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Meaningful Quantitative and Qualitative Transformative Experiences using the Arka Dhyana Intuitive Meditation Method



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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Article history:

Received 01 May 2022
Received in revised form 17 May
Accepted 20 May 2022
Available online 30 June 2022
doi: [10.51917/dialogo.2022.8.2.13](https://doi.org/10.51917/dialogo.2022.8.2.13)

Keywords:

Self; yoga; Arka Dhyana; Intuitive
Meditation; heart; transformation;
emotions; feelings; quantitative;
qualitative;

Using scales and the analysis of shared phenomenological experiences, our chief aim in this investigation is to record what happens when practitioners start meditating on their Self via their hearts using the Arka Dhyana Intuitive Meditation method (IM). This yogic-based practice involves a journey from the thinking mind to the emotional heart to pure consciousness. Thirty-one participants divided into three groups attended a five-session online introductory IM workshop. The participants filled in the Resilience Scale (RS), Spirituality Scale (SS), and the revised Feeling Consciousness Scale (FCS), which included two open questions providing qualitative data. Quantitative findings indicated significant increases in RR, SS, and FCS. The highly significant quantitative results provide meaningful support for the hypothesis that the IM method is associated with transformative changes after learning IM. The qualitative data support and expand on these findings. This study is relevant to people who hold a metaphysical position that supports the concept of the Self beyond the small ego identity.

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Citation: Lindhard, Tina, Stephen D. Edwards. "Meaningful Quantitative and Qualitative Transformative Experiences using the Arka Dhyana Intuitive Meditation Method." *DIALOGO*, ISSN: 2393-1744, vol.8, issue 2 (June 2022): pp. 161-185. DOI: [10.51917/dialogo.2022.8.2.13](https://doi.org/10.51917/dialogo.2022.8.2.13)

Session 3. SPIRITUALITY about: HEALTH

eISSN: 2393-1744, cdiISSN: 2392-9928
printISSN: 2457-9297, ISSN-L 2392-9928

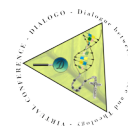
I. INTRODUCTION

Science and spirituality both want to know the nature of life or the nature of Nature. Nevertheless, the way they go about it is traditionally very different. Western scientists study the nature of the outside world, whereas the *inner scientists* of India, who later became known as yogis, philosophers, seers, and rishis, turned their attention inward to study, explore, and discover the nature of their inner Self. This is based on the premise that if they came to know their own nature, they would know the nature of the universe (Arka, 2003; 2013) [1; 2]. For Arka this inquiry is meditation, and he posits meditation predates religion and takes the practitioner back to a time there were no teachers or books. For him, the term entails “serious self-pondering [which involves] the process of making profound inquiry into the depth of the soul about ... [our] existence or how the Universe was created or the laws that governed living and non-living matter Arka, 2013, p.29). Although meditation is a natural process, for those people who have forgotten how to do this, yogis throughout the ages have developed methods to facilitate this art (Louchakova, 2007). This ancient wisdom is said to bring about a perennial form of healing which is the basis of *Sanatana dharma*, the spiritual philosophy of India (Louchakova, 2007, p. 81; Britannica, n.d.). In this context, Jung understood the self as “the principle and archetype of orientation and meaning. Therein lies its healing function” (Jung, 1961, p. 224).

According to Patanjali, the objective of Yoga is union with the soul (Johnston, 1912, p. 17) and in his sutras, he outlines 8 ways to achieve this. His eight classical branches of yoga involve *Yama* (ethical life choices...); *Niyama* (personal observations...); *asana* (postures...), *pranayama* (breathing practices...); *Pratyahara* (sense withdrawal...), *Dharana* (concentration...),

Dhyana (Meditation, an effortless state of deep concentration or awareness...), *Samadhi* (absorption – a state of integration or ecstasy that is beyond the ordinary state of consciousness ... (Brems et al, 2016, Table 1; Feuerstein, 2013))

Our chief aim in this investigation is to discover and record what happens when practitioners start meditating on their Self via their heart using a method of meditation known as Arka Dhyana, or Intuitive Meditation through analysis of their shared phenomenological experiences and the use of scales. This method is described as bringing “the ancient techniques of yoga fully and meaningfully into the 21st century” (Arka, 2013, back cover); a description that was also used on the flyer announcing the course on which this investigation is based. Arka (2013) talks of the IM method leading the practitioner to the second-highest state before samadhi known as Dhyana. Dhyana is not an easy concept to translate, and it is easier to consider the three last aphorisms of Patanjali as increasing degrees in concentration where each takes the practitioner to different levels of experience depending on the contemplated ‘object’. Whereas Dharana is like shining one’s attention on the ‘object’ or topic, Dhyana takes attention to a new level involving the uninterrupted flow of concentration or “prolonged holding of the perceiving consciousness in that region” (Johnston, 1912/1990, p. 23 & p. 75). “It is not a practice in the true sense, Dhyana is abiding in our natural state of being and experiencing without relying on the mind as the interpreter” (Brems, 2016, Table 1). This is meditation and can apply equally to inner or outer things and “when the perceiving consciousness in this meditation is wholly given in illuminating the essential meaning of the object contemplated and is freed from the sense of personality, this



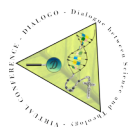
is contemplation (Samadhi) (Johnston, 1912/1990, p. 76).

Arka compares the Arka Dhyana method to a musical instrument that practitioners can play in whatever way they want, and this includes the intention they set Arka, 2013). However, IM usually involves an inner journey to discover our true Self. This is also the objective of the somatic-focusing practice known as Prayer of the Heart (Louchakova, 2007); a method utilized by the Desert Fathers that was later adopted by the Orthodox Church. But before this, it, or variations of it, were also known to the ancient Egyptians, Jews, other Mediterranean cultures, and the Sufis and Tantric traditions in India. It is also close to methods involving Self-enquiry (*Atma-vichara*) and Kashmiri Shaivism (Louchakova, 2004). Although the many articles of Louchakova have done much to remedy our knowledge about these practices, there are still very few reported scientific investigations into methods that involve people undertaking a heart-based journey into their inner realms with the proposal of discovering their deeper Self. According to Louchakova (2004) seekers consider PH as “being complex” (Louchakova, 2007, p. 82) as discovering the heart’s intuitive and gnostic aspect takes years of training. This perception may explain why there is little actual research into the method.

The Arka Dhyana method was developed over 40 years ago by the yogi and philosopher Srinivas Arka and like PH, it involves a journey of Self-discovery, although its practice is somewhat different. In IM, participants invite their I-ego-awareness to descend from their thinking mind to their feeling heart-mind, intending to discover their deeper essence or Self as well as touching 19 energetic stations while ascending the body and synchronizing the hand movements with the breath

and emitting a vibratory sound at each point (Arka, 2013). At each station, the practitioner becomes one with the point touched. The practice of inviting our I-ego-awareness associated with surface mind consciousness to come on a journey into our inner realms starts a process where we rewind our history “to experience the very essence of our being, the Self” (Arka, 2006, p. 180). The recognition of the Self beyond the ego-personality is having a comeback in some integral understandings of reality. Gafni (2014) sources six cultural and spiritual movements that stand against the recognition of the Self. For him, these have created a “significant potential destruction in (their) wake. When Self and Story are effaced, then human dignity is undermined, and all manner of brutality becomes possible” (Gafni, 2014, p. 9).

Here we use the term Self’ interchangeably with our deeper essence, soul or being, and we spell ‘Self’ with a capital letter to distinguish it from the ego-personality which, until polished, includes the habits and limitations of the person, or ‘persona’. This is consistent with Plotkin who refers to the self as “the vital, mysterious, and wild core of our individual selves, an essence unique to each person, qualities found in layers of the self, much deeper than personalities (Plotkin, 2003, p. 25). As our souls are the infinitesimally smallest of the Giant cosmic soul called Brahman, our souls have the deepest wisdom of the spiritual Self (Arka, private correspondence, 6.2.2022), alternatively known as the Higher, Deeper, Greater, True and/or Original Self. Plotkin also claims each soul ultimately exists as “an agent for spirit” where the spirit is ‘the single, great, and eternal mystery that permeates and animates everything in the universe and yet transcends all (Plotkin, 2003, p. 25). As the study was conducted on people just starting out on their journey of self-



discovery, no mention was made between the possible relationship between the soul and Spiritual Self.

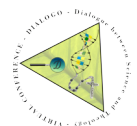
The IM method uses a vibratory sound and as such, it is different from the prayer which uses words and from mantra practice which involves sounds that mean something specific. It is purely feeling, or sensation based and other than setting an intention where thoughts are used, there is nothing in IM to distract the thinking mind from involving words or their meanings. However, this does not mean that spontaneous insights do not arise during the meditation practice, they may, but being intuitive insights, they are also novel to the surface mind of the practitioner.

Based on his own experiences Arka (2013) proposes that the practitioner will experience 6 main levels of consciousness as they progress with this feeling-based practice. The main levels he [2] identifies are: 1) M (Mind)–Consciousness, 2) SM (Subliminal-Mind)–Consciousness, 3) F (Feeling-Mind)–Consciousness, 4) H (Emotional-Heart)–Consciousness, 5) HS (Heart-Soul)–Consciousness and 6) PS (Pure-Self)–Consciousness. The levels identified have given rise to a theory known as the ‘Theory of the Six Main Levels of Consciousness’. This theory recognizes and includes a level of mind involving thinking which is usually associated with the brain. This is where the journey normally begins for modern practitioners and the first part of this exploratory inner undertaking involves a shift from our thinking-based consciousness which, through practice, has often developed into an intellectual mind, to a more feeling-based consciousness associated with the heart. When describing Feeling-mind Consciousness, Arka (2013) adds that “almost all mothers have this faculty naturally available and readily accessible to them to help them understand the intense needs of their children and

people they care about” (Arka, 2013, p.37).

Although IM is practiced in many countries, research has been limited to an investigation undertaken by Lindhard (2016) and later published in two articles (2017; 2018) In the first (2017), she expands on the qualitative results, whereas in the second, she focuses on the results of a scale known as the Feeling Consciousness Scale (FCS) that she developed for the study. Her study showed a highly significant shift (at the $p = .001$ level) towards a more feeling based consciousness as measured by the Feeling consciousness scale (FCS) which includes items involving “unity, peace, intuition, positivity, awareness of emotions, and connection to one’s inner Self, sometimes expressed as soul, inner being, or atman” (Lindhard, 2016, p. 184).

Because of these significant results, the authors of this study decided to collaborate to learn more about the IM method through using a new mixed-method design which included a revised edition of the FCS, the Resiliency Scale (RS) and the Spirituality Scales (SS). The latter scale encompasses three subscales (Self-Discovery, Relationships and Eco-Awareness). In addition to these scales, in this new study, the participants were asked to provide qualitative information through their answers to two reflective questions as part of the Revised FCS, which were completed again after the fifth IM session. A third distinct aspect involved 6 of the participants’ self-monitoring coherence and achievement before and after each session using HeartMath (HM) Inner Balance or emWave2 electronic technology. The highly significant results showing an increase in both coherence and achievement were presented in a separate article (Lindhard et al, 2021). This reported study was limited to only 6 participants who had access to HeartMath equipment, whereas the present article includes the



collected information obtained from all the participants in the study.

The rationale behind using the Resiliency Scale was the thought that as people start connecting with their deeper Self, they would become more positive and bounce back from encountered hardships more easily. It was also supposed that people living from the level of mind-consciousness feel more lost, rather like Jung (1933) suggested in his book *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, which he wrote in 1933, but still applies in our material-based modern society. Based on a similar rationale, we felt that as participants began to discover their true Self, they would become more spiritual in their understanding of themselves, others, and nature. Hence our decision to use the Spirituality Scale, even if we were not quite sure how much a spiritual comprehension of themselves would expand to others and nature after only five weeks of practicing IM.

II. INTUITIVE MEDITATION

A. Course Process

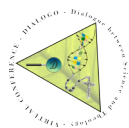
After greeting the participants who shared their expectations for the course, the Arka Dhyana method based on three pillars, touch, a vibratory, mystical sound, and breath, was introduced progressively. Each aspect was practiced by the participants, following which they shared their experiences. The IM instructor also showed the group a gesture that helps when inviting our surface thinking mind, associated with the cerebral cortex, to come on a journey to our feeling heart-mind connected with the heart center. This center is in the middle of the upper chest and is associated with the Spiritual Heart which is considered the “psychospiritual center of embodied consciousness in the interior space of the chest” (Louchakova

et al, 2003; 1 Louchakova, 2007, p. 4). Although this present study is talking about the same area, the gesture shared in the IM course is to help the I-ego-awareness of the participants to shift from a thinking-based consciousness to a heart-based consciousness that rests on feeling.

During the five sessions, participants are also shown how to progressively ascend the body rhythmically by touching 4, then 8, 12 and 19 body stations, consisting of feet, calves, knees, thighs, sacrum, naval, solar plexus, heart, shoulders, elbows, hands together, throat, mouth, nose, cheeks, ears, eyes, forehead, and head. Each station touched, is accompanied by their breath and the intonation of a syllable of the mystical vibratory sound, SAROOGOVAUM. This sound is not a mantra as it has no meaning so there is nothing to entertain the thinking mind, and the practitioner can experience a feeling-based consciousness which also involves sensations more easily. In the fifth session, participants are introduced to a variation of the method that consists of superseding physical touch with visualized hands of light. During the practice, participants direct the vibratory sound SAROOGOVAUM at each energetic station touched and are encouraged to increase their pitch and duration as they ascend the body. It is recommended that participants practice the method by themselves between the weekly sessions.

B. Intention

During the first session, the IM method was described as an inner journey of Self-discovery that will not always be easy, and practitioners will need to show courage and persistence to overcome old habits and emotional blocks. For those participants who want, it was suggested they launch a desire to discover and connect to their deeper essence, Self, or soul (mentioning the three terms allowed participants to use



the one with which they most resonate).

C. *Breath and Emotions*

Although in yoga it is known people can control their emotions through controlling their breath and vice versa, it is only in the last 25 years or so that scientists are beginning to understand and unravel the relationship between our cardio-respiratory and our emotional state. For example, when we are emotionally aroused, it has been shown that we breathe more rapidly with accelerated heart rate (Yoshikawa et al, 2020; Masaoka et al, 2014; Nyklicek et al, 1997; Boiten, 1998) and when we breathe slowly, we are more relaxed. Through Pranayama breathing, also referred to as breath manipulation, specific physiological responses can be obtained probably through a shift in the Autonomic Nervous System (Jerath et al, 2006). In IM, the breathing pattern is not controlled in any way but, by encouraging participants to breathe fully and prolonging the intonation of the sound SAROOGOVAUM, practitioners slowly change their habitual breathing pattern as the out-breath becomes more prolonged.

D. *Emotions and Meditation Methods*

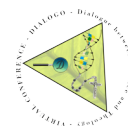
Like with other meditation methods, the shadow emotions start to surface during the practice of IM. However, it is in the processing of these emotions that methods differ. Although approaches to arising emotions differ vastly, we must remember that they eventually contribute to practitioners reaching the desired higher states of consciousness specified by their tradition.

In *Shamatha* (mindfulness), a Buddhist-based practice, practitioners are instructed to just observe the emotions and thoughts that arise. A slight variation of this method is following the breath, where the

practitioner is encouraged not to engage in their thoughts and emotions as they arise but gently return to the breath (Mindworks Team, n.d.)

The mystical *Hesychasm* tradition, which comes from the Greek word *hesychia* meaning “inner silence”, has three main aspects, wakefulness (or mindfulness), *hesychia*, and Prayer of the Heart. The version practiced by the monks in monasteries in the north of Russia requires that they purify themselves from all negative emotions by mindfully guarding what enters the mind, and if a negative emotion or thought (known as ‘demons’) starts arising, they must actively drive them out. This practice is sometimes referred to as “sobriety”, “guarding the mind” or “unseen warfare”. “Consequently, the goal in mindfulness in *hesychasm* is to detect rising negativity as soon as possible to expel it immediately from the mind. Wakefulness goes hand in hand with *hesychia* – inner stillness and peacefulness” (Louchakova et al, 2003, p. 23).

According to Arka (2003), in meditation, we must let everything in or exclude everything, like in the above-mentioned method. As in IM, everything is included, when a so-called negative emotion arises, participants are invited to see it as a part of emotional-mind consciousness but not their identity and are encouraged not to identify with the emotion, like we often do or imply in our everyday speech. This insight is experience-based, as with the whole of the IM practice (Arka, 2013). If, and when necessary, the instructor invites the person experiencing an arising emotion to close their eyes and say, ‘I am anxious’ (or whatever emotion is arising) and to expand their inner awareness and observe what happens in their body. The person is then told to change the phrase to ‘A part of me is anxious, it is only a part’ and observe what happens to the sensations in their



body. The instructor also encourages the person not to judge the arising emotion as good or bad but become one with it.

Through this newfound ability based on their own inner experience, some of the participants start to change the way they describe their emotional experiences and the stories they tell themselves, as reflected in some of the qualitative answers of the participants reported later in this article. In IM, once emotions are managed “they can be raised and harnessed constructively towards nature and humanity” (Arka, private email, 7 June 2021).

E. Hypothesis

In any meditation course, participants are at different stages of their inner journey, with some just beginning and others being more advanced. However, no matter where participants started from, it was expected that after learning and practicing the IM method, their scores on the RS, SS and revised FCS would increase significantly.

The authors also anticipated the qualitative answers would back up these findings and give clues to the inner processes of the participants as they undergo this shift in their level of consciousness.

III. METHOD

A. The course

The investigation consisted of 3 groups that received the IM course comprising of weekly sessions spread over five weeks; the first session lasted three hours and the rest, two; a total of 11 hours for each group. The course was online using zoom technology. One workshop was in English, and the other two were in Spanish. Dr Tina Lindhard, a certified Arka Dhyana instructor for over 15 years, imparted the

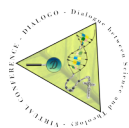
three courses.

B. Participants

Before Thirty-one ($n=31$) participants living in six different countries, completed the course, 23 women and 8 men. The sample means age was 46.4 years, standard deviation 11.4 years, and age range from 27 to 74 years. Four participants professed to be of the Christian religion, 12 of the Catholic faith, 13 participants did not follow any formalized religion or were agnostic and two others practiced various mystical traditions. For confidential reasons, the 31 participants were simply coded P1 to P31. They had heard about the course via letters posted by the two researchers or by people who had already completed an IM course. In this sense they were self-selected. None had previously attended an IM workshop.

C. Instruments

The Spirituality Scale (SS) (Delaney, 2005) was used to collect quantitative data on perceptions of spirituality before and after the workshops. This is a standardized 23-item ‘holistic assessment instrument that focuses on the beliefs, intuitions, lifestyle choices, practices, and rituals that represent the human spiritual dimension, and ...that can be used to guide spiritual interventions’ (Delaney, 2005. p. 146). Spirituality was defined as a multidimensional universally experienced phenomenon, encompassing a personal, interpersonal, and transpersonal context consisting of four interrelated domains: (a) higher power or universal intelligence--a belief in a higher power or universal intelligence that may or may not include formal religious practices; (b) self-discovery--the spiritual journey begins with inner reflection and a search for meaning and purpose;...(c) relationships--an integral connection to others based on deep



respect and reverence for life and is known and experienced within relationships...; and (d) eco-awareness--an integral connection to nature based on deep respect and reverence for the environment and a belief that the earth is sacred (Delaney, 2005. p. 152).

In the initial psychometric standardization of the scale with 224 American participants, the Cronbach alpha coefficient for the total scale was .94. Factor analysis yielded three main factors labelled eco-awareness, self-discovery and relationships, with alpha coefficients ranging from .81 to .94. The finding of three, not four, factors as expected was explainable in terms of the collapsing of the two transpersonal dimensions of higher power or universal intelligence and eco-awareness into a single main factor. As eco-awareness was described as the highest level of spirituality, this label was retained for items previously subsumed under the two dimensions. Test-retest reliability yielded a very acceptable Pearson correlation coefficient of .84. Reliability analysis on the Spirituality Scale with an initial sample of 77 participants similarly indicated a very acceptable Cronbach alpha coefficient of .83 and test-retest reliability Pearson correlation coefficient of .72.

The Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) (Smith et al, 2008) was administered before and after the workshops to detect any quantitative changes in resilience perceptions. The BRS has 6 items, which are equally positively and negatively phrased, along a 5-point Likert scale with requested answers ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. Cronbach's alphas for the BRS in six samples were found to be .836, .902, .877, .798, .754 and .702 (Smith et al, 2013). The Resiliency Scale was used to measure participants' capacity for resilience (Smith et al, 2008)

The Feeling Consciousness Scale (FCS)

was developed by Lindhard (2016) for her doctoral thesis. It was adapted for this study by adding some statements. Furthermore, the Likert Scale options were reduced from 7 to 6 to make its use compatible with the format of the Spirituality Scale.

D. Quantitative Data Analysis

The Quantitative outcome evaluation consisted of an analysis of the structured questionnaire consisting of the updated Feeling Consciousness Scale as well as Spirituality and Resilience scales. As the sample, size was relatively small and data were not normally distributed, Wilcoxon nonparametric statistics were considered the appropriate analytical techniques.

E. Qualitative Data Analysis

The quantitative data were supplemented by participants' qualitative comments from two questions which formed part of the updated FCS:

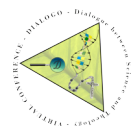
1. In what way or how do you feel Arka Dhyana has complemented your wellbeing?
2. Please add something about your experiences while practicing the method Arka Dhyana (IM) and how you feel afterward?

a) Content Analysis

The answers to the two questions were amalgamated because the participants made no clear demarcation between their two answers. This qualitative data was then subjected to various types of analysis, including NVivo analysis and content analysis using the computer find function. The number of times the different sexes used certain terms was also considered.

b) In-depth thematic content analysis

A thematic content analysis (TCA) as described by Anderson (1998; 2004) and Creswell (1998) was conducted. As this was



an exploratory study, we also maintained an open mind such as used in grounded theory, particularly Kathy Charmaz’s (2000; 2006) constructivist grounded theory interpretive method. This allows for the researchers’ experience to intervene between him or herself and the data and is not bracketed out like in phenomenology (Creswell, 2013, p.78).

Working backwards and forwards, several main categories were identified, the identification of which also was influenced by the number of times certain words, or their equivalent was used by each participant. These grouped words were identified as a ‘category’ that shared the same nature (Charmaz, 2006). This method of working arose spontaneously while contemplating the data and seemed a novel way of integrating qualitative and quantitative findings that seem to also involve a phenomenological hermeneutic perspective (Edwards, 2013).

Themes such as possible sex differences and emotional changes were also identified. The main categories and themes elected are outlined in the results and expanded on in the discussion, where they are highlighted by referring to quotes from the original data (Charmaz, 2006). In the discussion, other possible themes such as peace are mentioned.

F. Ethical Statement

The study was conducted according to the guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki and approved by the Academic Committee of the International University of Professional Studies (protocol Lindhard 2, 16th March 2021). Informed online consent was obtained from all participants before the completion of the online questionnaires. Knowing about the possible dark side of meditation practices (Lutkajtis, 2019; Schlosser et al, 2019),

participants were regularly reminded that if they needed any help with arising emotions or clarification concerning the practice or their experiences of Arka Dhyana (IM) or if they would like to share anything about how their life was unfolding, to contact the IM Instructor. Regular contact between group participants and IM Instructor was maintained throughout the course.

Permission for use of the instrument had been obtained by one of the researchers for previous studies.

IV. RESULTS

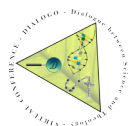
A. Quantitative Findings

Table 1 one refers to the Pre-test and Post-test Means (and standard deviations in parenthesis) (N=31) as assessed on variables of Resilience, Spirituality, including three subscales (Self-Discovery, Relationships and Eco-Awareness) and Feeling Consciousness

Assessment Variable	Pre-test	Post-test	Wilcoxon Z	Probability
Resilience	17.55 (1.61)	18.00 (1.81)	4.87	.000
Total Spirituality	112.48 (17.38)	120-19 (14.56)	3.92	.000
Self-Discovery	18.03 (4.18)	19.68 (4.04)	3.34	.001
Relationships	32.32 (3.67)	33.16 (2.89)	1.67	.094
Eco-Awareness	62.13 (12.15)	67.35 (9.54)	3.76	.000
Feeling Consciousness	100.12 (15.96)	110.94 (13.13)	4.23	.000

Table I mean score increases from pre-test to post-test in all assessment variables generally indicated that the IM Course was associated with improvements on all variables. Wilcoxon nonparametric analyses for related samples revealed

SECTION 3



significant Z scores increases in all variables at the 1 percent ($p < .01$) level of significance, except for the relationship subscale of the spirituality scale ($z=1.67$, $p=.094$), where probability lies between the 5% and 10% percent level of significance. Viewed inclusively, these findings provide meaningful support for the hypothesis that the IM course was associated with consciousness transformations, with special reference to resilience ($Z = 4.87$, $p = .000$), total spirituality ($Z = 3.92$, $p = .001$) and feeling consciousness ($Z = 4.23$, $p = .000$).

B. Qualitative Findings

a) Categories used by Percentage of Participants

Several main categories were identified involving the terms ‘feel’ plus equivalent terms (used by 74.1 of the participants); ‘connection’ plus equivalent terms (used by 58%); ‘self’ plus equivalent terms (used by 58%); ‘meditation plus equivalent terms (used by 48.39% of the participants); ‘peace’ plus equivalent terms (used by 41.9%) and ‘wellbeing’ plus equivalent terms (used by 29%) (data extracted from Appendix A). A graphic representation follows below.

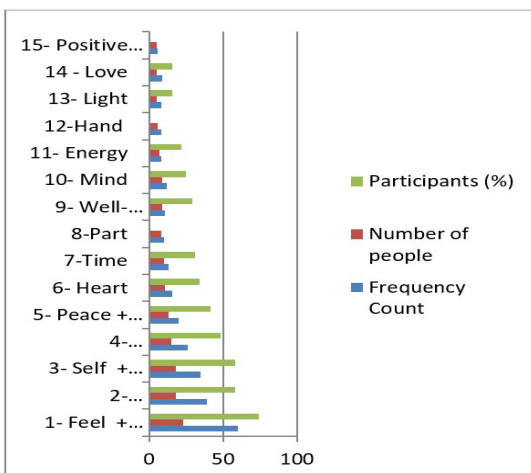


Figure 1: Graphic representation of content analysis of words including categories of words with a similar meaning, frequency of use, no of participants, and their percentage (truncated at 15 words)

b) Sex differences as a theme

The category ‘feel’ was also looked at in terms of sex. (Appendix A)

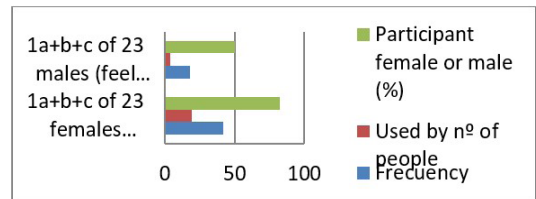


Figure 2: Graphic representation of the category ‘feel’ used by 23 females and 8 males (This analysis was elevated to a theme for discussion purposes).

c) Transformative changes involving emotions as a theme

Transformative changes involving emotions were arrived at by working backward and forward (Appendix A)

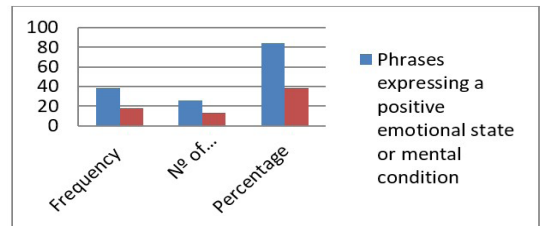
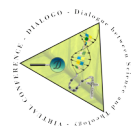


Figure 3: Graphic representation depicting the frequency of use, no. and percentage of participants expressing a positive emotional state or mental condition and overcoming a negative emotional state

V. DISCUSSION

The results obtained must be seen within the context of an experience-based embodied spiritual approach which entails



a journey into our inner realms to discover our true Self. For Ferrer (2008) embodied spirituality ultimately, “seeks to catalyze the emergence of complete human beings—beings who, while remaining rooted in their bodies, earth, and immanent spiritual life, have made all their attributes permeable to transcendent spiritual energies, and who cooperate in solidarity with others in the spiritual transformation of self, community, and world’ (Ferrer, 2008, p.8). The ability to tap into the inner feeling-mind associated with the heart is a way people can begin this transformative inner journey by which this vision is made possible.

Although we first looked at the quantitative results and then expanded on the qualitative results through using both an open-minded grounded theory constructivist approach (Charmaz 2000; 2006) which also overlapped with a phenomenological hermeneutic approach, the quantitative and qualitative approaches interact, inform and nurture each other in numerous ways (Edwards, 2013). We therefore also include qualitative answers with the discussion of the quantitative data.

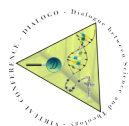
The highly significant quantitative results on all three scales indicate that when participants are shown how to bring their I-ego-awareness from the mind to the heart using the IM method, there is a meaningful transformation in their consciousness. As we expected and was revealed by the change in scores on the RR Scale, participants bounce back from hardships more easily when they discover themselves to be a consciousness being with a body and mind but are not only the body nor the mind. Participant 5 expressed this in the following way:

“This method had brought me back to a place of remembrance of how much more I am than this body and this experience on earth. Through my daily challenges, I now

have something to continuously return to, that helps me feel less stressed and more connected to myself and my higher power resulting in me flowing through challenges with more grace and acceptance”.

Similarly, through connecting with their Self or essence, the highly significant changes in the Spirituality Scale are coherent with this new or clarified understanding of themselves, especially the subscale dealing with Self-Discovery. This spiritual understanding seems to have extended more readily to the subscale dealing with Eco-Awareness which was also significant at the 1 percent ($p < .01$) level of significance than to the subscale concerning Relationships, which however, also showed a positive shift with the probability laying somewhere between the 5% and 10% percent level of significance. Only three participants (P1, P2, P12) specifically mentioned more contact with the group: ‘I feel the connection with the group even if I don’t know everybody, in person’ P1; ‘Socially our group gelled more in the fourth session’ P2; and ‘I have felt especially connected with the group’ P12. The reason for the non-significant difference in the subscale concerning relationships is not entirely clear, but we must remember the discovery of the nature of our essence is a journey, and for many of the participants this inner voyage had only just begun. Also, the extension of a spiritual understanding of our Self to other people who are often living from a thinking mind level of consciousness with little heart and caring can be a challenge. Although the word ‘nature’ was not specifically mentioned by any of the participants, we suggest that once a person has recognized their spiritual nature, it is possibly easier to perceive the fundamental invisible spiritual principle behind visible nature, however, this hypothesis needs further research.

The significant increases found on



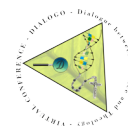
the improved FCS indicates that this transformation in consciousness involves feeling, as measured by certain scale items such as 'I feel peace inside', 'I feel the centre of my being is in the heart', 'when I bring my attention to my heart area, my thoughts become slower or disappear altogether'. In their qualitative answers, 41.9% of the participants referred to the experience of inner peace or related terms like serenity and calm (19 times when amalgamated as a category). Participants mentioned the heart 16 times, and one of the participants (P3) referred to the gesture 'from mind to heart' in the following way: 'one can do some small connective actions or thoughts such as head to heart and through the movement of energy I am received at home/connecting to essence'. Another (P8) commented, "It does help me to feel centred and integrated and aligned in my heart, soul and body after practising". Participant 24 commented: 'entering to meditate with mind to heart helps me calm my emotions. I want to do it because I connect more with my body, and in silence, listening and feeling my body. Afterwards, I feel lighter, and I have changed attitudes for the better'.

The shift from mind to heart and from thinking to feeling is consistent with the Theory of the Six Main Levels of Consciousness. The terms 'feel', 'feeling' or 'felt', which became a category, was used 60 times by 74.1% of the participants (Table 1). It was also found (Table 2) that 82.6% of the 23 females used the words feel/feeling/felt whereas only 50% of the males, used them. This sex difference was identified as a theme. This difference, like in Lindhard's 2016 study, is inconclusive as the number of males participating in the study was low. However, it does give some support to Arka's claim that women, particularly mothers, have their feeling-mind consciousness more highly

developed. In this study, the authors did not ask females if they had children or not, but we suggest future studies include this question. Both sexes can enhance their feeling-mind consciousness, in much the same way most people can, through education, develop their logical intellectual minds associated with thinking mind consciousness. However, it is probable that women still have easier access to the heart-mind consciousness because of their role as mothers, and it is only two hundred odd years ago that higher education was opened to women.

A more in-depth analysis revealed some of the words picked up through the computer find function like 'connect' could be formed into a category consisting of several terms with a similar meaning which could then be looked at in the context where they are used. We, therefore, scrutinized further and found that 13 (38.7 %) participants used the word 'connect' when linking it with terms like soul, Self, being, essence spirit, heart, unity. This percentage increased to 51.6% when we included equivalent words like 'in touch with' (P4), 'aligned with my heart, soul and body' (P8), 'resort to my inner self'. Two participants (P1 & P2) who mentioned connect, used it to refer to the group and/or that everything is interconnected. These can also be seen as spiritual understandings, but the majority used the category "connect" when referring to the self, rather than the whole or the other. These insights form another possible theme for further reflection in later studies.

With regards to the question of how Arka Dhyana had helped participant's wellbeing, all but one participant (P11) expressed some positive change, with this participant stating she was not sure yet. Despite this, in the question involving experience, she shared that the method helped her 'to focus'. The analysis of the data is highly



interesting with 26 (83.87%) participants describing changes in their emotional outlook either in terms of overcoming a negative emotional state (38.7%) or mentioning more positive emotional changes (77.4%) with 13 participants mentioning both. Examples of descriptions of less negative emotional outlooks include comments such as: ‘overcoming fears’ (P1); ‘less alone, less misunderstood’ (P2); ‘less stressed’ (P5); I have learned not to be scared (15).

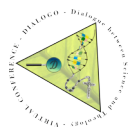
Emotions were identified as a theme which we expand on by referring to the original data. Examples of both positive and overcoming negative condition phrases used by the same participant, include: “Through my daily challenges I now have something to continuously return to, that helps me feel less stressed and more connected to myself and my higher power resulting in me flowing through challenges with more grace and acceptance” (P 5); ‘increases a lot my wellness and happiness, blocks and tensions understand them as something positive’ (P14); ‘feel more inner peace, and forgiveness feelings to people who hurt me surface in myself; my emotionality has changed to a state of happiness’ (P16); ‘during my meditation, I feel gratitude, emotion, something opposed to negativity’ (P19); ‘Taking away the shame for being who I am, showing me more authentic, without regrets or worries. It has been incredible to see that when you give the soul space, everything begins to position itself more according to how it should be, how it feels good’ (P23); I have managed to reduce stress and anxiety at specific moments, feeling calmer and allowing me to face the day more positively. I feel that it improves my emotional stability and makes me more aware of things that went unnoticed (P. 30).

Examples from participants who only express changes using positive terms are

‘I liked discovering that uniting mind and heart calms me’ (P25); ‘greater internal joy, easier meditations, unconditional love, more secure, closer to my higher Self (P29); connecting with my balance, getting to experience unity in body, mind and spirit, I have connected with myself and I have noticed how I have released physical and energy blocks (P 31).

It appears from the qualitative descriptions that the accent in IM on discovering the Self through shifting from the head to the heart and being open to the arising emotions, helps people to undergo a shift which is expressed by their positive statements. The category involving the term ‘peace’, consisting of related terms like ‘calm’ and ‘serene’, was used by 41.9 % of the participants. We elevated this category to a possible important theme when practicing the IM method. The conjecture is consistent with Lindhard’s report [16, 17] where she found 36% of the participants used peace when describing an inner experience. It seems both these studies confirm peace is an inner experience related to feeling and not something that can be imposed from outside. How much the acceptance of the different arising emotions is related to the experience of peace is unclear and needs further specific investigation in future studies on IM. It also seems that peace and associated words (41.9%) might be more inclusive than well-being/good (24.8%).

That low percentage usage of other words like love and joy are easily understandable as IM involves a journey into one’s inner realms, and until the practitioner learns to manage his or her emotions, it is difficult that they start experiencing these deeper emotions that surface spontaneously. Arka [2] claims: “The first experience of spirituality is inner peace. Once this threshold is obtained, many doors of matrix realities open” [2,



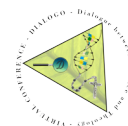
p. 68]. However, he also says that “before we enter the inner realms of peace, we must bypass the mind’s obstructions. If we accept this about the mind, then we can even enjoy its disturbing nature on route to the peaceful heart, and thence to the deep, silent sea of consciousness” [2, p.145]. Maybe for some, peace also requires that we learn to manage the emotional layer and not only the mind’s obstructions, even though they are related. Once we realize and comprehend that whatever emotional thought we send out, we are the first receiver, we can start changing the way we describe ourselves and others.

In Fuster’s (2013) evolutionary model, brain development involving cognitive functioning builds on prior functions, and skills, including the control of emotional and instinctual behaviours (Fuster, 2009). Although this control develops relatively early, prefrontal executive functions concerned with “temporal organization of behaviour, speech, and thinking” (Fuster, 1999, abstract) develop slowly and evolves through the adaption of the organism to the cortices of other beings and the environment (Fuster, 2013). This model throws light on the reverse order (Arka, 2006) of our ontological history when practising IM during which the person starts from their thinking mind related to prefrontal cortex (PFC) to discover the deeper layers of their Self. By learning to go below their thinking mind, practitioners may reencounter their history involving the control of emotional and instinctual behaviours, where some might have residues of traumatic emotional experiences. The bringing to the light of conscious awareness their earlier emotional history that is not judged in any way by the person might be related to the positive emotional shift reported by 83.87% of the participants and the feeling of inner peace, calm and serenity experimented

by 41.9% of the practitioners, but further research is needed to verify this. We must also remember that this study only involves the beginning stages of an inner journey and the likelihood of people maintaining the inner states reported during meditation throughout the day is unlikely after only five weeks of exposure to IM. This was commented on by participant P15 who said: ‘at the end it is difficult to return to daily life maintaining the calm generated’.

Although the word ‘positive’ was only used by five participants, the shift in reported emotions indicates that they started to become more positive. Arka (2003) claims that many doors of matrix realities open after the spiritual experience of inner peace and it seems that even with only five weeks of IM practice, participants can connect with their hearts and confirm or reconfirm their spiritual nature as a conscious being from which they can build on to protect themselves against negativity and find inner peace and serenity.

In a case study using HeartMath (HM) technology (Lindhard et al, 2021), 6 of the participants taking part in this present investigation, showed highly significant increases in both coherence and achievement. It seems that practising IM is accompanied by psychophysiological changes, which, from a HM coherence perspective, involve cardiovascular phase synchronicity and interconnection of various bodily, emotional, personal, social and ecological subsystems. Coherence essentially refers to the orderliness and connectedness within parts, zones, subsystems, maps and/or instances of the whole, domain, territory and/or system. These significant psychophysiological changes also provide empirical support for the original meaning behind the practice of yoga as yoking, linking and/or connecting with the Divine, which is always, already, everywhere present (Iyengar, 2001, Iyengar



et al, 2005). It is not only possible but probable, that these physiological changes may be related to the experience of inner peace.

We human beings can live from the mind, the heart, or the soul (Arka, 2003). The first stage in IM is learning to live from the heart and as we open to this layer and manage the shadow emotions, the next stage is harnessing them for the benefit of humans and nature. The feeling of love experienced by five participants (P2, P9, P15, P29, P22) and joy (P29), are signs of a deepening in emotional consciousness.

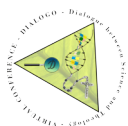
The possibility that women, especially mothers, have their feeling-mind consciousness more highly developed was not looked at here, but the finding that 82.6% of the 23 females use words like feel, feelings and felt opposed to only 50% of the males, suggests this needs to be investigated further, especially as a slight sexual difference was also noted in some of the traits in Lindhard's (2016) study. However, we must remember there were only a few male participants in both studies. Clarification of this possible sex difference could also possibly throw some light on the many misunderstandings that frequently occur between men and women. As empathy is related to our capacity to feel vicariously with another [36; 37; 38] one might expect that after learning IM and 'being empathic' and non-judgmental with one's own arising feelings and emotions, one's empathic ability might increase, but this needs to be tested.

Although meditation methods that involve an experimental inner journey into the nature of the Self are not popular with spiritual traditions that do not recognize the Self (Louchakova, 2007) science needs to stay open and recognize and investigate methods that lead to a spiritual understanding of ourselves, as to how we see our inner nature extends to how we see

outside reality. Material-based science is an example where no spiritual understanding of ourselves or the universe is upheld or is overlooked as not being relevant.

The study is also relevant to educational systems as our Western system fomented living in the mind where the rules of logic apply, and nothing exists except the physical. This excessive emphasis on developing our intellectual ability is programming out our inherent feeling nature, particularly associated with females, which involves living from the heart. Living from the heart entails "living with depth, with feelings, with emotions, and with creativity. In this case, the heart is using the mind as an instrument to express its guidance - in emotional forms, like poetry" (Arka, 2006, p. 60). This study reveals that, in a short space of time, IM practitioners can begin recuperating their heart level of consciousness, which involves feeling. As our feeling consciousness opens, we become more sensitive. This was expressed by participant P6 who shared she 'become aware of energies and vibrations externally of me and in other people. It has made me MORE sensitive to that energy I feel in other people'.

This shift in the level of consciousness also permits a reconnection with our inner being, Self or essence, but to be fully grounded in the heart takes time, and at least after 5 weeks of IM, participants were able to have a taste of this level during meditation. The next plane of living, according to Arka (2003) is "living from the deeper Self, where your perceptions are beyond ordinary thinking" (Arka, 2003, p. 61). An example is participant P2's insight that 'there are different layers and levels of heart consciousness involved in intuition; personal, social, and global, life, love, and light'.



d) Limitations of the study and recommendations for future research

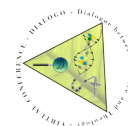
This study had several limitations, one being the small sample size and that there were only a few male participants. This makes generalization difficult. Also, only 31 of the 44 who filled in the pre-test scales, completed the study; seven dropped out after only one session. Of these who discontinued, two stated the course was not what they were expecting, one got a job, for another participant the times conflicted with his new University schedule, and 3 for bad internet connection. Of the rest who did not complete the course, the mother of one participant died, two could not connect the last two sessions because of internet problems, one moved house, and the last two we could not trace. The participants also made no identifiable differences between their answers to the two open questions, forcing the researchers to amalgamate the two answers. It is suggested a question regarding difficulties encountered by the participants whilst practicing the method be included in future studies to counterbalance what some might consider a leading question regarding wellbeing. In future research, it is also suggested that further study, for example, involving randomization and control, might be considered with regards to such issues as adherence and generalizability. However, a test-retest procedure remains a valid way of generating meaningful information (Bland et al, 1986, American Educational Research Association 1985; Cozby, 2014; Cronbach, 1971; Moskal et al, 2000). To throw more light on the IM method, it is also recommended that future research pick up on and clarify the possible themes identified in this study. This could be done through an in-depth phenomenological study or using a grounded theory methodology of theoretical sampling and saturation (Glaser and Straus, 1967) where

this initial research provides some insights into what happens when people begin practising the IM method.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The aspects of this investigation reported here and in the previous publication by Lindhard, Hermann and Edwards (2021) suggest that practicing the Arka Dhyana method not only brings about psychophysiological changes reflected by the highly significant increases in both coherence and achievement, but also the thematic analysis proposes these changes are related to the experience of inner peace. The highly significant scores on RS, SS, and FCS scales indicate that when people become more connected to their inner Self or being they become more resilient, more spiritual and begin to live in harmony with nature, with a trend towards improved relationships with people. The qualitative changes also suggest that as people open to their feeling mind consciousness, they feel more connected to their inner Self which gives them more direction in their lives. However, in the beginning stage of IM when practitioners open to their emotions, they first need to learn how to navigate them through acceptance before they have access to their heart. The reported transformative experiences involving emotions are relevant when considering overall health and wellbeing.

This study fills some of the gaps in scientific investigations into feeling-based meditation methods that support a spiritual understanding of ourselves. However, as this inner journey of self-discovery is a process, future research needs to clarify the issues raised in this article possibly extending it using grounded theory methodology. In addition, investigating the consciousness of people who have practised IM for a longer period



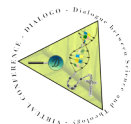
is necessary so we can acquire a greater understanding of intuition associated with shifting our level of consciousness as mentioned in the Theory of the 6 Main Levels of Consciousness.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

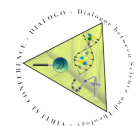
Our special thanks go to Dr Caroll Hermann who was responsible for the online questionnaires and technical parts of parts of the study and worked on some of the corrections. In addition, we thank Begoña Giraldes for preparing the graphic representations of our data and all the participants who collaborated by sharing their inner experiences of IM with us.

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BIOGRAPHIES



Tina Lindhard was born in Cape Town, South Africa. She earned a MA in Transpersonal Psychology from Sofia University (ITP) and a PhD in Consciousness Studies, from the International University of Professional Studies

She is an academic mentor at IUPS, and a certified teacher of the Arka Dhyana Intuitive Meditation method. Her prime interest is on the discovery of the Self and her research involves the connection between the heart and the different levels of Consciousness, the Female Principle, embryology, intuition, and the spirituality of Paleolithic women. Her publications on these different topics are all available on Research Gate.

Dr. Lindhard is currently president of the nonprofit organization CCASpain and also chair of Consciousness Research of CICA, an international scientific organization. She is also a fully trained cranial sacral therapist.



Steve Edwards is currently an Emeritus Professor and Research Fellow at the University of Zululand. Qualifications include doctoral degrees in Psychology and Education and registrations in South Africa and the United Kingdom as Clinical, Educational, Sport and Exercise Psychologist. Steve's research, teaching and professional activities are mainly concerned with health promotion. He has supervised many doctoral students, published much research, presented papers at many international conferences and served on boards of various national

and international organizations. Academic and professional awards include USA Fulbright Scholarship, South African National Research Foundation ratings and Psychological Society of South Africa Mentoring and Development award. He is happily married with two children, and four grandchildren. His research record is available on internet at: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Stephen_Edwards11.

APPENDIX A

Answers to Question 1 and 2, Participant No. and Sex

P1 By practicing Arka Dhyana, I feel that it is easier for me to balance my mind and body. I feel more complete, more centered. Also, the feeling of faith became stronger. It is easier to overcome fears, as well as make decisions. The feeling of confidence that everything is going as it should be. My mood became more stable, without sudden changes. Practice helps to heal the body - if there are any unpleasant sensations or pain, Arka Dhyana helps to remove the pain completely or heal it. Directing your consciousness to the place in the body that hurts, consciousness begins to permeate this place and as it were enter into interaction with it, which ultimately brings the place that hurts with the whole body into balance and relieves the pain. the part of the body that hurts seems to exist separately from the whole body, but when you direct your consciousness in meditation to that part of the body, it becomes part of the whole body again and it is no longer separated from the whole body - so unpleasant and painful sensations go away

P1I feel the connection with the group even if i dont know everybody in person, it gave me a sense of serenity. The feeling that everything is indivisible, the feeling that everything is connected, has increased. I feel that the group was strong, subtle and receptive. I thank everyone who was involved in this research

P2 Male It has made me more aware of many aspects of light love and life. It is easily amalgamated into my existing meditative and contemplative practices

P2 Male "There are different layers and levels of heart consciousness involved in intuition; personal, social, and global, life, love, and light. Hands of light made me more aware of the mainly, old, sport injury issues on the right side of my body, which I am healing further: hip, lung, shoulder, throat and eye are all getting extra love and care. Socially our group gelled more in the fourth session. Many processes seemed similar to other group processes: intention, expectancies, attitudes, motivations, relationships, energy, sentience, awareness, consciousness. I have included other variables in my earlier,

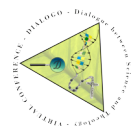
experiential descriptions. At the lower collective consciousness level, dreams, which initially flooded through, were represented by more than usual reptilian imagery, e.g., crocodile and snake, spiritual sexual imagery, which were energetically transmuted into intuition, love, empathy and compassion. Inner umbilini kundalini awakening, isangoma animus, embryology, Jung's (1995) active imagination, Sufi imaginal world, phallic clitoral physicality, lower-level animal unconsciousness, ancestral calling, feet-sand running, integration of sea and river ancestors, rewinding for fast forward planet generational healing. Traditional spiritual images included Zulu isangoma, the black Madonna of Monserrat and related African and Spanish geographical and historical associations, typically divine and feminine, as related to our group who were predominantly women. I found IM similar to my usual meditation and comfortably used personal, Christian, ancestral, HM and IM mantra interchangeably during practice. Differences noted was that my usual meditation, contemplation and/or prayer is relatively less past, whole body and Self-orientated and more psychophysiological, heart, personal, group, global and future-directed. IM is essentially more orientated towards knowing and global coherence towards healing. However, all these orientations appear inextricably interrelated

P3 Arka Dhyana has created in me a quick connect to source through my heart, I can do some small connective actions or thoughts such as head to heart and through the movement of energy I am received at home/connecting to essence. This connection has me feeling less alone, less misunderstood, more connected, supported and whole. I am more accepting of all parts of me through this meditation, where before i was critical of the negative, the shadow and the fear.

P3 This method I find unobtrusive and absent of judgements i have felt from not adhering to previous meditation régimes. I find myself seeking the meditation out in times of stress or when i need connection. I find it naturally fitting in to my lifestyle without having the make room for it. The connection made means I have invited it in and we are at home together. After this course I feel that I have most certainly embarked on a journey which has already taken me to other realms, previously unknown to me. I am excited by this newfound deep connection and the recognition of self that I have already experienced. I realize this journey has only just begun but I have already opened up, thanks to the connection, I am lighter and more trusting of my intuition and my previously unacknowledged connection where I could see connection but had previously written it off as coincidence, and randomness. I want to share the path to this connection with all I meet and all my loved ones, but I don't quite know how to share with them all that Tina and Arka have opened up to me

P4 I feel I get in touch with Spirit in a naturally, organic, & faster way

P4 I have acquired the capacity to let go and let Spirit catch me..
P5 This method had brought me back to a place of remembrance of how much more I am than this body and this experience on



earth. Through my daily challenges I now have something to continuously return too, that helps me feel less stressed and more connected to myself and my higher power resulting in me flowing through challenges with more grace and acceptance.

P5 I generally feel very relaxed after practicing and hungry for some unknown reason. But I for sure feel more connected to my body and my soul. I have a grounded ness and surety of myself and my decisions.

P6 It has allowed me to recognize different 'parts' within me and that that is ok.

P6 I have become aware of energies and vibrations externally of me and in other people. It is made me MORE sensitive to that energy I feel in other people.

P7 I finally sit down and go inwards! I judged me for not doing so, I started to feel an 'urgency' to meditate for some time and feel relief for this technique to come my way, perfect timing!

P7 I feel at each breath that the touch of my hands on my body feel like one. And every time I make the sounds, my presence 'sits' more in the part of the body I touch. I feel the heart space getting bigger, spacious even and feel an excitement, like an orgasmic feeling, stronger every week.

P8 The practice helped to still my mind and calm and still the agitation and anxiety in my body, bringing me into the body and heart-focus more easily.

P8 I noticed that being in the group practice space would bring up a kind of jittery feeling and agitation that would settle by the end of the practice. I was able to observe how busy and agitated my mind is. I was surprised at how it works so well, I didn't expect that. The sounds and sensation helped to focus my mind so that it didn't drift off and dissociate as is its usual habit. I am still impatient with the whole procedure when I do it by myself. The final session helped me to experience the process more viscerally, especially experiencing the spirit body so clearly. I practiced that this morning. It does help me to feel centered and integrated and aligned in my heart, soul and body after practicing.

P9 It gave me a tool to bring peace in me

P9 The practice felt heart expanding

P10 It has opened a new way of approaching my inner being that I feel I need to connect with more so its a positive move in my life

P10 I felt an escape from everyday problems (except when the unstable internet cut us off in sessions). It was a relief to remind myself there is a way to find this peace and time for connection. I still have difficulty quietening my thoughts but have this as a much desired goal.

P11 Not sure yet

P11 It helped me focus

P12 Male I feel that it has given me inner peace. At the same time, it has helped me to systematize the meditation and connect in a quicker and deeper way with my being. I feel this is just the beginning. I have felt especially connected with the group during the sessions on Tuesdays and Tina transmit lot of energy. It has helped me specially to have faith that as you go/

on the go, everything goes well itself and I was surprised to see that some thoughts or desires about future situations has become reality exactly in the way I visualized them.

P12 Male I have experienced very deep connection moments, specially during the sessions on Tuesdays. I felt the energy in my hands, going through my body to deeper layer. I have felt my heart beating in unison with the earth and my being traveling to the vacuum. I have felt my hands and arms of light and I glimpsed how I can touch other people with them to give them light, love and peace. I feel often the impulse of touching the head of the people with the intention of giving them calm. I cannot do it because is not considered correct, but now I feel I can get focus and do it, always with looking for them benefit. Things that I still do not have sufficiently worked on have been removed and they have reappeared to me so that I can work them from the heart and unconditional love.

I am very grateful to Tina, Ángeles, Ángela and all the people who are part of this team, as well as my classmates. Thanks from my heart to all of you.

P13 I feel less mental noise and more physical well-being.

P13 Lot of sensation of peace and calm. Very restful.

P14 I have learned to connect with my heart, that is something I desired to do, and it increases a lot my wellness and happiness. Also it has taught me in a very direct way to connect with all my body and my soul, reaching inner peace even during pain situations, physical discomfort or illness. That learning makes me feel better physically and increases my faith.

P14 I have learned a lot to handle the physical situations that occur to me after meditation, the blocks and tensions that come to light when I relax my body. I have learned not to be scared, to understand them as something positive, and above all, to overcome them by letting myself go, letting my body do its thing without the intervention of my mind. It's amazing how they disappear if my mind doesn't intervene. It has been a very positive experience.

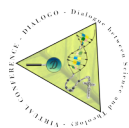
P15 It has apport me another technique to connect and stop the rhythm of thoughts. I like the emphasize of touching ourselves with love and the feeling of my hands dipping in my body. I have discovered some energy blocks and a new technique to keep working on them.

P15 M I have experienced calm and a quick cessation of thoughts. Blockages have been expressed as a feeling of great heaviness, even cramps. At the end it is difficult to return to daily life maintaining the calm generated. Thank you for sharing this method and offering us the possibility to continue practicing

P16 Male I feel more inner peace and forgiveness feelings to people who hurts me surface in myself.

P16 Male I have sometimes felt warmth in the hands-body and in the middle of the session my emotionality has changed to a state of happiness (I have even smiled without trying to do so) After them I am left with inner peace and a feeling of liberation.

P17 It has helped me to get techniques to be able to connect with my inner being in a more effective way.



P17 It is a practice that has benefited me very positively because I am a person with a lot of inner movement (hurry rush), my head does not stop. Thanks to this meditation I can give it (my head) peace.

P18 Reconnecting with my unity

P18 Reconnection

P19 Male It's still early to describe specific benefits, but I have the sensation of being a bit more focus during the day. That is more than I expected. During the last period of time that I have lived shut at home I become more conscient about the negative things that I suppress my body and mind. Actually, during my meditation, I feel gratitude, emotion, something opposed to negativity. I appreciate a lot the time I meditate or try to meditate, like a resort to my inner self. It's difficult to explain this kind of things. I hope my words are useful. I have the intention of incorporate the method in my routine, but it takes time.

P19 Male For now I'll keep practicing. I think the previous answer, in part, answers this. A hug.

P20 It has contributed in a very happy and precise way.

P20 I have felt transported in space and time, without fear and very happy.

P21 Acknowledging my inner world.

P21 I feel well about what I learned.

P22 It increases my feeling of well-being a little ... and balance
P22 For me, the experience is positive and some of the positive things that happened to me before have multiplied. And other negative (ones) seem to be reduced for the moment ... For me it will be a matter of seeing it in time ... Thank you

P23 Be more aware of my inner desires, listening to my inner voice. Taking away the shame for being who I am, showing me more authentic without regrets or worries.

P23 It has been incredible to see that when you give the soul space, everything begins to position itself more according to how it should be, how it feels good. I feel like I have more energy, more control of time (expanding or contracting it), more connection with the people around me.

It has given me understanding on a deep level: after doing the practice and being in the relaxation part, everything starts to settle into my mind effortlessly and I understand events in my life.

P24 I have learned to start meditating, what I used to do was relax; I have felt connected, calm, emotions, both from others and mine, do not drag me down. I am more serene and in contact with my body.

P24 Entering to meditate with mind to heart helps me calm my emotions. I want to do it because I connect more with my body, and in silence, listening and feeling my body. Afterwards I feel lighter and I have changed attitudes for the better. The end of meditation, looking at the hands and saying "the destiny is in your hands" gives me strength and determination.

P25 I liked discovering that uniting mind and heart calms me.

P25 I have felt very good but I have not spent much time practicing.

P26 Less fear

P26 Permissive with my painful emotions

P27 Male It has allowed me to explore new sensations in my heart during meditation.

P27 Male I have been able to meditate much deeper. I have come to unexplored places within me.

P28 It has given me a new tool for my practices and a different vision of what a meditative practice can contain.

P28 The possibility of feeling a natural and powerful connection with my Limbic and Thalamic brain, and how they responded when invited to approach the heart area.

P29 Male Greater internal joy, easier meditations, unconditional love, more secure, closer to my higher Self.

P29 Male The initial communication between the participants is a total success

P30 Male I have managed to reduce stress and anxiety at specific moments, feeling calmer and allowing me to face the day more positive. I feel that it improves my emotional stability and makes me more aware of things that went unnoticed. In summary, I feel that it has been a very rich and very valuable experience.

P30 Male I have felt very good, the only thing left for me is to be more constant on my part in performing the meditations because I feel that my obligations (work) and thoughts still govern me.

P31 Male Connecting with my balance, getting to experience unity in body, mind and spirit.

P31 Male I have connected with myself and I have noticed how I have released physical and energy blocks

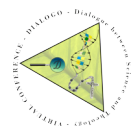
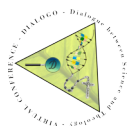


Table 1: Arka Dhyana, Intuitive Meditation (IM) Assessment (N31) Means Table.

Assessment Variable	Pre-test	Post-test	Wilcoxon Z	Probability
Resilience	17.55 (1.61)	18.00 (1.81)	4.87	.000
Total Spirituality	112.48 (17.38)	120-19 (14.56)	3.92	.000
Self-Discovery	18.03 (4.18)	19.68 (4.04)	3.34	.001
Relationships	32.32 (3.67)	33.16 (2.89)	1.67	.094
Eco-Awareness	62.13 (12.15)	67.35 (9.54)	3.76	.000
Feeling Consciousness	100.12 (15.96)	110.94 (13.13)	4.23	.000

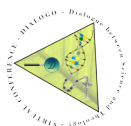
Table A 2: Content analysis of words used

Words	Frequency Count	Number of People	Participant No.	% Participants
1a) feel	32	18	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 19, 21, 23, 24, 28, 30	58%
1b) feeling(s)	16	10	1, 3, 7, 8, 15, 16, 22, 24, 28, 30	32.2%
1c) felt	12	9	3, 6, 9, 10, 16, 20, 24, 25, 30	29%
1a+ 1b + 1c Feel plus equivalent terms	60	23	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 30	74.1%
2a) connect/connection	33	13	1, 3, 5, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 23, 24, 28, 31	41.9%
2b) resort to	1	1	19	3.22%
2c) in touch with	1	1	4	3.22%
2d) aligned	1	1	8	3.22%
2e) closer to/gelled	2	2	2, 29	6.45%
2f) give the soul space	1	1	23	3.22%
2a+2b+2c+2d+2e+2f Connection plus equivalent words	39	18	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 23, 24, 28, 29, 31	58 %



SECTION 3

3a) self	14	12	2, 3, 5, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 19, 23, 29, 31	22.58%
3b) soul	4	4	5, 8, 14, 23	12.9%
3c) essence	1	1	3	3.22%
3d) being	10	8	8, 10, 12, 13, 17, 19, 22, 23	25.8%
3e) spirit/spiritual	6	4	2, 4, 8, 31	12.9%
3f) reconnecting with unity	1	1	18	3.22%
3a+b+c+d+e+f Self plus equivalent terms	35	18	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 29, 31	58%
4a) meditation	14	10	1, 3, 12, 14, 17, 19, 24, 27, 29, 30	31%
4b) practice	12	8	1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 17, 23, 28,	25.8%
4a+b Meditation plus practice	26	15	1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 12, 14, 17, 19, 23, 24, 27, 29, 30	48.39%
5a) peace	9	7	9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17	22.5%
5b) calm	9	7	8, 12, 13, 15, 24, 25, 30	22.5%
5c) serene/serenity	2	2	1, 24	6.45%
5a+5b+5c Peace plus equivalent terms	20	13	1, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 24, 25, 30	41.9%
6) heart	16	11	2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14, 24, 25, 27, 28	34.1%
7) time	13	10	3, 7, 10, 12, 16, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25	31%
8) part	10	8	1, 3, 6, 7, 12, 19, 23, 30	25.8%
9a) Well-being/well/wellness	8	7	1, 8, 12, 13, 14, 21, 22	22.58%
9b) good	3	2	25, 30	6.45%
9a+b Well-being/well/wellness +good,	11	9	1, 8, 12, 13, 14, 21, 22, 25, 30	29%
10) mind	12	9	1, 8, 10, 14, 19, 23, 24, 25, 31	24.8%
11) energy	8	7	2, 3, 6, 12, 15, 23, 31	21.7%
12) hand	8	6	2, 7, 12, 15, 16, 24	18.5%
13) light	8	5	2, 3, 12, 14, 24	15.5%
14) love	9	5	2, 3, 12, 15, 29,	15.5%
15) positive/ly	6	5	10, 14, 17, 22, 30	15.5%



16) focus	5	4	8, 11, 12, 19	12.4%
17) relax	4	4	5, 14, 23, 24	12.4%
18) whole	7	4	1, 2, 3, 8,	12.9%
19) touch	6	4	4, 7, 12, 15	12.9%
20) head	4	3	3, 12, 17	9.68%
21) learn/learned	6	3	14, 21, 24,	9.68%
22) stress	3	3	3, 5, 30,	9.68%
23) faith	3	3	1, 12, 14	9.68%
24) balance	4	3	1, 22, 31	9.68%
25) heal	5	2	1, 2	6.45%
26) anxiety	2	2	8, 30	6.45%
27) unity	2	2	18, 31	6.45%
28) Joy	1	1	29	3.23%

SECTION 3

