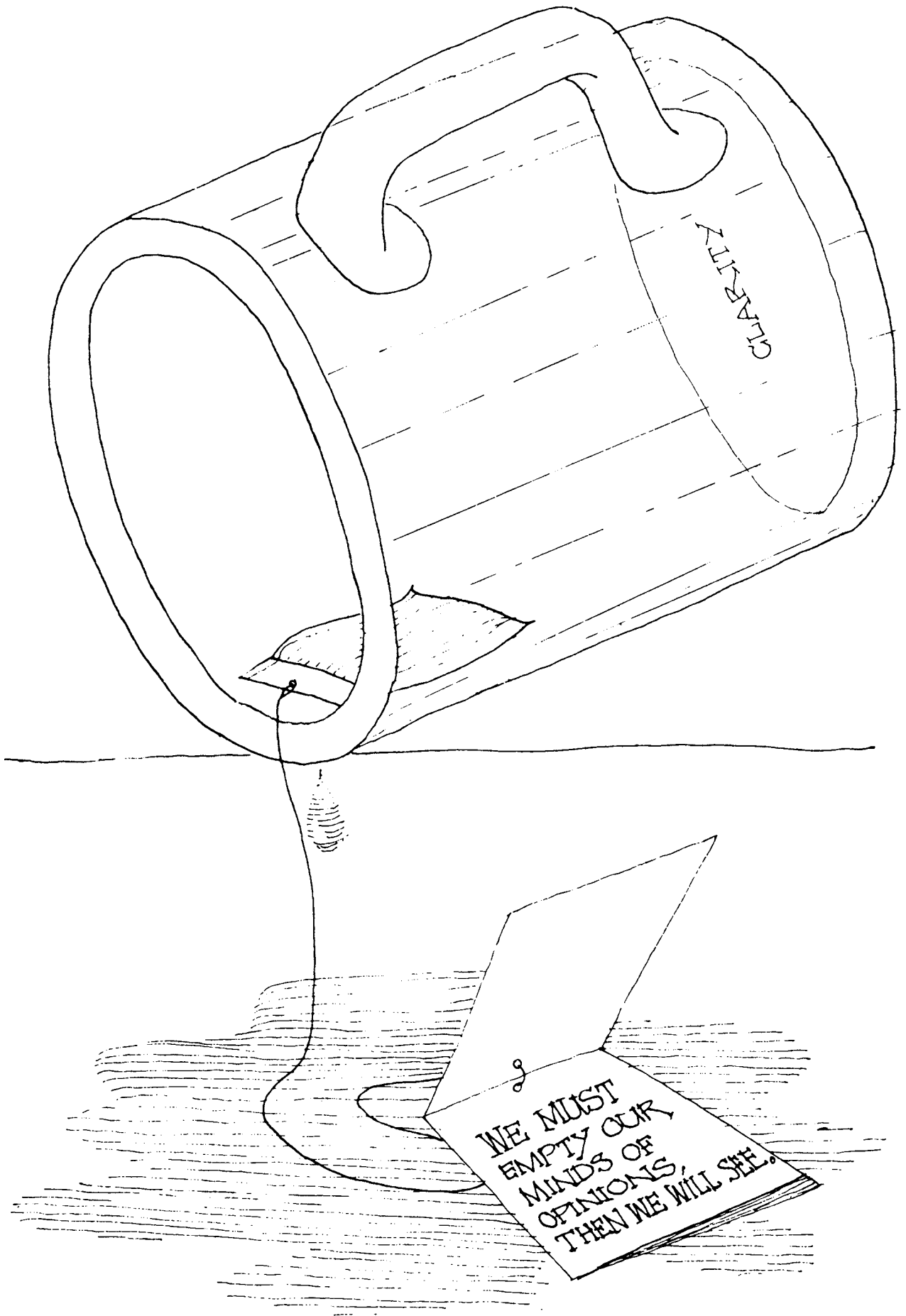
When there's just a little light in the mind, you can't see things so clearly, you get the general outlines, but without that sharp perception.

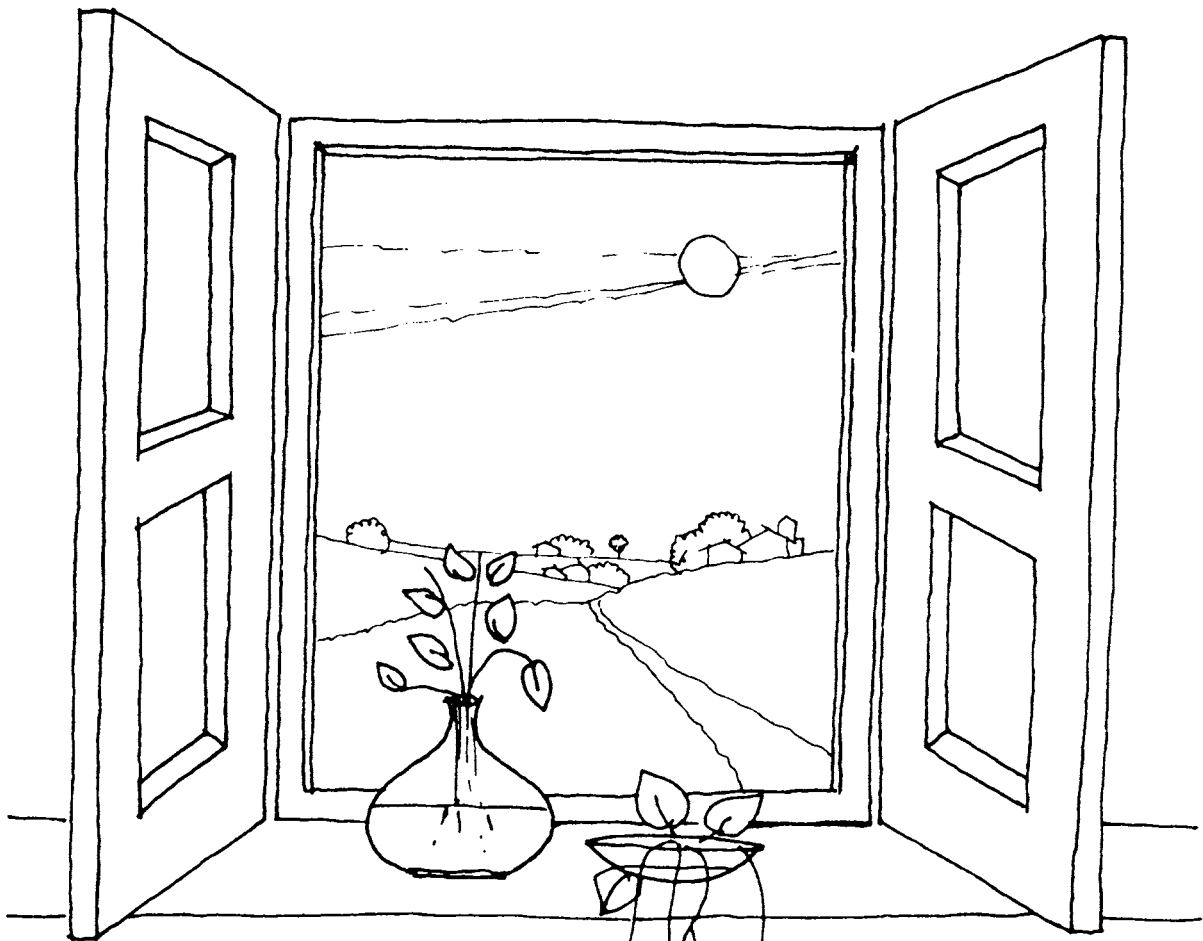
With a lot of light in the mind, everything becomes distinct then the process becomes so clear, so easy to understand.

That light is the
LIGHT OF AWARENESS,
OF MINDFULNESS.

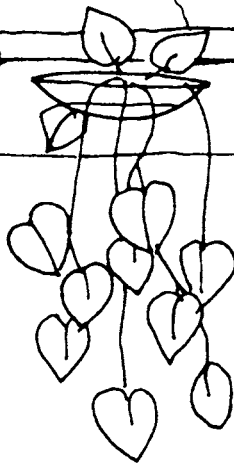


only after the old water is
thrown out can the cup become
useful.





THE SKY

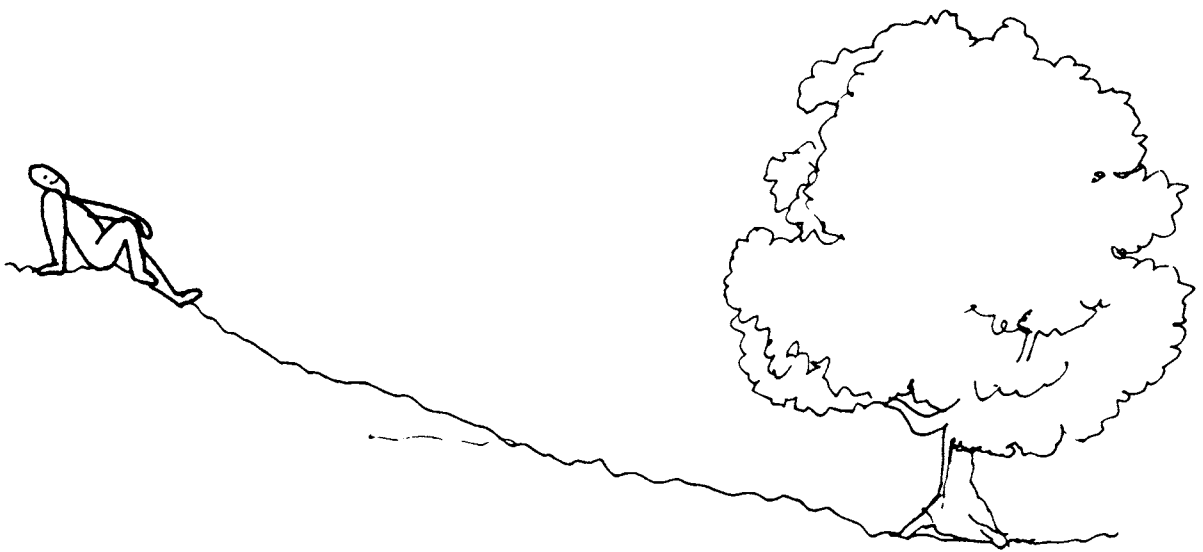


The sky is clear and unaffected
by what is happening.

the clouds come and go,
the winds come and go,
so does the rain and sunlight,
BUT the sky remains clear.

Reckon the mind
as a big clear sky
and let
everything arise and vanish
on its own.

Then the mind will stay
balanced,
relaxed,
observing the flow.





Clarity
with respect to the
MIND ~

emotions,
thoughts and
different mental states.

Not getting caught up
in the whirlings
of the mind,
staying clear and balanced
in their flow.



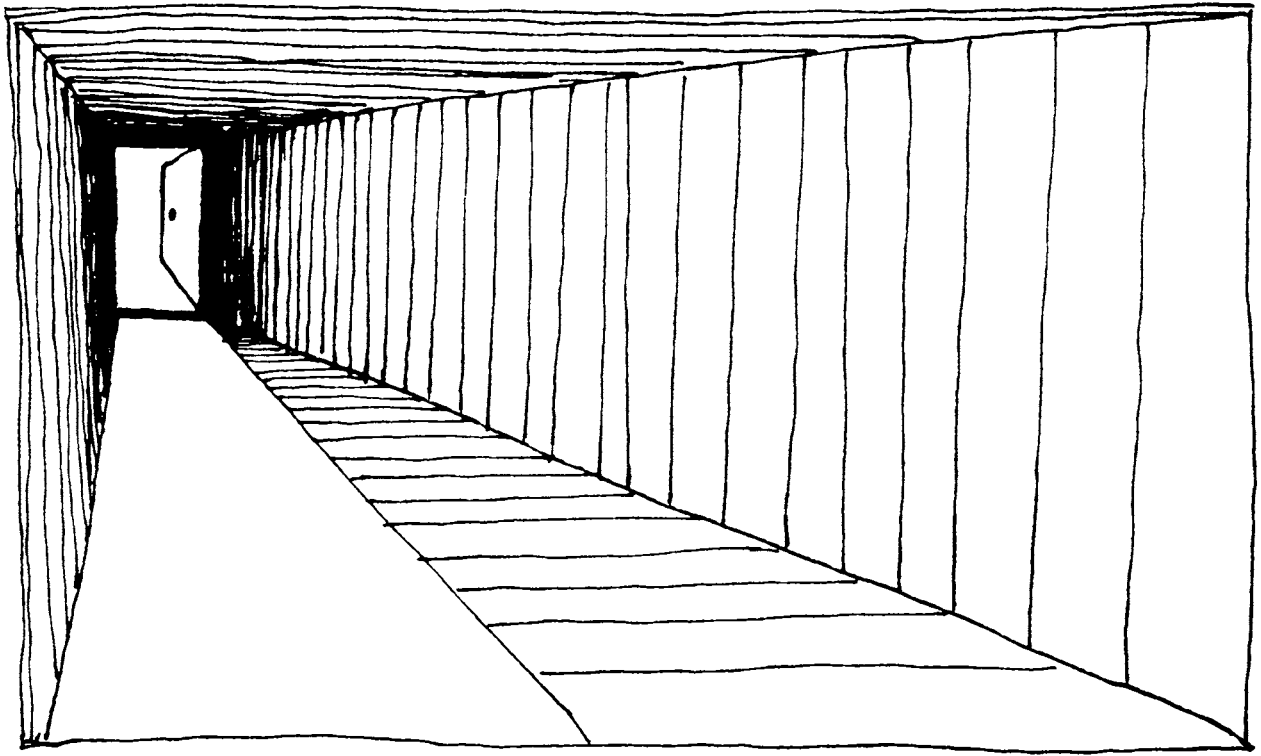
Clarity
with respect to the
BODY ~

being aware of postures,
the interplay of the physical
elements,
becoming sensitive to
just how much food
and sleep is actually needed.

Bringing all the different
kinds of bodily energies
into balance.

When
the mind is clear
it
experiences
the ceaseless change
on a
microscopic level :

INSTANT TO INSTANT
we are
being
born and dying .



NEVERTHELESS

we have to become aware
of the clarity itself
so as not to cling to it,
not to identify with it.

Clarity is only part of
the process.



HINDRANCES

Often there is a tendency to condemn the hindrances when they arise. The condemning mind is itself the factor of aversion.

Every act of condemning the hindrances strengthens the enemy. This is not the way.

No judging , no evaluating.

Hindrances come, simply observe them. Mindfulness makes them all inoperative .

They may continue to arise, but they do not disturb the mind because we do not react to them.

All
the hindrances
are impermanent mental factors.
They arise and they pass away,
like clouds in the sky

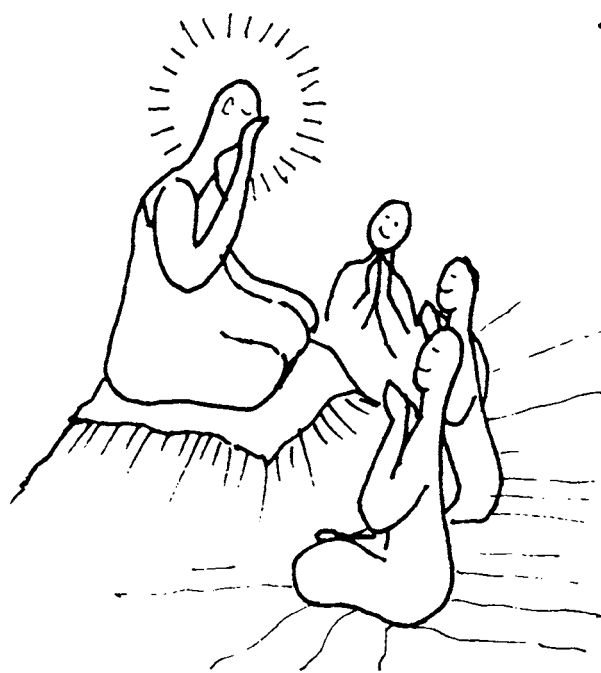


If we are mindful
of them when they arise
and don't

react or identify
with them,

they pass through the mind,
without creating any
disturbance.

THE BUDDHA'S
ENLIGHTENMENT SOLVED
HIS PROBLEM, IT DID NOT
SOLVE OURS, EXCEPT TO
POINT OUT THE WAY.

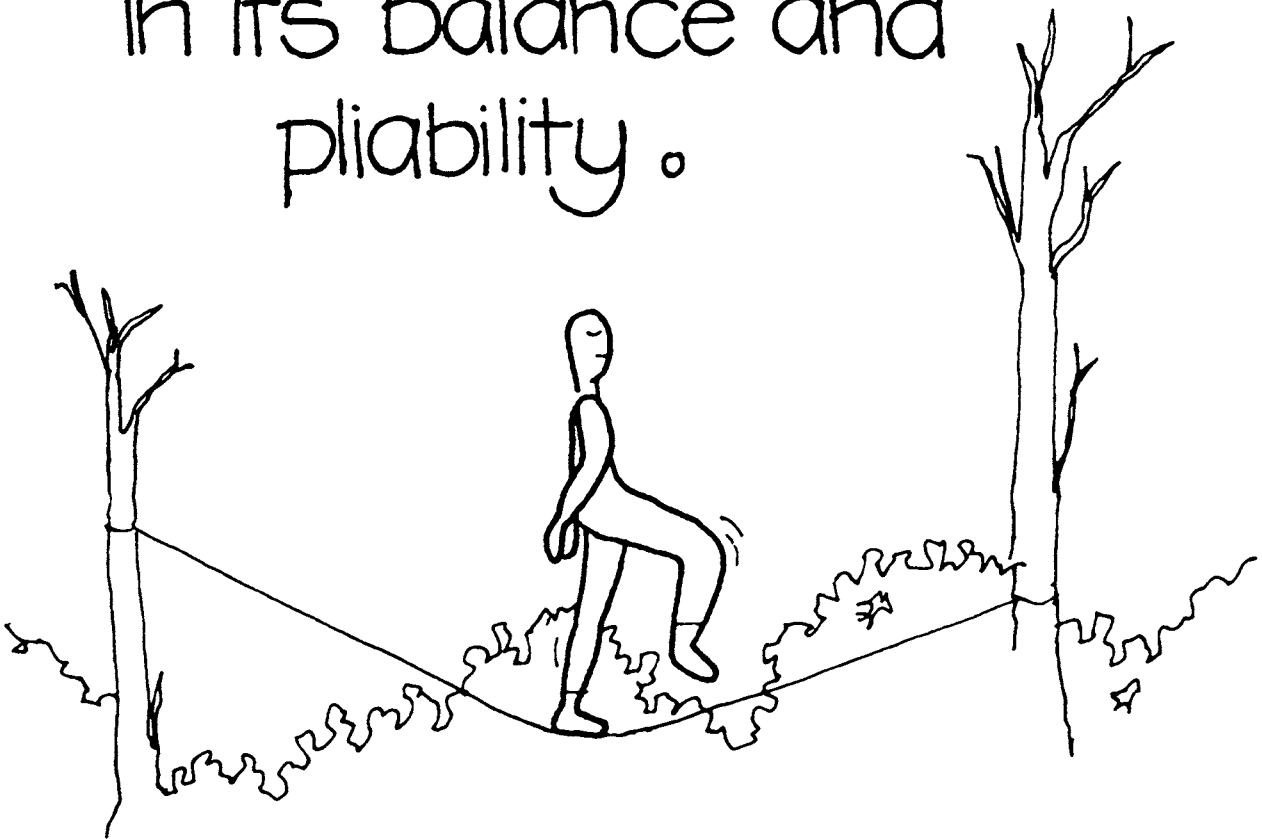


there is no
magic formula
which will
release us
from
suffering.

Each of us has to purify our
own mind, for it is the
ATTACHMENT IN OUR MIND
that keeps us bound.

Try sustaining
the effort and continuity
of awareness ;

the mind which has
overcome the power
of the hindrances is
unshakable
in its balance and
pliability .



HINDRANCES

... regarding restlessness

There is no "one"
who is restless;
rather it is the working
of a particular
mental factor,
it comes and goes.

If there is a balanced
awareness,
it does not disturb
the mind.

..... regarding anger

Freedom from
ILLWILL
means freedom from anger.

Anger is a burning in the mind,
and when expressed
causes great suffering
to others as well.

It is helpful to be able
to recognize anger and to
LET GO.

Then the mind becomes
light and easy,
expressing its natural
lovingkindness.

One of the factors
of enlightenment
is

INVESTIGATION OF THE
DHAMMA ~

an investigative quality of the
mind
which examines,
which explores
just how the elements
of
mind and body
work.

INVESTIGATION OF THE DHAMMA

is the quality of mind
that is investigating,
probing,
analyzing
the mind-body process,
not with thoughts,
not on the conceptual level
but
with a silent and peaceful
MIND.



Distinguishing

INTUITION &
INSIGHT FROM IMAGINATION

Intuition come out of the silent mind ; imagination is conceptual .

There is a vast difference .

That's why the development of insight does not come from thinking about things , it comes from the development of a silence of mind in which a clear vision , a clear seeing , can happen .

The whole progress of insight , the whole development of understanding comes at times when the mind is quiet , then a sudden , "aha , that's how things are!"

INVESTIGATE

not with words,
not with thoughts,
not with concepts
but rather
try getting a feel,
a sense
of the process of
consciousness
happening together with the
object.

This experience brings freedom
from identification
with the observer.

"There seems to be a distinction between awareness and absorption in something. I can be engrossed in music, without being mindful; very much in the moment, but not being aware of being in the moment."

That's the difference between concentration and mindfulness.

You can be very one-pointed on the music yet not very mindful, although there will be some mindfulness there. What is predominant is the one-pointedness factor, the mind not wavering.

Add to that a sharp mindfulness and there you have the entire practice.



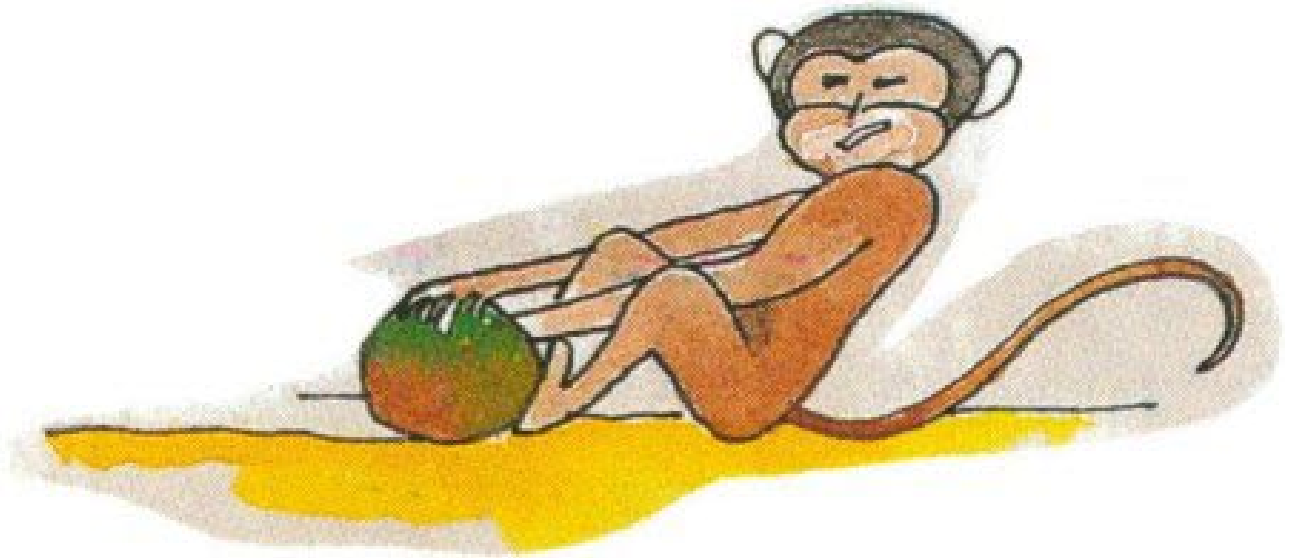
Keep your eyes fixed
on the
Path to the Top,
but don't
forget to look right in front
of you.

The last step depends
upon the first.

Watch your footing.

Be sure of the next step,
but don't let that
distract you from the

HIGHEST GOAL .



There is a kind of monkey trap used in Asia. A coconut is hollowed out and attached by a rope to a tree or stake in the ground. At the bottom of the coconut a small slit is made and some sweet food is placed inside. The hole on the bottom of the coconut is just big enough for the monkey to slide in his open hand, but does not allow for a closed fist to pass out. The monkey smells the sweets, reaches in with his hand to grasp the food and is then unable to withdraw it.

The clenched fist won't pass through the opening. When the hunters come, the monkey becomes frantic but cannot get away. There is no one keeping that monkey captive, except the force of its own attachment. All that it has to do is to open the hand. But so strong is the force of greed in the mind that it is a rare monkey which can let go.

It is the desires and clinging in our minds which keep us trapped. All we need to do is to open our hands, let go of our selves, our attachment, and be free.

~ JOSEPH GOLDSTEIN