**Space of Consciousness Meditation: Chidakasha Dharana**

**Introduction**

Chidakasha is a Sanskrit term meaning ‘space of consciousness’ or ’inner space.’ In yoga philosophy, it is the link between the conscious, subconscious and super-conscious, and is located behind the forehead and the ajna or 3rd eye chakra. Chidakasha is where the activities of consciousness — both gross and subtle — take place.

The term comes from the Sanskrit roots, *chit*, meaning “consciousness,” and *akasha*, meaning “space,” “ether” or “field.” Chidakasha meditation, or *dharana,* is concentration on this inner space of consciousness.

So, in this practice where we are concentrating on the space of consciousness, where it is in essence a type of visualisation technique. We are going to work very gently through this meditation, feel free to stop off at any point along the way, there will be options to stay where you are, or move on if you wish. Throughout this meditation we concentrate on a viewing screen through which manifestations of the subconscious mind may appear.

**Settling**

Sitting in your comfortable meditation position, feel free to use blocks or a chair, or sit with your back to a wall. Ensure that you are warm enough, maybe use a blanket if you need to. Make any adjustments you need to so that you are completely comfortable, spine long, shoulders relaxed, hands in any position that you find comfortable, gently resting them on your knees or thighs. Closing your eyes or lowering your gaze at the moment if you prefer.

**Body and breath awareness**

Allow your mind to take in the environment. Listening for sounds, noticing the temperature of the room, any sensations on your skin. Be aware of your body sitting on the floor. Be aware of the contact your body is making with the floor. The parts of your body that are in direct contact with the floor, and the parts that seem to lightly skim the floor. And now allow your attention to travel up through your body, taking in the whole of your body. Feel a lifting sensation floating up through your spine and passing out through the crown of your head. Be aware of the whole of your body from the crown of your head, down the spine, through to your sitting bones, legs and to the soles of your feet. Taking in every part of your body, then beginning to focus on the body as a whole, the whole body sitting with a steadiness, sitting still.

Whilst keeping an awareness of the whole body, gently introduce the awareness of your breath. Awareness of the physical body, awareness of the breath. Allow the breath to be effortless. Awareness of the physical body and the effortless breath. Don’t try to control the breath, simply allow it to happen, natural and effortless. Awareness of the physical body, looking within at the effortless process of breathing, of your breath, it’s ever-changing presence. Awareness of the physical body and awareness of the breath.

**Chidakasha**

Now begin to turn your attention to the space in front of your closed eyes, the space we call ‘Chidakasha’. Imagine before you a transparent screen through which you can see infinite space. A space that extends as far as the eyes can see. Concentrate on this dark space and become aware of anything that manifests within it, whatever you see is the manifesting state of your mind. You may begin to see colours, maybe patterns, rest your mind in this space. If thoughts occur let them come and go, but continue with your awareness of this space and any manifestations that may emerge, do not become involved, practice detached awareness.

If it feels ok to do so, take the transparent screen, or chidakasha from the space in front of your eyes to the front of the forehead, the region of the third eye, the ajna chakra, ensure that you do not feel any strain to move your awareness. If this feels difficult or uncomfortable, keep your chidakasha at the space in front of the eyes. Keep developing your awareness of your chidakasha, the infinite space that extends as far as you can see, as low and as high, as wide as you can see. Keep your awareness of this space, but don’t become involved, observe it as if you were watching a film, watching the projections of your subconscious. If you see patterns or colours, this is simply the way your mind is manifesting.

Rest your mind, allowing a gentle awareness of your space of consciousness. Remain where you are comfortable and watch the play of chidakasha, observing the colours, they may change from moment to moment, they may be distinct, they may be unclear, just be aware of them, resting your mind as you simply watch this space. If you can read the colours, mentally name the colours as they pass by. If you are unable to read them, name them as “unknown”. Sometimes the colours are so complex that is not possible to understand them, but whether you understand them or not, you can be aware of the colours. Try to maintain an unbroken and unceasing flow of awareness of your chidakasha.

Now allow awareness to expand a little so the space of chidakasha becomes a space that permeates every atom of your physical and mental being. A space that is everywhere, an all-encompassing space, the totality of your formless existence, the space in which your body exists. Chidakasha is not in the body, rather the body is in chidakasha.

If you notice any object or shade of light emerging within your chidakasha, acknowledge it whist keeping your awareness with the whole chidakasha.

You may want to now return your awareness to the eyebrow centre, if not remain where you feel at ease. If your attention has moved to the ajna chakra, the eyebrow centre, notice if you can become aware of a cave, a circular cave, a circular opening within. Inside this cave there is only darkness, nothing can be seen, nothing can be understood. This is the deeper aspect of chidakasha, the sushumna nadi, extending downwards through the chakras.

In a moment, whilst keeping the awareness of chidakasha, we are going to chant OM seven times. If you feel comfortable to chant out loud then do so, if not, repeat the mantra OM internally. Remember, keep your awareness of chidakasha with you, all around you, within you, your body as a form of awareness and within awareness. And now we will chant OM seven times, AUM, AUM, AUM, AUM, AUM, AUM, AUM.

Gently, begin to free your attention from chidakasha, gradually take your mind outside. Become aware of your physical body, your body sitting in the room. Become aware of any sensations within your body, become aware of your breath, feel your body responding to your breath….. Carefully lower your chin down towards your chest, gently blink your eyes open. When you feel ready return your gaze forwards. Taking your fingertips to the floor beside you, inhale stretching up through your fingertips, exhale bring your hands to your heart centre.