

A hand holding a feather against a sunset background. The feather is the central focus, with its quill pointing upwards. The background is a soft, blurred gradient of orange and blue, suggesting a sunset or sunrise over a body of water. The text is overlaid on the image.

Stories from Freedom Mountain

#7

PADDY LEARNS TO MEDITATE

BY MICHAEL TALBOT-KELLY

Begin your journey toward unlocking your mind, body and soul
in this introduction to the three different meditative practices.

7 PADDY LEARNS TO MEDITATE

"There are thousands of ways to kneel and kiss the ground" Rumi

Paddy really wanted to meditate. He was dying for it. He'd heard his pals talking about it at Starbuck's the other morning. One of the wives had taken it up and didn't it cause a whole lot of ballyhoo amongst the fellas. "She's doing sometiin' called Breath of Fire or some darn thing or other. She sounds like the old streetcar used to go down Main St. And she 's yelling oom! oom! I'll tell you, I had to close the windows and go out for a long walk!" Jimmy was on a roll and he had everyone doing spit takes in their venti lattes. Paddy listened and sure, he had a smile on his face, not wanting to be the odd man out. ..but something about this "Meditating" got him wondering. "How's it make her feel Jimmy? What she doing it for?"

"Oh Lord, she thinks she's too tense - thinks I make her nervous - she wants to 'go inside' she says. Yer already inside woman, I told her, but she insists." says Jimmy and he shakes his head and looks around the table for some backup.

"But how does it make her feel Jimmy - that's my question." Paddy tried again.

"I don't know Paddy - she says it makes her feel good...more connected like. I guess she's not hurting anyone."

"More connected", thinks Paddy. "that sounds really good to me."

Later that day, if you looked in Paddy's window, you'd see him sitting at his computer, Googling to beat the band. He read everything he could about meditation ...all the different kinds. He saw photos of people sitting on cushions and holding their hands in interesting positions. But they all had one thing in common. They looked peaceful. They looked happy. He scribbled down an address on a piece of paper, shoved it in his pocket and off he went to learn to meditate.

It took him a while to get used to sitting so still. Paddy, truth be told, is a jiggy kind of guy - leg always jumping up and down, knuckles cracking , eyes darting back and forth. Now here he is with his legs tucked in , his eyes closed and his hands resting in his lap. Quite a picture! And he's breathing...long deep breaths. At first, he could hardly wait for the bell to ring, so he could stretch his legs and jump up and over to the tea pot for some refreshment and chatter. But gradually he found he could sit longer and longer and...wow...when the bell went off, it felt like no time at all had passed.

And this "connection' thing...that is the biggest mystery for Paddy. He does feel connected...he's just not sure to what. "Maybe it doesn't matter", says the meditation teacher. "Just enjoy the experience and it will take you where your soul needs you to go." "Holy jumpin'" thinks Paddy, although he smiles and thanks the teacher. " I wonder where my soul wants me to go?"

Paddy keeps going - every Wednesday night - and sure enough, he feels better and better. His jumpy legs have calmed down and when he talks with his pals, he looks them in the eye and really hears them. It sounds funny, but he thinks he can hear what they are really saying, even when they're just cracking jokes or bragging about some foolish thing or other. He hears their loneliness or their fear. This is all new to Paddy and sometimes it makes him feel strange, but he also notices that he trusts himself more. "I guess that's my big old third eye opening up", thinks Paddy. "Who'd have thought!"

After a few years of weekly meditation classes, Paddy finds himself meditating at home. It seems so simple...just wake up and sit for a while before he starts his day. He finds he gets less pissed off at the guys at work when he does this. And sitting for a few minutes before he goes to bed makes him sleep so much better. He has great dreams...each one would make a best-selling movie he thinks. And no more nightmares.

Well you might think things couldn't get any better for Paddy. He's got a grand life. He thinks so too. But then something else starts to happen. And the amazing thing is...it happens all by itself. Paddy doesn't have to stir up one of his grand schemes. He doesn't have to knit his brow and get all worked up trying to make a plan. It just happens. One by one, his friends start dropping over to the house ..just to chat...just to chill. Soon groups of them are coming and they're bringing other friends. What for you might ask? They just like being there. They share a pot of tea or help in the garden, which is now flourishing. They just sit around and tell stories. Paddy's house has become a gathering place, a place where real connection happens...with no effort...it's just there in the walls, in the teapot, in the garden. I guess you might say it's where Paddy's soul wanted him to go.

TEACHINGS/MORALS OF THE STORY

When an energy attracts you, follow through with it, even when it takes you out of your comfort zone. It is usually a message from your soul.

Once you start a practice, notice what differences it has made in your life. Take note of where you want to spend your time, what people you want around you. You are building on your store of energy.

Realize that meditation can take many forms...you don't have to be sitting on a cushion, or in an ashram, or in a church or temple. You become meditation and so it goes with you wherever you go.

The energy you build through going inside expands to fill the space and people around you...your home becomes a container, your friends are touched by it and consciously or unconsciously feel an elevation.

2. What actions do you need to step into today in order to live into the next level of practice?

3. The Dalai Lama suggests that we “Do, as if”. What if you decided to jump into the 3rd level of meditation, what would your life look like tomorrow morning? What would be different? What would you notice first? What would be your first thought? What would your partner notice? How would you respond in all your relationships? At work?
