

INTRODUCING SENIORS TO
(I) VARIETIES OF MEDITATION
(II) MEDITATION&MUSIC
A Report from Don Evans

Part II: Access for Seniors to
Similar Human States through
Both Meditation and Music

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How the Exploration Began

Long before I ever learned to meditate, music had stirred me deeply. Now, in my eighties, meditation stirs me deeply and in similar bodily ways. How can they both do something similar? I decided in the summer of 2009 to explore this experientially.

My exploration involved three steps each week:

(i) First, I would meditate several days before a meditation session with my fellow seniors, seeking guidance as to whether it should include music. If it should, what meditation or meditative theme would be most appropriate for the group?

(ii) Second, by myself in my room, I would try out various excerpts of classical music, choosing a few that seemed to fit best with the meditation or meditative theme. (Occasionally I would begin with some music that moved me into a particular bodily-emotional-spiritual state and then explore what meditation also did this.)

(iii) Third, I would bring the particular meditation and the particular music to a session with my fellow seniors for them to experience for themselves.

In my early infancy I was deeply traumatized. This damaged my childhood, during which I lived almost exclusively in my own private intellectual world. Such a child today would probably have been diagnosed as “autistic”. At age 13, however,

a new piano teacher, Margaret Grant, came into my life. During the next six years with her I was transformed. What she brought to me would today be called “music therapy”. As I played music for her and with her I learned how to connect with my bodily emotions and with people who loved music or who played music. Music could “sneak” past my bodily defences against feeling my emotions, against letting people in and against becoming aware of spiritual energies as vibrations. Sometimes a piece of music such as Franck’s First Symphony would even “crash” through these defences.

Decades later I began to meditate. I found that if I meditated in ways involving bodily awareness, similar gentle or dramatic breakthroughs into connection would occur. In recent years the breakthroughs have become even more profound.

My 80th birthday was the occasion for me to write a “mini-memoir” in which I looked back over my eight decades, trying to make sense of my life by looking for coherent patterns and trends. (See my webpage: <http://individual.utoronto.ca/devans>.) The central theme was that I had become less and less of a “loner” as I connected in various ways with myself and thereby could connect with others. In my teens I connected mainly through music.

In my seventh decade meditation had been central. By bringing music and meditation together 2009 I could continue my memoirs, making sense of my life in a new way! By offering this to others I could connect with them in a way that also enriches their lives!

It now seems obvious to me that I would not have launched into the project as a purely-private exploration by myself in my room. Offering it to my fellow seniors was crucial, for it was a way to connecting with others in my new community. Another conscious consideration was that when I realized how mature the

group was, this further encouraged me to bring the new kind of meditating to them. As I mentioned before, they were “ripe” for very advanced meditations, especially the meditation that involves letting go and letting be. Indeed, after leading one such meditation with them I told them that what happened for me personally was deeper than with any previous group! Later on, when we were listening to music together, their response intensified my own.

When I began the project in September,2009 I had a hunch that both meditation and music can provide access to similar bodily-emotional-spiritual states. It took me over a year, however, to identify and distinguish these states in a clear way. Here are some examples of states that I will be considering in my report:

- (i) inner harmony (ii) serene acceptance**
- (iii) feeling intensely alive (iv) longing love**
- (v) childlike playfulness (vi) “heart expansion”**

Appreciating a piece of Western classical music by responding bodily/emotionally/spiritually requires no knowledge of its structure, its place within the Western musical tradition, the distinctive gifts of the composer and the musicians, etc. Moreover, one need not have previously listened to a lot of such music. This approach opened up meditation&music to seniors in the meditation group whose lives had not previously included much classical music in their lives.

It was obvious to me that not all classical music is appropriate for “gut-response” listening. Some of it, especially during the last 100 years, is composed in such a cerebral, expert, musically-knowledgable way that a listener cannot appreciate it without having had a comparable background in musical education. Most classical music, however, though open to such musically-knowledgable appreciation, has a dimension that is also directly accessible in a bodily-emotionally-spiritual way. In the

project I've tried to select excerpts of music that are very accessible in this way. Often I've drawn on 19th-century Romantic composers whose central intention was to create such music, but I've also drawn from many composers from other centuries.

As an amateur musician I've become somewhat knowledgeable in Western classical music, but since my teens what has always mattered most has been enjoying the transformation that occurs while I'm listening to it. Indeed, I am convinced that what is true for me is true for all human beings, though in varying degrees. The bodily-emotional-spiritual dimension of music is what makes some music accessible in similar ways to all human beings, in spite of immense differences in language and culture and religion and musical education.

For the seniors, however, my selections were almost all from Western classical music. This was partly because my own musical experience from other cultures is limited. But my main concern was that I didn't want the music to seem too strange to the group. For another group, a broader range might work well.

Discovering what kind of meditation resonates with what kind of music

A quotation from my favourite pianist, Helene Grimaud

A few years ago I read her autobiography, "Wild Harmonies: A Life of Music and Wolves". On October 6, 2010, I happened to re-read this passage concerning what happened at age 7 when she began playing the piano. It may have influenced me as I began the meditation&music project:

“Playing seemed perfectly natural to me, an extension of myself...The tactile pleasure of playing, of seeking inside myself the emotion that I never, ever, in any way had been able to express or bring to a peak, this delicious pleasure completely satisfied me. I experienced the simultaneous pleasure of conveying my feelings and of receiving an echo of hem through the magic of those black and white keys, of breathing in the presence of something perfect. I had the physical feeling of being a part of the music.” (page 46, Penguin Riverhead ISBN: 978-1-59448-266-3)

What is the most appropriate kind of meditation to precede listening to music? The first answer to this question that came to me was, “Breathing into my body”. In this basic meditation (#2) I become aware of my breathing as a physical process involving an awareness of changes in my rib-cage and my abdomen and an awareness of breath/air coming into my body through my mouth and/or my nostrils.

When the meditation is not a preparation for music, it usually continues in combination with a mantra to welcome a spiritual energy (e.g. “healing”) or a spiritual presence (e.g. “Jesus” or “Krishna”). One breathes into one’s body the spiritual reality named by the mantra.

When “Breathing into my body” precedes music, no mantra need be involved. One simply shifts from breathing in air to breathing in the sound-vibrations of the music as it begins. This breathing-in is a fundamental way of becoming receptive to the music, welcoming it into one’s body. Indeed, it can be used before listening to any music so as to resonate more in a bodily-emotional-spiritual way.

As my exploration went on, however, I did not limit the preparatory meditation to “Breathing into my body”. I chose other meditations that we had previously learned, meditations distinctively appropriate to the particular kind of music. For

example, as a preparation for listening to music expressing a quiet, contented state, “Being at Home in the World”, I chose a meditation on self-love that also facilitates such a state. (See Combination #2, later on.)

In preparing for another session I actually began with the “Inner Mystery” meditation and then asked myself, “Do I know any musical excerpts that were both composed and played from a similar ‘Inner Mystery’ state?” (Later on, see Combination #12.)

In some instances I provided a prior visualization concerning what the music might convey, drawing on images that the music had evoked in me or might evoke in them.

Sometimes I passed along some meditative reflections that the music had stirred in me.

Where the music called for it, I sometimes presented a new version of a familiar meditation, or even a meditation that was new to the group.

Later on we sometimes began the session with a piece of music that helped us to move into a particular meditation that would, in turn, enhance our reception of some further music.

Another modification was that sometimes, before any meditation or music, I would indicate the kind of bodily-emotional-spiritual state that would be our theme.

All these variations will be evident in my reports concerning particular combinations of meditation and music. I do not always follow the apparently-random sequence in which the sessions actually took place week by week. Rather I present a “rational” step-by-step sequence that a potential leader may find easier to

follow. Also, many sessions have been revised considerably as I reflect in October, 2010 concerning what I did.

(If in the future another leader meditates each week concerning what to offer the group next, his/her sequence of sessions will probably also be scattered and open to later revision.)

Particular Combinations of Meditation and Music

Combo #1: Breathing-in Happy Music

We begin with the most basic meditation in preparing to listen to music: focusing our attention on our breathing as a physical process and then breathing-in the music (see above.) We will listen to seven musical excerpts (see below). I could have chosen other music, but we all like music that moves us into a happy state. There are many kinds of happiness, of course, and each piece evokes a somewhat different kind. Indeed, we will later see that each piece can appropriately be preceded by a meditation that is an addition to the breathing-in meditation or a substitute for it.

Do we meditate before each of the seven pieces or only before the first? Prior bodily meditation, at the very least, helps people to respond with full bodily-emotional-spiritual attention to a piece of music rather than treating it as merely “background mood music”. Often, however, full listening to one piece continues over to the next piece.

Daniil Shtoda sings Rimsky Korsakov's “Nimfa” Op.56 No 1 in Russian Songs, EMIClassics 5 74232 2 TRACK 16 ENDS 3.39

Jacquelin du Pre, cellist, plays Maria Theresa von Paradis' "Sicilienne" in a cd entitled "A Lasting Impression" EMI, 1996, 7-24356 59552 1 Disc #2, TRACK 1 ENDS 2.57

Helen Grimaud, pianist, plays Rachmaninoff's arrangement of J.S. Bach's Prelude in E major in her cd entitled "Bach", Deutsche 4777978 TRACK 16 ENDS 3.38

John Eliot Gardiner conducts The Monteverdi Choir in J.S. Bach Cantata "O ewiges Feuer" BWV34, opening chorus. Deutsche 2000 0 28946 35842 9 TRACK 20, FADE AT 4.10

Annie Fischer, pianist, plays Mozart's Piano Concerto No.20 in D minor K466, 2nd movement "Romanze" in Seraphim 5 68529 2 Disc 2 TRACK 2, END ABRUPTLY AT 4.33.

Matthias Goerne, baritone, sings Aria "Endlich, endlich.." from Bach's Cantata BWV56 in Bach Cantatas Decca 466 570-2 TRACK 14, FADE AT 2.44-7

Respighi: "Italiana" in Ancient Airs and Dances I & III, Three Botticelli Pictures, The Birds, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Deutsche 028943 75332 6 TRACK 10 ENDS AT 2.38

Combo #2: Loving Oneself/Schubert Piano (Kempff)
Schubert, Piano Impromptus, #3 in G flat major, D899, pianist Wilhelm Kempff, Deutsche, TRACK#3, 7.01min

Meditations Prior to Listening:

(i) **Imagine a setting** where you are feeling completely "at home" in the world, with some people whom you love and who love you, perhaps by a fire-place. Not a feeling of restless passion, not a "happiness-high". Rather, feeling contented and serene, with no sense of wanting anything more or anything different.

(ii) Meditation on Loving Oneself

Participants had already learned the Advanced Meditation #15 (Loving Oneself). For this session we did not spend a long time on each of the two parts: (a) bringing healing energies or healing presences or both to our ailing bodily parts and (b) bringing affectionate, sensual, appreciative touch to any bodily parts. Instead we moved quickly through both, omitting a great deal.

Eventually my instructions for meditation were something like this:

“Feeling at home in the world involves feeling at home in one’s own body. Place one hand on the top of your thigh and the other on your heart, loving yourself, loving your body and feeling at home in your body. Have affectionate compassion for your body, with all its pains and limitations. Express your affection and appreciation for your body through your hands.”

(iii) Breathing in the Music: As the music begins, breathe it into your body, welcoming it as a host might welcome into his/her home a guest who brings energies that are affectionate, comforting, nurturing, reassuring, and tenderly consoling.

In addition to the Schubert/Kempff piece there are two other musical excerpts that would be appropriate:

Rachmaninoff’s Cello Sonata played by Emmanuel Ax (piano) and Yo-Yo Ma (cello), 3rd movement; in Cello Sonatas by Prokofief and Rachmaninoff, Sony Masterworks Expanded Edition 8 2796-90397 -2. TRACK #6 ENDS AT 6.40

Vaughan Williams, “Serenade to Music” in Chandos Classic cd 10714X, works by Williams & Delius. TRACK 2, FADE AT 4.30

Combo #3: Enlivening Music:
(a) Mahler (b) Sibelius (c) Rachmaninov

Preliminary Reflections:

The meditation and the music in the preceding section was designed to help us feel at home in the world and in our bodies and to love ourselves in a gentle, nurturing way. The ensuing state was a particular kind of happiness: contented, serene, at peace.

The focus in this section is very different. The music helps us to feel more alive, alive not as merely surviving, the opposite of dead, but as feeling lively, full of life, excited to be alive. Such music is especially needed to stir us when we're not letting ourselves feel our emotions.

We'll be listening to three musical excerpts. Each one stirs us in a different way. The first stirs us very subtly and third very vigorously. The second is in between. Overall, we move from an quiet awakening from sleep to an exuberant celebration of life.

(a) Mahler Awakening into Life (a personal response)

The music begins very, very quietly, as if I'm awakening very slowly from a dreamless sleep. At first there are only hints of life and these are some distance away. Gradually there are also, some hints within my body, but overall it's still mostly stillness.

Then some melodies from violin and clarinet and flute resonate delightfully in my body and I begin to feel alive, though in a very quiet way.

Then, several times, the music changes into a loud and boisterous dance into which I'm briefly drawn, the dance of life. But after each brief shaking-up, I'm back in my private world again.

Finally the sparkling, airy aliveness feels somewhat heavy and thick as it is contained within my body: "There is light in the heart of matter".

***Mahler, Symphony No.1, 1st movement, BMG 09026-63312-2,
Disc #2, TRACK 2, FADE GREATLY AT 10.01-10.15***

Meditation prior to listening to Mahler

**The usual bodily-welcoming as we inhale: first air, then music.
Meditation includes a mantra: “Awakening to Life”**

(b) Sibelius Enchants Us Into His Shimmering World

In the 1st movement of his Violin Concerto, Sibelius invites us into the exciting, turbulent world of his musical imagination, which has many moods, but is constant in its fascination with the many diverse ways of being alive. He begins and ends quietly but is very passionate in between.

Meditation prior to listening to Sibelius

**The usual bodily-welcoming as we inhale: 1st air, then music.
Meditation includes a mantra: “Alive”**

***Sibelius, Violin Concerto in D minor, p.47, Gil Shaham, Deutsche
0 28943 75402 6, 2nd movement, TRACK 2, ENDS AT 8.05 SHARP.***

(c) Rachmaninov Celebrated by Helene Grimaud:

When Helene Grimaud plays the last movement of Rachmaninov’s second Piano Sonata, there is no doubt concerning what is expressed: a triumphant celebration of life. It’s wonderful, gloriously happy to be alive, with life-energies vibrating through every cell in one’s body. Sometimes the flow of passion is quiet for a while, but soon it begins to build again and we are again carried along in its exuberant flow.

A word about Rachmaninov: He often was in despair, but through music he could overcome it.

A word about Helen Grimaud: in her build she is slender and willowy, like a pre-teen, but she lived with a pet wolf, and she plays with a ferocious vigour, as if that wolf were inside her!

I should warn you that the music begins with a very loud **bang**, indeed a succession of bangs, but after that let the music pour through you, like the foaming white waters of a mountain river.

Meditation prior to listening to Rachmaninov

The usual bodily-welcoming as we inhale: 1st air, then music.
Meditation includes a mantra: “Alive”

Helene Grimaud, 3rd movement of Rachmaninov, Piano Sonata no.2 in Bflat minor, op.36 in Chopin/Rachmaninov, Deutsche 0 28947 753325 4 TRACK 7, ENDS 5.50

Combo #4: Immersed in Nature/Scriabin piano

Scriabin Piano Concerto, Slow Movement, Demidenko with BBC Symphony Orchestra (Hyperion), TRACK #5, FADE AT 3.44-7

Meditations prior to listening:

(i) Focus the energy of your attention on your breathing as a physical process; that is, as you inhale and exhale notice the changes in your rib-cage and perhaps in your abdomen; also the breath coming and out through your nostrils or your mouth or both. **BE** your breathing.

Now focus mainly on your exhalations, breathing out any thoughts or emotions or bodily tensions as they arise; not allowing these to distract you from focusing on your breathing. Now imagine or remember being within a setting in nature that is quiet, safe and calming. Be open to whatever sensations arise for you. For each person it's different. For you it might involve **water**: a trickling stream or ripples on a lake

Or **light**: of the sun or of the moon

Or **air**, perhaps a breeze that is gentle and refreshing

Or you might feel the earth through your feet, or see various fellow creatures: trees, rocks, flowers, birds or animals

(iii) When the music begins, focus on your inhalations as you receive the music into your body: “breathe the sound in”. Be open to whatever sensations and images arise as you listen.

A postscript concerning the Scriabin excerpt.

When I first heard it I immediately felt that I was immersed in nature. Several other people told me that this was also their experience. The music itself is not “program music” about nature. There is, for example, no series of sounds depicting (i) a gathering storm, (ii) loud claps of thunder and then (iii) a freshening quiet and birds chirping.

Of course some music can tell a story even when the music involves no words and many classical songs use the words of a poem to tell a story. I enjoy listening to such music. In my project of linking music and meditation, however, the main point is the particular bodily-emotional-spiritual state that a particular meditation and a particular piece of music can evoke in us. Some music such as the Scriabin excerpt is very effective in evoking a state that includes connecting with nature. Often music that has an explicit nature-program distracts us from being in that simple state. There are exceptions, however. Here are two examples: Grieg’s “Morning Mood”, which sets forth three stages of a sunrise and Delius’ “On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring”, which includes some cuckoo-sounds but also conveys the gentle excitement of new-life quietly stirring everywhere.

Nature Music evoking a simple human state:

(a) Edvard Grieg, “Morning Mood” from Peer Gynt Suite no.1, op.46, Karajan with Berlin Philharmonic, Deutsche Digital

TRACK 1, ENDS AT 4.11

Meditations prior to listening to Grieg

(i) **Breathing-in** as a physical process (see above).

(ii) **Imagine** a sunrise, at first subtle streaks across the sky, then gloriously expansive, then quietly into a new day. The images may, or may not, occur later when you are listening.

(iii) **Mantra** to breathe in spiritual energy: “**joyful wonder**”. Do this just before the music begins and as it begins.

***(b) Frederick Delius, “On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring”**
works by Delius & Vaughan Williams, Chandos Classics, 0 95115
11742 2 **TRACK 4 ENDS AT 6.07***

Meditations prior to listening to Delius

(i) **Breathing-in** as a physical process (see above). As you inhale let each breath be a **new** breathing bringing **new** life.

(ii) **Imagine** seeing your favourite **flower** for the first time in spring. Remember being in nature as spring begins, breathing in the hidden new life.

Combo #5: Smiling Child/ Mozart Piano – Brendel
*Mozart Piano Concerto 22, last movement, in Mozart the Great
Concertos played by Alfred Brendel, Phillips, 1994, 442-571,
disc #2, **TRACK 2, FADE OUT 3.23-6.***

Meditations prior to listening

(i) **Breathing-in** as a physical process (see above)

(ii) **Facial Smile; Image of a Smile; Mantra: “Childlike”**

As you breathe in, let your own face smile.

Also imagine, visualize or remember a smile as you breathe in.

Let both smiles be childlike, playful, light-hearted, uninhibited, innocent, even a little impish.

Breathe in childlike-energy into your heart and then gradually into your whole body.

Breath out whatever heaviness or seriousness or stress is in the way or the light-hearted energy.

Eventually your whole body can smile.

As the music begins, breathe in the sounds, receive them into your whole body, let our whole body resonate with the sounds, let your whole body “SMILE”.

Other “Childlike” Musical Excerpts

*Same Brendel/Mozart disc as above, but Piano Concerto No.27 in Bflat, KV595, third movement,
disc 2 TRACK 8, FADE VERY QUICKLY AT 7.04*

*Annie Fischer, Mozart Piano Concertos Seraphim 5 68529 2
Concerto No.23 in A major K488, 3rd movement
Disc 2, TRACK #6 FADE VERY QUICKLY AT 3.14*

Some Transitional Comments.

One feature of all five combinations thus far is that the state into which we are brought is happy. What we call “happiness” has many versions that are quite different from each other. Sometimes, as in the Scriabin-piece, happiness is not the most distinctive dimension of the state. What matters is the context for the happiness. In that piece the context was becoming immersed in nature.

Another distinctive context out of which a distinctive happiness arises is falling in love.

Combo #6: Falling in Love with

(a) a person (b) a musical sound or (c) Ultimate Mystery

Introduction:

When we fall in love we feel our hearts opening to give and to receive, and this brings a distinctive kind of happiness, whether what we love is a person, a musical sound or Ultimate Mystery. Our happiness involves excitement, wonder, appreciation, expansiveness and joy. We feel more alive and more fulfilled.

Each of the three instances, however, is also different because the immediate focus of our love is different.

(a) Falling in Love with another human being:

Daniil Shtoda, Russian Songs, Tchaikovsky's "Den li tsarit, Op.47. No.6 EMI Classics 5 74232 2, TRACK 9, ENDS AT 3.00

The music is by Tchaikovsky, an outburst, a celebration, of love. The singer is the young Russian tenor, Daniil Shtoda.

Meditation before listening:

(i) Breathing-in as a physical process

(ii) Mantra as you breathe in, naming a spiritual energy: "love"

Other musical excerpts are appropriate:

Khataturian, "Sparticus", Scottish National Orchestra, Neeme Jarvi, Chandos Musical Heritage Society, 7 1779-44453 – 2 Ballet Suite No.2 Adagio of Spartacus and Phrygia, TRACK #6, FADE AROUND 7.00

Two tracks in Meditation Music, DECCA 0 28946 741412 9

(i) Massenet "Meditation" from *Thais* TRACK 1, ENDS 5.41

(ii) Mascagni "Intermezzo" from *Cavalleria rusticana*, TRACK 6, ENDS 3.10

(b) Falling in Love with the sound of a musical instrument
Heitor Villa-Lobos, “The Complete Solo Guitar Music”, Fabio
Zanon, Guitar, Prelude No.1 in E minor MusicMastersClassics
0 1612-67188-2 TRACK 7 ENDS 4.38

Preliminary Personal Comment: Until very recently I had enjoyed classical guitar in its usual role, accompanying Latin dancing, but I had never loved it purely for its sounds. Then I heard the solo guitar disc by Villa-Lobos played by a guitarist who has devoted his life to playing this music. Especially in one Prelude it seemed to me that both of them were inviting me to marvel at each sound: “Wow, the guitar can do this too! How utterly amazing and beautiful!” As I listened I fell in love with the sounds. It was love at first hearing.

Long ago I had fallen in love with the sounds of the piano, the organ or the cello, but gradually, without realizing what was happening. Only now do I clearly notice when my response is mainly a simple savouring of the sound.

Brief Meditations prior to listening

(i) Basic eyes-open meditation, following exhalations to where they dissolve about 6 feet away in an area of the floor before you. (This meditation is especially helpful for listening in a new, fresh way, with an uncluttered mind.)

(ii) Basic eyes-closed meditation: breathing-in as a physical process, welcoming the breath/air into the heart-centre. As the music begins, welcome the sounds by breathing them in, allowing your heart-centre to resonate with the vibrations.

(c) Falling in Love with the Ultimate Mystery
Durufle “Requiem” conductor Robert Shaw, “Sanctus”
Telarc 80135, TRACK 11, ENDS AT 3.20

Meditation prior to listening

Very brief version of the “Tree of Life” meditation.

Start with your heart-centre and descend through your feet down the roots to the earth-core.

Then move up from your heart-centre through your crown up the trunk into the heavens.

Then “travel” horizontally from your heart-centre along the branches in all four directions.

Aware of yourself as expanded in all six directions, humbly thank the mysterious Source of everyone and everything.

Combo #7: Delighting in Musical Sounds

Preliminary Reflections

After listening to the various musical instruments that we are about to hear I suddenly realized why musicians sometimes insist that music creates a “musical space” in human beings that only music can create.

This implies that meditation can never duplicate the human state created by music. And this is true if the listener is focused exclusively on savouring the sounds. Usually, however the listener is responding partly in a bodily-emotional-spiritual way, so the human space created is not exclusively musical.

Moreover, even when the listener is mainly or exclusively delighting in the musical sounds, the love for the music is similar to other forms of human love, and usually opens up our heart-centre in similar ways. Let’s experience what happens today, when each piece invites us to delight in a particular instrument. We will savour the sounds of the following: human voice, classical guitar, violin, piano, chamber orchestra, percussion and organ.

Preparing to Listen to the Sounds of Various Instruments

Previously we used two meditations to prepare for falling in love with the sound of a musical instrument:

(i) an eyes-open meditation to help towards a fresh, new way of listening

(ii) the usual eyes-shut, breathing-in meditation to welcome the sounds into our bodies

We could do this again, but for this session we'll not prepare by meditating. Instead we'll prepare by listening to a special piece of music. We'll literally “warm up” and expand our hearts by listening to the piece that helped us to fall in love with the Ultimate Mystery:

Durufle's “Sanctus” TRACK 11 ENDS at 3.20.
Here's the music.

Savouring the “Sanctus” After you hear it:

Focus your attention on your heart area, noticing how the music has affected you there. Somewhat different emphasis for each of us – perhaps feeling more heat there, or more alive there, or more expansive there, or more joyful there, or filled with awe&wonder there. Continue meditating on for a while on what's happening in your heart. I hope you're becoming more open to experiencing musical sounds as if for the first time.

Focus your attention now on breathing: literally into your lungs, but more generally into your rib-cage and your chest, especially your heart area. You are preparing yourself to receive musical sounds/vibrations into your body. Soon the first music will begin, a human voice:

Victoria de Los Angeles: Chants D'Auvergne, arr. Canteloube, EMI, 7 24356 69932 8 TRACK 2, FADE AT 3.57-4.01

Villa-Lobos Guitar Music, Fabio Zanon, MusicMasters Classics TRACK 7, FADE AT 3.59 SHARP

Bach, Six Sonatas&Partitas for Violin, James Ehnes

Analexta fleursdelys 7 74204 31472 9
CD1, TRACK 1, FADE AT 2.25 SHARP

Schubert, Impromptus, No.3 in G flat major, pianist Wilhelm
Kempff, Deutsche 459 412-2 Disc 2, TRACK 3 FADE AT 3.45-50

Respighi, “La Primavera” in Ancient Airs and Dances I & III,
Three Botticelli Pictures, The Birds; Orpheus Chamber Orchestra,
Deutsche, 0 28943 75332 6 TRACK 14 FADE AT 2.50-53

Mickey Hart, Planet Drum “Temple Caves”, inspired by pre-historic
drawings, a magical mix of percussion instruments. Rykodisc 0
14431-0206-2 9 TRACK 7, ENDS AT 3.13

Before we listen to the last piece, on the organ, I invite you to meditate again (a very short version of the “Tree of Life”):

First focus your attention on the crown of your head for a while, connecting you with the heavens above.

Now shift your attention to the soles of your feet, connecting you through the floor to the earth

Now try to be aware of both your crown and your feet.

Be prepared for a very loud opening, for this is the full organ sound, like a 100-piece symphony orchestra. Soon you’ll get used to it, and enjoy being thrilled by it.

Vidor, Organ Symphony #5, John Grew, ATMA,
ACD2 2370, TRACK 5 ENDS AT 6.05

Combo #8: Music for Inner Harmony/Bach&Mendelssohn

Today I’ve selected several pieces of music that can stir within us a state of inner harmony if we allow it to do so. We may also fall in love with the beautiful sounds of piano and violin, and we may also be stirred emotionally. But let your main focus

be on how the music resonates within you, touching two contrasting aspects of yourself, somehow reconciling them. I invite you to listen to the first piece, which is by Bach. Glenn Gould is the pianist and Jaime Laredo the violinist.

• Before listening, we briefly meditate in the “welcoming” way, first breathing in the air and then breathing in the music as it begins.

Glenn Gould and Jaime Laredo play Bach’s Sonata No.1 in B minor BWV 1014 (Sony Classical, cd.1, TRACK #1, about 4 min.)

After the first piece:

Two contrasting human states were expressed in this music. The piano is all about starkly clear structure and rational control. The violin is all about spontaneously flowing mystery. Somehow these opposites are balanced and harmonized without either of them losing their distinctiveness. They combine beautifully in the piece of music and something like them combines beautifully within each of us.

For some people such a glimpse of inner unity in spite of having these tendencies is quite amazing. For these people the contrasting tendencies usually create inner conflict. Unfortunately, when the music stops, or soon afterward, the conflict begins again. Nevertheless something new has happened. For a few minutes structured control and flowing spontaneity have happily co-existed. The experience has brought new hope and new understanding: such an inner harmony now seems possible and intelligible.

Before the 1st Piece, Listening Again

We again do a brief “welcoming” meditation, first the breath, then, as the music begins, welcoming the sound. Then let the music take over.

Before the 2nd Piece:

The next piece that we will listen is for piano and cello. It expresses and evokes a very different kind of inner harmony from the harmony of opposites in the first piece. The two states of mind expressed by the piano and the cello are similar in mood. The cellist first plays the ongoing melody, accompanied by the pianist. Then the pianist has the melody and the cello has the accompaniment. They go on reversing roles, again and again. Through the whole piece they go on mingling and connecting, yet they remain distinct. The music evokes in us a state of serene inner harmony, as if two lovers or two dancers were ecstatically enjoying a serene intimacy within us.

Music does this because some emotional or spiritual states within our bodies resonate vibrationally with the vibrations in the music. Although people vary in their responses to this piece, the responses have something in common: a duality within us, already to some extent harmonious, is brought into a more spontaneous and graceful balance. At least for a few minutes, there is a new intimacy within ourselves, and the memory of this state can be a new resource on which we can later draw.

The next piece is from the same Sony 2-disc album, but Glenn Gould is paired with the cellist Leonard Rose. The piece is also by Bach: Sonata No.2 in D major, BWV1028 (disc 2, TRACK 16, FADE AT AROUND 4.42)

Brief meditation is the same as for the first piece:
“Welcoming” the breath into your chest and then, as the music begins, welcoming the music.

AFTER the second piece: Let the inner harmony continue for a while. Then take three deep breaths and let each one out with a sigh.

Before the 3rd Piece:

The 3rd piece we're going to hear twice. I won't say anything about it before our first listening except to say that it's sacred words set to music by Felix Mendelsohn: "Hear my prayer".

**It is from a cd by the Choir of New College, Oxford, ,
entitled "Agnus Dei: music of inner harmony".
Erato 7 0630 13634-2 0 TRACK 9 FADE at 4.50**

**Our brief meditation is the same as for the first two pieces:
"Welcoming" the breath into your chest and then, as the music
begins, welcoming the music.**

After the 3rd Piece

Continue enjoying whatever the music has brought for you. As you continue with your eyes closed, I'm going to bring you some reflections concerning this piece before we listen to it again. If you don't feel like listening carefully, don't worry; it's more important to continue enjoying what the music has brought to you.

Reflections:

Some profound thinkers link two words: healing and wholeness. Healing is not merely, or even mainly, the absence of physical disease. Rather it is an inclusive harmony among all our human dimensions, a wholeness that accepts and reconciles together all that makes us human.*(Such wholeness is contrasted with domination by one dimension over the others, accepting from the others only what can be fixed to fit in. One example of such a domination is when abstract reasoning stifles heart-presence towards one's self and others and constricts spontaneity in the creative imagination. There is unity, but only the kind of unity that exists in a totalitarian state.)*

There is one ingredient in each human being, however, that can lead without dominating, and unite without constricting. This ingredient is the radiant innocence, simplicity and purity in which we came into this world at our beginning, fresh from God. We gradually bury the little child within each of us to some extent as we “grow up”. We tend to hide it away as we learn to plan and cope and control. If, however, we re-member the child, recalling it in a way involving our bodies, it can rally the whole of our adult self in support. For some of us, that’s what happened as we listened to the boy soprano and the adult choir. In so far as the little child is fresh from God, he or she is not a tyrant, dominating the adult self. All the parts of the adult self can remain adult while nevertheless being subtly pervaded and transformed by the holiness of the inner child, who brings out the best in them. So healing and wholeness are linked with holiness.

As Jesus said, “You can’t even see the Reign of God unless you become like little children”. That is, “You can’t even experience God’s transforming presence unless you become like little children”. Hence: “A little child shall lead them”

*** I omitted this in the meditation session: too complicated there, but important for me in background reflections.**

Meditation Before Listening Again to the 3rd Piece:

The meditation we’ll do briefly before listening again to the 3rd Piece is a visualization of a radiant child. As an aid for those of you whose vision is not impaired, we will show you reproductions of two works of art.

**One is a painting of Jesus, held in the arms of Mary. He is not a baby. He is the Divine Child who rules the globe, holding it in the palm of one hand. His eyes are full of light and love.
(Fresco in Florence, by Fra Angelico)**

The other is a painting, not of a human being, but of a child-angel, whose innocence and purity and gentle tenderness are evident. (I don't know who the artist was.)

If the reproductions don't help you, shut your eyes and let your memory of the music bring you your own vision of a radiant child.

For all of you, before we listen again, focus on the image of the radiant child and welcome it into yourself, so that you are looking out at the world with his or her eyes.

A Postscript Concerning Meditations Towards Inner Harmony

In the 45-minute sessions with seniors I have not attempted to move into states of inner harmony through meditating as such. Meditation has been only a brief preparation for listening to the music that can temporarily do this. (The one exception is meditation on the icon of the Divine Child so as to look out at the world with his or her eyes.)

My own meditative path towards inner harmony has involved three decades of gradual transformation, focused on healing the rifts between the masculine and the feminine dimensions within myself: bodily, emotionally and spiritually. It has also involved repeatedly renewing and deepening the Divine Child within me, especially in times of crisis.

I have led or co-led many groups in processes of shamanic meditation that can help individuals open up towards inner harmony. Such processes, however, require at least a whole day together as a group. A weekend or an extended week-end is better.

Another reason for not attempting meditative processes towards inner harmony in a brief group session is that the processes often need to include some psychotherapy as

unconscious blocks to inner harmony such as childhood traumas emerge into consciousness.

Combo #9: Gendered Music: Feminine/Masculine

Although I have not devised a meditation that helps us towards healing the rifts within us between the feminine and masculine dimensions, it is possible to have a glimpse of such healing by listening to music that is essentially feminine or masculine.

(a) Feminine Music:

Victoria de los Angeles: Chants D/Auvergne, arr. Canteloube, EMI 7 24356 69932 8 TRACK 2, FADE AT 3.57-4.01

The first piece we've already heard when we savoured the sounds of various musical instruments. It was the human voice of Victoria los Angeles, the Spanish soprano. I have also used this song as an example of music that enables us to become more immersed in nature. Here are the words that I used:

“A woman is singing to a shepherd across a deep mountain valley. Imagine the scene:

- an awesome expanse, nothing in the way
- high mountains beyond and beside the valley
- bright sun, blue sky, fresh mountain breeze,
- solid earth beneath our feet, maybe a waterfall”

This time, however, after first briefly meditating, in the usual way, on breathing-in as a physical process, we don't visualize a scene in nature. Rather, our focus is on the sounds of the singer. As we prepare to resonate with the sounds of the

singer we realize that men and women differ in how they resonate.

Women:

Become the singer, resonating with her in your own body. As you listen, be who you are at your core: your own woman in your full feminine power: uninhibited, expansive, gorgeous, resonating with nature, divinely inspired and inspiring. You may even imagine yourself in a circle of magnificent women.

Men:

Welcome into your body the vibrations of the music, the vibrations of the divine feminine coming through this woman's voice, transforming you.

(b) Masculine Music;

Mickey Hart, Planet Drum, "Jewe" ("You are the one"), men's voices and men's chests. Rykodisc 0 14431-0206 -2 9

TRACK 5 ENDS AT 4.01

Meditations prior to listening:

(i) Reflections: Since the beginning of so-called "civilization" men have frequently bonded together through music in ways that make them destructive towards not only other men but also women and children. This piece of music is utterly different. Each man is heart-connecting with each other man in a distinctively masculine way, connecting with his distinctive strength as a man

(ii) Begin meditating, in the usual way, on breathing-in

(iii) Respond as a man or as a woman as the music begins:

Men: Become one of the men in the circle, chanting and beating your chest, moving with the rhythms, connecting with other men in this primitive, non-violent way, opening your heart to give and to receive.

Women: Welcome the sounds into your own female body, resonating with them in your own way, allowing this particular kind of masculine energy to become part of who you are.

A Postscript concerning “Welcoming” Energies from the other Gender:

Many women who have suffered much because of male destructiveness don't welcome any masculine energies, even when these energies are not of the kind that harms women and children.

Many men have unconscious fears of returning to their total dependence on a woman in the womb or in early infancy (though part of them longs for such nurturing!) and can't welcome the powerful energies of a woman when she is full of feminine strength.

So the outcome of a group session on “Gendered Music” varies greatly from individual to individual. Most participants feel very positive, but some participants who strongly resist welcoming energies from the other gender don't experience much happening. Their own defences have worked well! It's possible, however, that the session may upset someone. The risk is minimal, but higher than for most sessions of meditation&music. Clearly it's not designed mainly for seniors in their 90s – unlike the next session.

Combo #10: Three Stages in Life:

(a) Child (b) Adult Loving (c) Old Age

(a) Child (i) Mozart Piano – Brendel

Mozart Piano Concerto 22, last movement, in Mozart the Great Concertos played by Alfred Brendel, Phillips, 1994, 442-571, disc #2, TRACK 2, FADE OUT 3.23-6.

Meditations prior to listening

(i) Breathing-in as a physical process (see above)

(ii) Facial Smile; Image of a Smile; Mantra: “Childlike”

As you breathe in, let your own face smile.

Also imagine, visualize or remember a smile as you breathe in.

Let both smiles be childlike, playful, light-hearted, uninhibited, innocent, even a little impish.

Breathe in childlike-energy into your heart and then gradually into your whole body.

Breathe out whatever heaviness or seriousness or stress is in the way or the light-hearted energy.

Eventually your whole body can smile.

As the music begins, breathe in the sounds, receive them into your whole body, let our whole body resonate with the sounds, let your whole body “SMILE”.

(a) Child (ii) “Sing Rainbow” Peggy Lee

(ii) Peggy Lee, “Sing Rainbow” in cd Peggy Lee, A Natural Woman & Is That All There Is? EMI bar-code:

7 24359 26572 8 TRACK #15, ENDS 2.26

Introduction to the Meditation and the Music:

The Mozart music has encouraged us to become more childlike in how we feel and are. (One resident, almost immobilized by intense chronic pain, reported that she listened she was feeling herself “doing” cartwheels!)

The next music is a song suitable for pre-schoolers as sung by Peggy Lee, a very versatile singer of popular music from the sixties.

Meditation prior to listening:

Focus your attention very lightly and vaguely on the variety of colours in front of you (various kinds of flowers).

If your eyesight is restricted but you can see a blur of colours, that’s an advantage.

Otherwise, imagine a rainbow or a collage of rainbow colours.

When the music starts, close your eyes and see if any other colours and colour-combinations come to you.

And quietly hum along with Peggy Lee or let some of your own quiet sounds come out.

If you feel too shy to make any sound at all, let some sounds come into your mind.

(b) Adult Loving (Mozart Piano – Fischer)
Annie Fischer plays Mozart Piano Concerto 21, cd #1
TRACK 2 FADE AT 3.58-4.00. Seraphim 7 24356 85292 1

Introductory Remarks & Preparatory Meditation Before Mozart

This brief piece, like our fourth, final piece, was featured in an art-movie where the music and the visual scenes matched each other. The sounds and the colours seemed “made for each other”

In this piece by Mozart the nature scenes were like some impressionistic paintings where all the colours of the rainbow were intermingled and had a radiant “sheen” that conveyed how trees and earth and water and sunshine look to a young couple in love.

Each of us has a very different personal history. Perhaps you were never in love with a romantic lover, but it’s unlikely that you never experienced something similar, perhaps suddenly feeling enchanted by a scene in nature, or perhaps thrilled by a presence as you prayed privately or worshipped in a church. And then the ordinary world seemed full of glory.

Before we go in to a meditation I invite you to take a few deep breaths and let them out with a sigh and then let your mind

be open to remember a scene or to receive a scene, full of exhilarating colour.

The music by Mozart will begin in a minute or so. When it does, be open to whatever it evokes in your body or in your imagination.

(c) Old Age (Mahler)

*Mahler, Symphony #5, movement entitled "Adagietto",
TRACK 4, FADE OUT AT 3.57-4.00.*

*(In Mahler, The Symphonies, Concertgebouw conducted by Chailly, Decca: 0
28944 29606 8)*

Reflections Read by Don prior to the Meditation&Music:

(These reflections previously came to Don after listening to the Mahler excerpt several times.)

A few days ago I was in a St. Hilda's elevator and I asked a fellow-resident "How are you today?"

He heard my question as a real request for a real answer and he said, "I'm feeling FRAGILE today."

All of us feel more fragile than we did 30 years ago, sometimes more fragile than yesterday:

We're more vulnerable.

We have less energy

We move more slowly

As we age, we become more aware of the fragility, the transience, the impermanence of life. Outside of us, people who have become dear friends move on, to hospital or hospice or to life after death and we feel loss, for the person had become a part of us. And in our bodies we gradually lose abilities, no longer able to do what we did last month or a year ago.

How can we best respond to all this?

As we age, we have less control, but many of us have more appreciation of what each fragile moment brings.

We have less ability to change things, but many of us have more acceptance of things as they are.

We endure more suffering, but many of us have more serenity and equanimity and calm.

We are less active, but many of us are more able to savour and enjoy the simple pleasures in life, such as food and friends.

The increasing limitations on our lives brings a kind of sadness, but many of us can delight more in what remains, which becomes more precious than ever before.

We're more aware of the inevitability of dying, but many of us can live more and more in a rich and beautiful present rather than a worrisome future or a regretted past.

Soon we'll be listening to the music of Mahler. It is very different from the very first piece, the Mozart that reminded us that we can be cheerful and even playful, like a child. Mahler will remind us that our lives as elders are a mixture of sadness and delight.

It's not a sadness that involves despair or bitterness or a giving up on all activity. It's a sadness that is combined with a joyful appreciation of beauty.

Meditations prior to listening to Mahler:

(i) Eyes-open Buddhist meditation, previously learned, focusing gently on an area of carpet six feet out, following the exhalations as they dissolve out there.

After a couple of minutes or so, raise your eyes to appreciate the colours in the centre (fall colours).

(ii) Close your eyes and imagine a very colourful autumn scene

Very soon the music will begin. Let the music gradually change the scene, the patterns of colour – all serene and beautiful.

Combo #11: From Sadness to Joy/ Magical Music

Introduction: This morning we'll be listening to some music that begins sadly or even tragically or defiantly. Eventually, however, it shifts to joy or peace. What is "magical" about the music is that it enables us to shift with it, bodily-emotionally-spiritually.

Each of the five musical excerpts does this in a very different way.

Meditation prior to listening

The usual eyes-closed focusing on breathing as a physical process, welcoming the breath/air first and then, as the music begins, welcoming the sounds.

(i) Rachmaninoff Piano Sonata #2, 2nd movement, in "Helen Grimaud: Chopin/Rachmaninov" Deutsche 0 28947 75325 4
TRACK 6 FADE AT 6,47 SHARP

That was Rachmaninov, played by my favourite pianist, Helen Grimaud.

The second piece is by Gabriel Faure, a quartet with Emanuel Ax, piano, Isaac Stern, violin, Jame Laredo, viola and Yo-Yo Ma, cello. An all-star performance,

The music begins in a somewhat sombre, grim mood but gradually moves through intense passion into a final serenity.

(ii) Faure, Piano Quartet in C minor Op15, 3rd movement, SONYO 0 7464 48066 2
TRACK 3 END BY 7.55

Our third piece is vocal, the celebrated Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli. You don't need to understand the Italian words to realize that the music begins with sadness, indeed grief. Then it gradually shifts towards magnificent, expansive celebration.

(iii) "Romanza", Andrea Bocelli, Philips 456-456-2
TRACK 1, ENDS AT 4.08

Our fourth piece is a brief excerpt from Rachmaninov's "Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini" played by the young

Chinese virtuosi pianist, Lang Lang. Here the shift is from a love that is mostly longing-love to a love that is triumphantly experiencing fulfillment.

(iv) The Magic of Lang Lang, Deutsche 0-28948-00658-8, TRACK 12, ENDS AT 2.49

Our final piece combines two magical musicians, Lang Lang and Andrea Bocelli. Although some listeners may find it excessively dramatic, “over the top”, I enjoy its excess immensely. It begins noisily, even defiantly. Then it becomes somewhat sad. Then it overwhelms us with its rich, exuberant sounds.

(v) The Magic of Lang Lang, Deutsche 0-28948-00658-8, TRACK 13, ENDS 4.49.

Combo #12: Tree Meditation/ Expansive Music

Introduction

This meditation&music combination is in stark contrast with the next combination #13, which involves emptying our awareness and sinking down towards our inner mystery, our soul. Instead of emptying our consciousness we receive an expansion of our awareness to include our spiritual connections with everything within earth, on earth and within heaven. Instead of emptying ourselves we become receptive to being filled with life, not only the life in everything and everyone, but also – if we offer up this expanded sense of self in thanksgiving - the life within the Divine Mystery.

Usually we meditate first and then listen to music, but this morning we’ll begin with some music that can prepare us for the meditation. After that we’ll listen to three other pieces. We’ve heard this first piece before. It begins very loudly, so don’t be surprised. Right now, I suggest that you focus your attention on the top of your head, the “crown” energy centre. While you’re doing that, focus some of your attention also on the soles of your feet, connecting with the floor and the earth.

Vidor Organ SymphonyNo.5

ATMA 7 22056 23702 4, “Toccata TRACK 5, ENDS 6.13

Steps in the Meditation on Being the Cosmic Tree

(1) Resonating with the Earth: Imagine roots going down from both feet deep into the earth, and with each exhalation descend in your consciousness further down the roots. With each inhalation rise up within the roots, against gravity; then with an exhalation drop down the roots still further. This is no ordinary tree, for its roots reach the earth's centre. After a while you become aware of primitive volcanic energies, powerful and primal, which somehow do not consume the roots with their flames.

You can begin to suck these energies up with each inhalation, for the roots become like straws. At first the drawing upward is difficult, against gravity, but then the energies begin to rise spontaneously towards the bottom of your feet. For some first-time meditators it only reaches there, but for others the energy-vibrations rise into the feet and ankles and even higher. As the volcanic energies enter our human bodies we resonate with them in our human way, so we feel not only grounded but also enlivened.

(2) Resonating with the Heavens: The meditation changes direction abruptly, shifting from earth to heaven: both the literal, material heaven (sun, moon, stars) and the imagined abode for unembodied angels and disembodied human teachers. Imagine your torso is the beginning of the imagined cosmic tree-trunk. Focus your attention on your heart energy-centre in the middle of your chest and with your inhalation let your consciousness soar through your crown up through the tree-trunk. Not endlessly, for soon with your exhalation you draw down through your crown into your body, whatever you have contacted in the heavenly realm, whether this be the energies of the moon or the spiritual presence of St. Francis, or what you experience as a generalized heavenly peace. The meditation can be accompanied by arm-movements up and down: stretched hands as you soar and cupped hands as you bring down.

(3) Resonating from the Heart-Centre in Six Directions

The next phase in the meditation is to focus your attention directly on your heart-centre, while maintaining some awareness of the heavens through your crown and renewing awareness of the earth through your feet. You are beginning to resonate whole-bodily with energies from heaven and from earth, and these energies converge in the heart-centre.

Now raise your arms horizontally with your fingers extended, and imagine two other horizontal "branches" extending frontward and

backward from your heart centre. This is your way of connecting in all four directions with everyone and everything on the surface of the earth. Through your hands you are both giving and receiving energies, blessing and being blessed.

It is amazing to realize that as a human being we can connect positively with angels and with oceans, with stars and with earth's core, with all of humankind and with all of nature. An awesome expansiveness that is possible for every human being.

It is amazing to experience oneself so filled up with spiritual life-energy, resonating in all six directions.

Now an invitation: Offer up, in gratitude for existence, this expanded self into the vast ocean of Divine Love. Let yourself be consciously sustained and pervaded by the Divine Mystery.

Silence for a short while.

First Musical Excerpts

The first music is a chorus from a cantata by Bach. A friend of mine who knows much music says it is the most joyful music he knows. Usually I don't read the words, but in this case I will, for both words and music express with great simplicity what it feels like for a human being to experience living passionately within Divine Love.

**“O ETERNAL FIRE, O SOURCE OF LOVE,
KINDLE OUR HEARTS AND CONSECRATE THEM!
LET HEAVENLY FLAMES FLARE UP AND PENETRATE THEM!”**

*Bach Cantatas, conductor John Eliot Gardiner, Deutsche Archiv
0 28946 35842 9, Cantata BWV 17 2 TRACK 20, FADE AT 4.10*

Now focus your attention on your breathing. Breathe in the joyful music as it begins.

Second Musical Excerpt (no introductory words)

*Bach Prelude in E major arranged by Rachmaninoff from Violin Partita no.3
BSV1006. In Helene Grimaud's "Bach", Deutsche, 0 28947 77978 0
TRACK 16 ENDS 3.38 (DISC END)*

Third Musical Excerpt

That was an arrangement of Bach by Rachmaninoff, who also composed choral music for the Russian Orthodox liturgy. . We end with one of his most inspired sacred compositions. The theme is “Let us now lay aside all

cares of this life”, and the music does end softly, but what enables us to lay aside all cares is not resignation but a sense of being already filled up bodily by Divine Life & Love.

“Sacred Treasures: Choral Masterworks from Russia”, 1998 Hearts of Space, P.O. Box 31321, San Francisco, CA, 94131, www.hos.com

“Hymn of the Cherubim” TRACK 4 ENDS 4.43

Combo #13: Mystery, Meditation and Music

1. Preliminary Reflections (drawing on Meditation #12)

In this meditation we will let go of whatever we cling to in this life (people, projects, personal importance, power, prestige) as we let ourselves sink down below our everyday awareness towards our own mysterious centre, which we describe in negative terms such as silence, stillness, darkness, emptiness, but which is a place or state that involves strength and confidence and safety and wordless clarity. For some people this inner mystery is their opening into the divine mystery, the loving Source that originates and pervades everyone and everything.

Previously when we have meditated in this way I have noted that this is both a way of preparing for a peaceful death and a way of learning how to be fully present in each moment of our earthly life. When we die, we have to let go of our attachments and to “move on” into what we can not control. And as we go on living, we can only appreciate each present moment if we are not clinging to our past or worrying about our future.

The meditation can bring an incomparable sense of inner peace. We will eventually be listening to music that conveys this inner peace.

2. Sequence of “Steps” in the Meditation:

(1) **Prayer?** Some of you pray for help from time to time. If you do, it is entirely appropriate to begin by praying to God or the Holy Spirit or Jesus for help in this meditation, which can involve being transformed by the indwelling of the Divine Mystery.

(2) **Breathing.** Begin by focusing the energy of your attention on both your inhalations and your exhalations as physical processes in your body, noticing the changes in your rib-cage and perhaps in your abdomen. After a few minutes I invite you to attend only to your exhalations.

(3) Emptying. With each exhalation breathe out whatever grabs your attention in your consciousness, not clinging to any sensation, image, thought, word, memory or emotion that arises there, whether it's painful or pleasurable, boring or fascinating. Gradually you are beginning to empty your consciousness, letting go of your attachments.

(4) Sinking down. With each exhalation also “sink down” below your ordinary consciousness of this and that, moving towards your own still centre, your hidden core, your own inner mystery, a place or state of silence and wordless clarity.

(5) Your hidden centre. As you let go and sink down, set aside any fears that may be arising. What you are becoming aware of may seem unfamiliar, but you have glimpsed something like it before. Trust your own hunch that deep within yourself is a mysterious source of peaceful strength and quiet, expansive love. Be open to whatever arises for you.

(6) Ocean of love. Eventually I offer some words that may convey part of what you are feeling. (If they don't, simply ignore what I say.) “It's like being immersed in an ocean of love, though we have no trouble breathing. We realize that within this ocean of love everyone and everything is included. We're all in this together.”

(7) Embodying the non-bodily state. Remaining in whatever state you are in, whether it be an ocean of love or some other blissful, peaceful, expansive awareness, embody it. Become aware of your bodily breathing and aware of how his state feels in your body. Let yourself become aware of sensations and emotions in your body. You may experience

- a bodily release from stress
- or a contented feeling of “ being at home”
- or a quiet joy.
- or a new way of being yourself within a greater oneness.

The music is about to begin: six short pieces, each one very different, and each one composed and played by people who have glimpsed inner mystery in their own way. Your own experience, too, will be unique to you.

Jacqueline du Pre, cellist, in a cd called "A Lasting Impression" EMI,1996 (72435-6599-2-1 or 7-2-4256-5952-1), a "Sicilienne" by Maria Theresa von Paradis: DISC 2, TRACK #1, ends at 2.57

*Durufle's Requiem: "Sanctus"
Robert Shaw, Telarc, TRACK 11, ENDS 3.20*

Victoria de Los Angeles: Chants D'Auvergne, arr. Canteloube, EMI, 7 24356 69932 8 TRACK 2, FADE AT 3.57-4.01

Daniil Shtoda sings Rimsky Korsakov's "Nimfa" Op.56 No 1 in Russian Songs, EMIClassics 5 74232 2 TRACK 16 ENDS 3.39

Bach, Prelude No.4 in Csharp minor, Helene Grimaud, "Bach", Deutsche 0 28947 77978 0, TRACK 3, ENDS AT 3.17

John Eliot Gardiner conducts The Monteverdi Choir in J.S.Bach Cantata "O ewiges Feuer" BWV34, opening chorus. Deutsche 2000 0 28946 35842 9 TRACK 20, FADE AT 4.10

OTHER APPROPRIATE MUSICAL EXCERPTS:

Mozart, "Ave Verum Corpus", in cd "Agnes Dei", Choir of New College, Oxford, Erato, TRACK 4, ENDS 3.05

Rachmaninoff, Cello Sonata in G minor, Yo-Yo Ma/ Emmanuel Ax, Sony Masterworks 8-2796-90397-2 TRACK 6, ENDS 6.46

Bach Sonata #4 in Cminor for Piano&Violin, BWV 1017, Gould/Laredo, Sony 0 7464-52615-2 TRACK 13, ENDS 4.28

Annie Fischer plays slow movement of Mozart's Piano Concerto #21, (Seraphim 7-24356-851921), CD#1, TRACK 2, FACE OUT AT 3.58-4.01

Gabriel Faure's Requiem, Robert Shaw with Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus,(Telarc Digital CD-80135), "Sanctus" TRACK 3, ENDS 3.26

Some End-Notes Concerning Combination #13:

1.What to Include in the Meditation. In presenting the Inner Mystery meditation I included everything that I've included at various times. It may seem appropriate, or even necessary, to omit some items such as the "Preliminary Reflections" and Steps 1, 5 and 6. What seems essential is Steps 2, 3, 4 and 7.

2.My Choice of Music. The immediate accessibility of the Inner Mystery meditation to the seniors moved me, later on, to ask, "What musical excerpts were composed and played by people who glimpsed the Mystery as they composed and played?"

My choice, of course, is shaped by my own experience of this mystical meditation. Having meditated in a similar "emptying& sinking" way with others in various spiritual traditions I am confident that if others draw more on their distinctive mystical approach their experience will not be remote from mine.

My choice of music is also personal: shaped by my resonating in a similar way to what I experience in the meditation. One musical excerpt, however musically significant it may be, seems to me less appropriate than another one, which is my choice. For anyone else, my choice is merely a suggestion. When I'm leading the group and playing half a dozen pieces, my hope is that at least some of the selections will "work" for each participant.

For anyone reading this report concerning combinations my hope is that they will be stimulated to explore this meditation and to search among their cds for excerpts that work for them.

Similarly if anyone is stimulated to lead a group of seniors (or others) what matters most is that a leader's version of the meditation and choice of music comes from deep within themselves.

Whether or not one is engaged in private exploration only, or is also leading a group, the one "rule" is that the meditation must include some bodily awareness if it is to correspond to the bodily resonating that music produces.

A Postscript: I realize that the musical choices of people who are immersed in a non-Western musical tradition will be very different from mine.

Combo #14: Longing-Love&Happiness/Shtoda

1. Rumi's Poem about Longing-Love

I'm going to begin today by reading a poem by Rumi, the great Sufi poet and Muslim mystic. Even in translation, Rumi seems to many readers to be the most amazing of all poets in his ability to express in words what is beyond words. Here's the poem, entitled "Love Dogs":
(Coleman Barks, "The Essential Rumi", pp.155-6)

One night a man was crying, *Allah! Allah!*
His lips grew sweet with the praising,
until a cynic said, "So! I have heard you
calling out, but have you ever gotten any response?"

The man had no answer to that.
He quit praying and fell into a confused sleep.
He dreamed he saw Khidr, the guide of souls,
in a thick, green foliage:

"Why did you stop praising?"

"Because I've never heard anything back."

"This longing you express

is the return message."

The grief you cry out from
draws you toward union.
Your pure sadness that wants help
is the secret cup.

Listen to the moan of a dog for its master.
That whining is the connection.
Give your life to be one of them.

A Personal Comment on the Poem: About ten years ago I was in cottage country with two friends. In the morning we read "Love Dogs" together. During the afternoon, out in a canoe on a quiet lake, we suddenly heard the sound of a dog howling in anticipation of the return of his master. The howl was both sad and joyful. Dogs are often psychic, and can intuit, within themselves, when their master is close to home. By analogy, when we are passionately yearning for intimacy with God, the yearning is

our experience of God already at work within us. We imagine God as being “out there”, beyond us, but God is already within us in our longing-love.

2. Listening to four Songs of Longing-Love

Now we’ll listen to the Russian tenor, Daniil Shtoda, singing four Russian songs. The songs all express intense longing-love, passionate yearning, for what would completely fulfill him, bringing total happiness. Each expresses a different phase in this.

In the first song, it’s mainly the longing-love.

In the second there are glimpses of the beautiful mystery that satisfies the longing.

In the third the singer finds enough fulfillment in the state of loving itself.

In the fourth the singer joyfully celebrates this loving state.

You don’t need to remember what I said about each one, but it may enrich your experience when you are immersed in the music. What matters is what the music evokes in you, which may be very different from what it evokes in me.

We’ll listen to all four songs without interruption. Before we do, let’s meditate for a couple of minutes:

focusing on your breathing as a physical process:

with each inhalation and exhalation there are changes in your rib-cage and your abdomen

with each inhalation and exhalation the breath comes and goes through your mouth or your nostrils or both.

use each exhalation to let go of whatever is distracting you from focusing on your breathing, any stress or anxiety or planning or wandering thoughts.

Very soon we’ll be listening to the music, but first I’m going to list three questions for you to pose to yourself just before we begin:

What do I most deeply long for?

What would bring me complete happiness or fulfillment?

What state would this be?

Perhaps as you listen to the music an answer will come to you, not in words but in a state of consciousness. As you pose these questions and ponder them briefly you are “priming” yourself, opening yourself, for a response later on.

**What do I most deeply long for?
What would bring me complete happiness or fulfillment?
What state would this be?**

As you begin to listen to the music, welcome it into your body with each inhalation and then let the music take over.

Notes concerning the Music (about 12 minutes)
Daniil Shtoda, (Russian) “Songs” EMI Classics 5 74232 2
1. Track 14
2. Track 15
3. Track 16 (ends at 3.39)
4. Track 9 (ends at 3.09)

3. Reflections Before Listening a Second Time

It’s amazing how deeply this music can stir us into passionate yearnings and new glimpses of mystical states.

How can music enable us to experience emotions and states that ordinarily we might not let ourselves venture into so deeply?

Part of an answer to this question is, “We fall in love with the beautiful musical sound!” (Remember Combos #6 and #7.)

Another part of an answer is linked with Combo #13: “Somehow the music itself creates in us a sense of safety and serenity. We are being empowered and renewed by connecting with a deeper’dimension within ourselves, a mysterious inner centre, a mystical ‘core” that is beyond words and thoughts and images.”

Perhaps some classical music expresses a limitless longing that lies within us, below what we’re clearly aware of, a longing that we usually link with people and projects and possessions that allegedly will bring us complete happiness or fulfillment. The music shifts us towards the possibility that what we long for is beyond any particular person or project or possession. We long for intimacy with Mystery. And our longing is bodily.

4. Meditations in Preparation to Listening to the Songs Again

Meditations that enable us to respond more deeply to the four songs involve a sequence:

(a) Attending to your breathing as a Physical Process

Let the energy of your attention be concentrated on your inhalations and exhalations.

Whatever else you are aware of, whether it arises from within yourself or comes from outside, let it recede to the “edge” of your consciousness –**except for** your awareness of what is happening in your physical body as you breathe: changes in your rib-cage and your abdomen and sensations in your nostrils or in your mouth as your breath passes through.

Don’t observe your breathing as you might observe someone else breathing: identify yourself with the breathing, realizing “This is me, though it’s not all of me”

(b) Sinking down into one’s own Inner Mystery, the way into Divine Mystery

(i) **Emptying**. First focus on your **exhalations** and breathe out whatever grabs your attention in your consciousness, not clinging to any sensation, image, thought, word, memory or emotion that arises there, whether it’s painful or pleasurable, boring or fascinating. Gradually you are beginning to empty your consciousness, letting go of your attachments, focusing the energy of your attention only on your bodily breathing

(ii) **Sinking Down**. As you continue using your exhalations towards emptying your consciousness of everything except your breathing, let yourself “sink down” below your ordinary consciousness of this or that item, dropping down towards your soul, your own still centre, your hidden core, a place or state of silence and safety and wordless clarity: your own inner mystery through which you link with the divine mystery out of which everyone and everything continuously merges into existence.

© Combining Aspects of (a) and (b)

After continuing for several minutes on the inward journey into mystery, let yourself appreciate whatever peace or calm or safety or

assurance you are connecting with. Realize that you can retain some of this as the pervasive background of what you are aware of as you now begin to become gradually aware of your body, from your feet to your crown.

As you continue to retain some awareness of mystery while returning towards bodily awareness, focus some of the energy of your attention on your inhalations, breathing in the air, welcoming it into your chest. And as the music begins, breathe the vibrations of sound into your chest, welcoming it into your whole body.

Perhaps the music will move you towards the state that would fulfill your deepest longing.

5. At the End of the Music

As the music ends, let it continue in the altered state it has brought about in you. Simply be in that state, enjoying it, adjusting to it, taking it in. No hurry and no need to think about it right now.

After a while, be sure that you consciously move back into your everyday awareness. You can do this while still remembering much of the altered state. One way of shifting is to take three deep breaths, letting each one out with a sigh.

Combo #15: Enjoying Sad Music

1. Introduction

We often enjoy listening to sad music. Yet in everyday life we don't enjoy feeling sad. Indeed, if the sadness is an intense grief it overwhelms us. How can some music enable us to feel intense sadness without being overwhelmed by the emotion?

In Combo #11 each musical was sad, but only at the beginning. Then the music shifted to joy or peace, and “magically” it shifted us to joy or peace.

Today, however, we are going to listen to some excerpts that begin in sadness and never shift to joy or peace. Indeed we're going to listen to three of them right away. They are by Russian composers and the singer is the Russian tenor whom we've enjoyed many times here before.

Daniil Shtoda, (Russian) “Songs” EMI Classics 5 74232 2

- 1. TRACK 18 ENDS AT 1.21**
- 2. TRACK 24 ENDS AT 4.40**
- 3. TRACK 4 ENDS AT 2.42**

Before each song I'll tell you what it stirs in me, but what matters is what it stirs in you as you listen, trusting in the mysterious power of great music.

2. Preparatory Meditation and Comments on Musical Excerpts

First we'll meditate briefly, focusing on our breathing as a physical process.

with each inhalation and exhalation there are changes in your rib-cage and your abdomen

with each inhalation and exhalation the breath comes and goes through your mouth or your nostrils or both.

use each exhalation to let go of whatever is distracting you from focusing on your breathing, any stress or anxiety or planning or wandering thoughts.

Track 18: The first brief piece is about how life flows on, constantly changing, and how we need to accept the transience of everything, including ourselves. We can acknowledge our melancholy moods, for somehow the enlivening flow of the melancholy music transforms the melancholy.

Track 24: In the second piece, a little longer one, the singer tells another singer not to sing songs from Georgia (in southern Russia), for they remind him how happily at home he felt back there, back then; now he's so far away from home, both in distance and in time. The mysterious beauty of the song helps him, and us, not to be totally overwhelmed by our longing to return to happier times. We can acknowledge our sadness because the music itself helps us to re-experience within ourselves our feeling of being at home.

Track 4: The third piece expresses perhaps the worst kind of sadness, the feeling of having been abandoned and now being totally alone. Many of us sometimes feel this aloneness, though we try desperately to deny it. The music somehow enables us, as it were, to "dip" into it without losing touch

with the inner mystery that enables us to be alone. Although we feel cut off from others, we're not cut off from ourselves.

3. Reflections Before Listening Again

Soon we will listen again to the three songs we just heard, plus two other pieces. Before we do so, I invite you to join with me in some reflections concerning what we have just experienced. For each of us, at least one of the songs we enjoyed, yet it was sad from beginning to end. Probably this was partly because we fell in love with the unusually beautiful sound of the man's voice. But in my own experience it was partly because the music connected us with a deeper dimension within ourselves, a mysterious inner centre, a mystical "core" beyond words and thoughts and images."

In addition to the three songs, this time we will begin with some music by Mahler and end with a fourth Russian song. Some of you heard the Mahler before as an expression of the transformed sadness possible in old age. The fourth Russian song expresses a longing love that combines sadness with hope.

*Mahler, Symphony #5, movement entitled "Adagietto",
TRACK 4, FADE OUT AT 3.57-4.00.*

*(In Mahler, The Symphonies, Concertgebouw conducted by Chailly, Decca: 0
28944 29606 8)*

Daniil Shtoda, (Russian) "Songs" EMI Classics 5 74232 2

(1) TRACK 18 ENDS AT 1.21

(2) TRACK 24 ENDS AT 4.40

(3) TRACK 4 ENDS AT 2..42

(4) TRACK 21 ENDS AT 1.51

Before we listen to the five pieces let's do the "Inner Mystery" meditation. It may prepare us to experience the music more deeply.

4. "Inner Mystery Meditation

(a) Attending to your breathing as a Physical Process

Let the energy of your attention be concentrated on your inhalations and exhalations.

Whatever else you are aware of, whether it arises from within yourself or comes from outside, let it recede to the “edge” of your consciousness –except for your awareness of what is happening in your physical body as you breathe: changes in your rib-cage and your abdomen and sensations in your nostrils or in your mouth as your breath passes through.

Don’t observe your breathing as you might observe someone else breathing: identify yourself with the breathing, realizing “This is me, though it’s not all of me”

(b) Sinking down into one’s own Inner Mystery, the way into Divine Mystery

(i) **Emptying**. First focus on your exhalations and breathe out whatever grabs your attention in your consciousness, not clinging to any sensation, image, thought, word, memory or emotion that arises there, whether it’s painful or pleasurable, boring or fascinating. Gradually you are beginning to empty your consciousness, letting go of your attachments, focusing the energy of your attention only on your bodily breathing

(ii) **Sinking Down**. As you continue using your exhalations towards emptying your consciousness of everything except your breathing, let yourself “sink down” below your ordinary consciousness of this or that item, dropping down towards your soul, your own still centre, your hidden core, a place or state of silence and safety and wordless clarity: your own inner mystery through which you link with the divine mystery out of which everyone and everything continuously merges into existence.

© Combining Aspects of (a) and (b)

After continuing for several minutes on the inward journey into mystery, let yourself appreciate whatever peace or calm or safety or assurance you are connecting with. Realize that you can retain some of this as the pervasive background of what you are becoming aware of as you now begin to become gradually aware of your body, from your feet to your crown.

As you continue to retain some awareness of mystery while returning towards bodily awareness, focus some of the energy of your attention on your inhalations, breathing in the air, welcoming it into your chest. And as the music begins, breathe the vibrations of sound into your chest, welcoming it into your whole body.

6. At the End of the Music

As the music ends, let it continue in the altered state it has brought about in you. Simply be in that state, enjoying it, adjusting to it, taking it in. No hurry and no need to think about it right now.

After a while, be sure that you consciously move back into your everyday awareness. You can do this while still remembering much of the altered state. One way of shifting is to take three deep breaths, letting each one out with a sigh.

Combo #16: Tree Meditation/ Heavenly Music

I. Introduction, Brief Meditation and First Musical Excerpt

The theme of this session combining meditation and music is the various ways in which we resonate with the heavenly in our human bodies.

Although it's possible to meditate in a way that is virtually disembodied, with minimal awareness of our human selves as experiencing emotions and states in our bodies, when we listen to music this is difficult, for music resonates in our bodies. Even music that is supposedly about angels resonates in our bodies! (Angels, not having physical bodies, have limited access to either passion or music!)

We're going to begin by listening to part of a piece entitled, "The Passion of Angels" by the Canadian composer Mozetich. It's not really about angels, it's about us human beings. We can experience in our bodies both passionate emotions and energizing, exciting Spirit. Mozetich expresses in music two kinds of aliveness within each of us: earthly-emotional and heavenly-spiritual

**"The Passion of Angels", by Marjan Mozetich in his cd called "Affairs of the Heart", CBC Records, conducto Mario Bernardi
0 59582 52002 4 TRACK 5, FADE OUT AT 8.40-46**

Before we listen, we'll meditate briefly to welcome the music into our bodies , focusing on our breathing as a physical process.

with each inhalation and exhalation there are changes in your rib-cage and your abdomen

with each inhalation and exhalation the breath comes and goes through your mouth or your nostrils or both.

use each exhalation to let go of whatever is distracting you from focusing on your breathing, any stress or anxiety or planning or wandering thoughts.

2. Shortened Tree Meditation, Preparing to Listen to 4 Pieces

(1) Resonating with the Earth: Imagine roots going down from both feet deep into the earth, and with each exhalation descend in your consciousness further down the roots. With each inhalation rise up within the roots, against gravity; then with an exhalation drop down the roots still further. This is no ordinary tree, for its roots reach the earth's centre. After a while you become aware of primitive volcanic energies, powerful and primal, which somehow do not consume the roots with their flames.

You can begin to suck these energies up with each inhalation, for the roots become like straws. At first the drawing upward is difficult, against gravity, but then the energies begin to rise spontaneously towards the bottom of your feet. For some first-time meditators it only reaches there, but for others the energy-vibrations rise into the feet and ankles and even higher. As the volcanic energies enter our human bodies we resonate with them in our human way, so we feel not only grounded but also enlivened.

(2) Resonating with the Heavens: The meditation changes direction abruptly, shifting from earth to heaven: both the literal, material heaven (sun, moon, stars) and the imagined abode for unembodied angels and disembodied human teachers. Imagine your torso is the beginning of the imagined cosmic tree-trunk. Focus your attention on your heart energy-centre in the middle of your chest and with your inhalation let your consciousness soar through your crown up through the tree-trunk. Not endlessly, for soon with your exhalation you draw down through your crown into your body, whatever you have contacted in the heavenly realm, whether this be the energies of the moon or the spiritual presence of St. Francis, or what you experience as a generalized heavenly peace. The meditation can be accompanied by arm-movements up and down: stretched hands as you soar and cupped hands as you bring down.

The first two brief pieces that we'll hear are from Faure's "Requiem".

**"Sanctus", Robert Shaw Chorus Elarc 80135,
TRACK #3, ENDS AT 3.24**

**"In Paradisum", Choir of New College, Oxford, Erato,
TRACK #11, ENDS AT 3.03**

3. Meditating and Listening

(1) Prior Meditation for "Sanctus"

Focus first on the bottom of your feet, but then

Focus on your crown chakra. "Soar" from there into the heavenly abode of non-material realities such as angels, spiritual teachers, deceased persons and blissful peace.

Bring the heavenly realities down into your body, especially into your heart.

Let the music transform you so that the musical "Hosanna" combines both heavenly and human energies inside you.

(2) Prior Meditation for "In Paradisum"

Focus first on the bottom of your feet, but then

Focus on your crown chakra. "Soar" from there into the heavenly abode of angels, spiritual teachers, deceased persons and blissful peace.

After listening, I remind participants to focus attention on their heart and then the bottom of their feet.

The last two pieces express two different experiences of the heavenly:

(3) Matthias Goerne, baritone, sings Aria "Ich habe genug" from Bach's Cantata BWV82 in Bach Cantatas Decca 466 570-2

TRACK 14, ENDS AT 6.48

The third piece is an Aria from a Cantata by Bach, sung by Matthias Goerne, a world-renowned baritone. The opening words are "It is enough". He doesn't mainly mean, "I've had enough of this world, please God, let me die!" though that feeling is present to some extent. Indeed that feeling is very understandable in some seniors at times when they feel overwhelmed by physical pain. But for the singer the main basis for welcoming death is that he has already welcomed Jesus into his eager arms. His only comfort is "for Jesus to be mine and I his". He's already mainly in

heaven. For him this is linked with Jesus. For others it may have some other association.

(3) Prior Meditation for “It is enough”

Focus on your crown chakra and be open to any sensations there or to anything heavenly arising in your consciousness.

**(4) “Sacred Treasures: Choral Masterworks from Russia”, 1998. Hearts of Space, P.O. Box 31321, San Francisco, CA, 94131, www.hos.com
Gretchaninov’s “I have chosen the blissful”, Bulgarian Radio and TV Choir,
TRACK 15 ENDS AT 4.52**

The fourth and final piece is a choral work from the liturgy of the Eastern Orthodox Church in Bulgaria. It is very different from the previous piece, where focusing on the crown chakra seemed appropriate. This music is not focused on life after death in heaven. Rather, it’s about what heaven on earth would feel like. It’s a foretaste, a prior experience, of heaven on earth. What we hope will happen for everyone on earth is occurring in the present, in us, in this life through the music, music that expresses what it feels like bodily to be immersed in Divine Love.

(4) Prior Meditation for “I have chosen the blissful”

(i) Focus your attention in turn on:

- Your feet, connecting you with earth
- Your crown, connecting you with heaven
- Your heart, full of love.
- Your whole body: head, shoulders, arms, torso, legs

(ii) “Choose the blissful”. That is, begin to live within an ocean of Divine Love as the music takes over.

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