



PERCOLATION

Practice Details...

The Key

There is no 'doing' in this practice other than asking a question.

Having asked the question you let it simmer in the background as you get on with your life.

Required

A willingness to let go of finding the answer right now.

Patience and trust.

When to practice

This is an ongoing practice, one that runs in the background of your life.

Every so often you can come back to your original question, ask again, if you feel that no answer has come forward. But don't dwell on finding an answer now - remember this practice is about filtering.

Percolation is the process of liquid slowly passing through a filter. It's how coffee is made and it takes time like the Zen Koan.

In the Zen Buddhist tradition a koan is a story, dialogue, question, or statement, which is used to provoke the "great doubt" and test a student's progress in Zen practice. The student is expected to *sit* with koans. They don't *think* about them; they don't try to "figure it out." Concentrating on the koan in meditation, the student exhausts discriminating thoughts, and a deeper, more intuitive insight arises.

The most famous koan you may have heard is "What is the sound of one hand clapping."

The insight that comes does so over a period of time. No answer is expected quickly. And the interpretation will be different for each person. Some questions just don't have an immediate answer. From the moment you ask the question it may take some time for the answer to filter through your brain and come to the surface.

I often have an initial idea of a blog post but don't see an end to the story. I know, however, that if I let it sit and percolate, one day the majority of what I need to write for the post will come to me.

For this practice you will need to be patient and trust that with persistence and focus the answer will come to you. Allow the answer to work its way out. There may be hard questions involving forgiveness, grieving, or letting go. You will have to ask the question and let it sit in the back of



Side Note

How to practice:

- Ask a question
- Let go of finding an immediate answer
- Get on with your life
- Be confident that an answer will come 'out of the blue'

your mind for a week, a month, or even a year.

You can write down your question. Ask yourself the question several times through the day or the week. But then let go. Know that the answer will come to you. Asking before you go to sleep at night can be helpful though the answer often comes in unexpected ways.

Sometimes you can use your creative mind to come up with unconventional ways of solving your problem. Sometimes it helps to talk about it with several people to get other perspectives.

However, with percolation or a koan, we are meant to sit with the problem allowing the answer to rise within us. That way we get the best and most suitable answer for us.

Whatever you do, stay with it. Be patient and trust the answer will come.