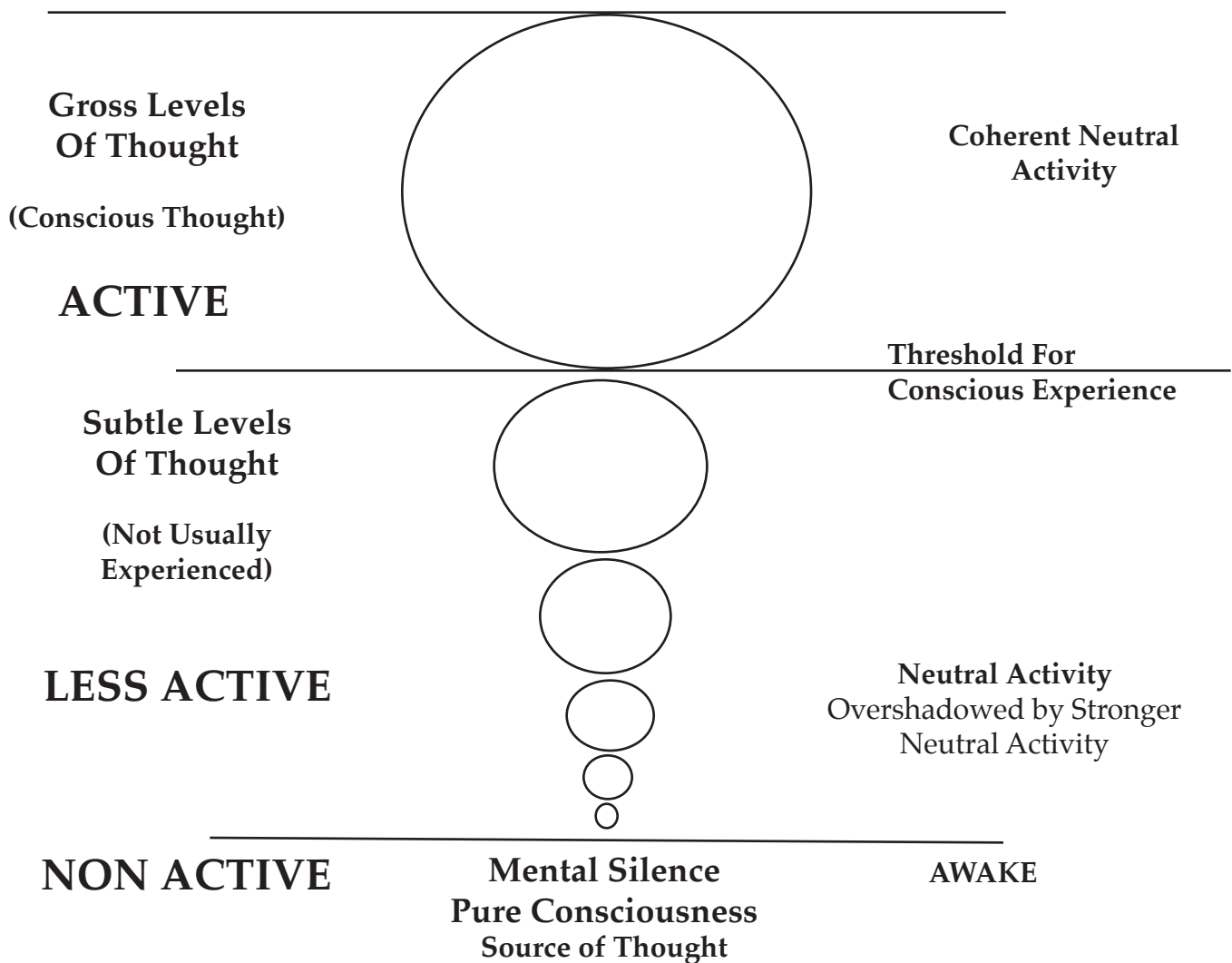


The Nature of the Mind



The Rising of a Thought in the Mind

TSM Bubble diagram * Process of Meditation

Source of Thought

A person needs only one ability in order to learn this technique—the ability to think a thought.

As the body becomes deeply relaxed, the mind transcends all mental activity to experience the simplest form of awareness—Transcendental Consciousness—the source of thought.

During Transcendental Stress Management the individual's awareness settles down and experiences a unique state of restful alertness. As the body becomes deeply relaxed, the mind transcends all mental activity.

Every thought starts from the deepest level of the mind as the faintest impulse and as it rises towards the surface it begins to gain structure. The structure of a thought determines its meaning and the meaning distinguishes one thought from another. At the moment of their inception all thoughts are qualityless and indistinguishable one from another, but as they rise towards consciousness they each become more specific and more differentiated from other possible thoughts until, on arriving at the gross conscious levels of everyday thinking, each thought is a unique, clearly defined, experience. *- continued*

Bubble Diagram



If we could somehow reverse time and trace a particular mental experience back through progressively earlier stages in its development we would encounter fainter, vaguer, softer levels of mental activity. Eventually, when we arrived at the point in time when the thought was only on the point of being generated, we would reach a state of zero mental activity, a state of what might be called non-vibrating consciousness.

This state of mental stillness can be thought of in terms of pure consciousness or the true self. In terms of the bubble analogy it is the bed of the pond from which the thought bubbles begin their journey upwards. The yogis of this tradition talk of it as the source of thought and a field of pure creative intelligence.

Every mental activity is, by virtue of its being an activity, a change of some kind. In this sense, change can be seen as a manifestation of the creative principle in nature or in us. 'Creativity' signifies not just inspired or original change but any change.

All thoughts also have a meaning of some kind; they are concerned or connected with some thing. This directedness of thinking can be seen as the expression of 'intelligence' - that which gives order and direction to change.

The ancients define this as the energy, creativity and intelligence in every thought and at every level of thought. Therefore, it has been said, the source of thought from which all thoughts arise must be a field of pure creativity, energy and intelligence.

Some might find this a bewildering concept. Let us just say the source of thought is a field of potential change and potential order. It is not necessary to fully grasp or accept this point to be able to learn to meditate correctly. The process of TSM is easy to learn and practice.

It is important that we make clear the distinction between the 'source of thought' and the 'cause of a thought'. By the source of thought the ancient rishis denote the field from which all thinking springs, every thought we ever have starts from deep within the mind as the faintest mental impulse and grows until it reaches consciousness. This is true of all thoughts whatever their meaning. It is the fundamental mechanism of all mental activity and is happening continuously from birth to death. What causes a thought to have a particular meaning is, however, a different process. We all know how one thought can spark off another and how some outside event will set us thinking about something else. When we ask what causes a certain thought we usually mean what previous ideas or incidents have given rise to this particular idea? We could say that the source relates to the medium in which mental activity is structured, whereas the cause determines the specific form this structure takes on.

In meditation, the closer one approaches the source of thought, the more relaxed the body becomes. This increased comfort to the body is, by nature, charming. The subtler levels of thought are found to be of a more pleasing nature in the right direction where the attention is drawn spontaneously, like water moving down a slope. As layer after layer is progressively peeled away the brilliance of the source increases and the attention is led on by the increasing charm to be found at every step, till finally it passes beyond even the finest level of thinking and arrives at the state of inner silence. The whole process is self-reinforcing; no control or effort is needed, it simply happens of its own accord. All we need to do is to learn to take the correct angle to dive within, and diving will be automatic due to the natural tendency of the mind to move to a field of greater happiness.

This is a technique whereby anyone can enjoy and explore their own inner potential on their own.