

Abraham Abulafia

ONE OF THE KEY personalities in the development of Jewish mysticism, sometimes referred to as the father of ecstatic Kabbalah, was Abraham Abulafia, born in Saragossa, Spain, in the thirteenth century. The year of his birth was 1240 CE, a symbolic year in kabbalistic cosmology, as we will see.

The combined twelfth and thirteenth centuries were arguably the most prolific period in the publication of kabbalistic teachings. Prior to this time, the Kabbalah was highly secretive, and there were stringent rules about who could learn these mysteries. For well over a thousand years, Kabbalah had been almost entirely an oral tradition except for a handful of early manuscripts, including the *Sefer Yetzirah* (*The Book of Creation*), a short, extremely esoteric writing that was composed completely in a code that even today is difficult to decipher.

Ironically, kabbalistic ideas first began to be expressed more openly in the twelfth century as a reaction to the highly rational teachings of the great Jewish

philosopher, Moses Maimonides (1135–1204). Maimonides, known more familiarly as Rambam (Rabbi Moses Ben Maimon), had extraordinary influence in his time as a prolific writer and as one of the primary judges to whom communities turned for opinions regarding Jewish law. He was fully versed in Aristotelian logic and Greek philosophy. Having an extraordinary intellect, he tended to rationalize many of the mystical aspects of Judaism. In so doing, he became controversial for traditionalists. To this day, some Orthodox Jewish practitioners view him with considerable skepticism.

Those who reacted to Rambam's rationalism placed great emphasis on the mystical aspects of the tradition: the nature of God, the creation story, the existence of angelic and demonic forces, the secret reasons for the Jewish laws—these and many other subjects were addressed. In the thirteenth century, this mystical movement gained considerable momentum, which led to the compilation of the most influential kabbalistic work: the *Zohar*.

The actual dates of composition of the *Zohar* are not clearly known, but major parts of the manuscript were circulated in the latter part of the thirteenth century. The individual considered to be its most likely author, Moshe de Leon, was born some time close to the year 1240 CE, and thus was almost the same age as Abraham Abulafia.

This year, 1240 CE, is quite meaningful for Jewish mystics. It happens to coincide with the Hebrew calendar year 5000, which represents the biblical measurement from the time of the first, primordial human: *Adam Kadmon*. While fundamentalist Jewish practitioners believe that Adam and Eve were literally in the Garden of Eden five thousand years ago, the mystical perspective (the Kabbalah) is that there was a dramatic shift in consciousness five thousand years ago that opened up a new level of awareness for human beings—an awareness that distinguishes humans from the rest of the animal kingdom. Indeed, the full

recognition of this awareness—the ability to be aware of awareness—is one of the major plateaus of the ongoing process of enlightenment.

Kabbalists agree with modern science that the earth is billions of years old. However, while science tends to focus on scientific method in fields such as geology, anthropology, paleontology, and so forth to distinguish eras of history, Kabbalists and other mystics are more interested in “consciousness”—understanding the nature of the mind itself—as a measure to determine major changes in life on earth. In this sense, Kabbalah follows evolutionary principles.

According to Kabbalah, humans today represent only one plateau on an evolutionary ladder that leads toward levels of consciousness that will transcend our current level. This potential of higher awareness is an elementary belief of mystical Judaism; it is called the coming of messianic consciousness, or simply the messiah.

The Hebrew year 5000 represents entry into the sixth millennium in the Jewish reckoning of time. From a mystical perspective, each thousand years is like a day, and thus the sixth millennium is represented by the sixth day of creation in Genesis. We see in the Torah that the sixth day of Genesis is when human consciousness came into its fullness. The implicit direction of consciousness is to transcend this level to reach the seventh day, the Sabbath day, when messianic consciousness will appear.

So the Kabbalist sees the thousand years that begin in 1240 CE as the final millennium of transition that leads up to a new species in the universe, one with messianic consciousness. The coming seventh millennium will begin in the Hebrew calendar year 6000, by our reckoning, 2240 CE, a little over two hundred years from now. According to the kabbalistic model, this is a time when the entire world will experience a paradigm shift, and people will relate to each other and to all of creation in an entirely new way.

Of course, the challenge before us is the ability to survive the next couple of hundred years. Our current level of consciousness may not necessarily be well suited for survival of the species. This is a major reason why the individual quest for more enlightened actions, each person's impact on the universe of consciousness, is so important in our time.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Abraham Abulafia, who was a deeply learned Kabbalist, believed that his birth-time signified that he was to play a powerful, prophetic role in moving the world toward this messianic view. As a twenty year old, for example, he traveled to the land of Israel to seek out the river *Sambatyon*, which is a magical, impassable boundary that in Jewish mythology stranded the ten lost tribes of Israel somewhere outside of the Holy Land. This mysterious river represents a barrier that moves with enormous force during the six days of the week—nothing can cross it. However, on the seventh day (Shabbat, thus the name Sambatyon), it is quiet and peaceful. The problem is that it cannot be crossed on that day because in traditional Judaism, travel (except within strict boundaries) is not permitted on the Sabbath day.

Abulafia's desire to search for this mythical river was clearly a pilgrimage. From the kabbalistic perspective, it was a journey to explore the metaphorical barriers that need to be encountered to break out of the limits of ordinary consciousness. Abulafia called these mystical barriers "knots" that had to be untied to liberate one's awareness. In his own description of his primary goal, Abulafia said his intent was "to unseal the soul, to untie the knots which bind it." This idea of untying knots is connected with unraveling the confusion and complexity of the world. These confusions and complexities are like bundles of tight knots in a strand of rope that was originally simple and straight.

Imagine a knot tied in a rope. It acts as a dam, blocking and complicating the smooth flow of one's finger down the line of the rope. In Abulafia's view, when

the knots are untied, the natural flow can be reestablished, and we will automatically enter the realm of original unity. This is his metaphor of finding and liberating the ten lost tribes, which represent multiplicity, to return to oneness.

Unfortunately, Abulafia never completed his search. When he arrived in Acre, a war was being fought at the time in the Middle East between the Mamelukes and the Tatars. This was a literal barrier he could not overcome. He was forced to leave quickly. We learn from this that the knots keeping us from full liberation take many forms that are the conditions and circumstances of our lives.

His early journey in the exploration of mystical secrets was a harbinger of things to come in Abulafia's life. In his early thirties, immersed in special contemplative techniques, he experienced intense prophetic visions and began to refer to himself by the name of *Raziel*, which means "secrets of God." His visions were overwhelming; he often described being blinded and lost. Still, he pursued his practices and lived on an edge that was strange for most traditional Jewish practitioners; there was too much ecstasy!

Indeed, Abulafia was so unique in his practices, mainstream Judaism marginalized his work and he remained virtually unknown until the middle of the twentieth century. While a few scholars of the latter half of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries discussed Abulafia in some of their books, it was not until Gershom Scholem's work *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (1941), that a new light was cast upon the significance of these eight-hundred-year-old teachings. Scholem devoted an entire chapter in his book to Abulafia's "theory of ecstatic knowledge." One of Scholem's students, Moshe Idel, has contributed a major scholarly effort, publishing a number of books that focus on Abulafia's life and his practices.

This "ecstatic" mystical approach was a phenomenon that strongly impacted on the Jewish world of the thirteenth century. A number of other individuals

during that time, including Maimonides' son, Abraham, described undertaking certain ecstatic practices. Abraham, himself, was drawn to participating in mind-altering Sufi practices. Some scholars even associate ecstatic Kabbalah with Moshe de Leon, the probable author of the *Zohar*.

We can only imagine the enthusiasm and fervor shared by these students of mysticism as they engaged in contemplative practices. Many of their writings have been lost, but the works that survived—along with other documents from Jewish authors in this time period—are among the most influential teachings in the entire library of Jewish mystical thought.

Abraham Abulafia stands out from all the others in that he developed a specific system of contemplative practice. These are techniques designed to access one's own inner guide, called in Hebrew *me'orer penimi*, an "inner mover," who "opens the closed doors." This inner mover is our own, personal spiritual mentor, "who will guide us through the veils of confusion." Our mentor can be a human teacher we have already met or about whom we have knowledge, or it can be an unusual teacher who will appear to us in some form we will recognize as our practice deepens. Our personal teacher could show up mysteriously in a moment of perception observing the way a bird flies, how clouds move, the way a stranger acts, reflections in a store window, a twinge of feeling when we experience someone in pain, or innumerable other signs. Each moment is filled with potential teachers if we have the eyes to see and the ears to hear in other levels of reality.

DISSOLVING KNOTS

How do you untie the knots of your souls? Imagine the soul as a vessel made of clear glass surrounded by light, but the glass is encased in a fabric, woven in tight knots, that prevents light from entering (or exiting). You will see later that

this metaphor is inadequate, for everything is composed of light—even the so-called glass itself and the fabric that surrounds it—but as a starting point, this is a useful tool for beginning meditation practices.

The imaginary fabric described above is often referred to in mystical teachings as “veils” that separate us from the full understanding of things. These veils are mainly composed of the “material” of our earliest conditioning, beliefs, ideas, prejudices, judgments, criticisms, desires, aspirations, hopes, and fears. For most of us, the fabric is a thick mat of personality traits and ego assumptions that seem at first to be almost impenetrable.

Abulafia’s method is to concentrate the mind on something specific that will, by its nature, dissolve the knots that hold the fabric together. The theory is simple and direct. It is based on the principle that we become what we immerse in. If you jump into a pool of water, you get wet all over. If it is a pool of ink, your skin gets dyed. If you spend all of your time reading current events, your mind will constantly turn to the subject material that it has absorbed. If you sit quietly and simply take notice of your thoughts, you will soon realize that you have a fascinating capability of observing your own mind; you can watch your thoughts, how they arise, how they are sustained, and how they inevitably evaporate and disappear.

If you concentrate on and repeat sounds and words that quiet the mind, you will eventually enter a transcendent dimension of the pure soul, a place of peaceful calmness and gentle tranquility. In this quiet mind-state, knots automatically begin to unravel. At some point, small openings appear in the fabric, and pinpoints of light enter the glass. This light is so powerful and so penetrating, you will experience a moment of truth, so to speak. This momentary vision can permanently influence you. In an instant of realization, you can gain a certain confidence that will arise as a result of your direct experience. That is to say,

when only a few knots are loosened, you can see some form of light or truth that pulls you to it. This attraction often becomes a continual urge to engage in spiritual practices that can loosen and untie more and more knots.

Abulafia used the letters of the Hebrew alphabet and names of God as primary images upon which his concentrative techniques were founded. Each Hebrew letter has been the object of intense study among Kabbalists, each has been the subject of hundreds of chapters. A letter's intrinsic meaning, the words that start with that letter, its shape, its placement in the alphabet, its numeric value (for example, a = 1, b = 2, c = 3, etc.), the numeric value of words and entire phrases, where in the mouth a letter is pronounced—all these and many other aspects are explored. But we do not have to be kabbalistic scholars to follow Abulafia's technique, for although he was learned in all aspects of Kabbalah, he leaned more heavily on intuitive, inner revelation than on intellectual expertise. We will work with Abulafia's technique in the next chapter, but first let us experience a special chant that relies entirely on our intuition.

Abulafia's Practices

JUDAISM IS NOT well known for its contemplative practices. The primary focus for students of Judaism is and always has been the study of Talmud and Torah. Most people who have not undertaken this kind of dedicated study/practice are unaware of its power as a contemplative experience. When one immerses in hours of intense Talmudic engagement, the experience is often described as a mind-state that exemplifies that of a meditation practitioner: expansive feelings of well-being, a new level of calmness, a sharpening of one's sensory experience, and a fresh clarity of mind.

Because Talmudic study is challenging in its requirement for one to be fluent in Hebrew and Aramaic, as well as to be able to engage highly intricate thought problems that can only be appreciated through the use of unique logic, relatively few individuals are able to appreciate the results of this kind

of study as a contemplative practice. Yet it accomplishes two important results: a transformed mind and an expanded breadth of intellectual skills.

Aside from the study of Talmud and Torah, however, there are numerous contemplative practices in Judaism. One of the most popular forms is based upon chanting one of the highest “names of God” in Hebrew, the four consonants of the ancient Hebrew name of God, the tetragrammaton, often written as y-h-v-h. These letters can be chanted using the five primary vowels. I have already mentioned Abraham Abulafia as one of the few writers who wrote about this method in detail, but these techniques were described as early as the ninth century. It is believed that many practices go all the way back to Talmudic times, two thousand years ago, along with other secret transmissions that metaphorically were associated with traveling in a mystical chariot to higher realms of awareness.

The principle behind this practice is that each of us is endowed with divine sparks, and each person is created in the “image” of God. That is to say, the source of creativity that rests within each individual is identical to the creative urge out of which this world unfolds. In essence, the universe as we know it is characterized by Kabbalists as a “thought” in the mind of God. It follows that being created in the image of God does not mean that we resemble the appearance of God, which would be an absurd conclusion, instead we resemble the Divine in that we have the power to create new universes through our own thoughts and actions.

We experience this power when we closely investigate our own minds and recognize the continual creation of thought-universes as an ongoing process. When we are deeply engaged in our thoughts, we become numb to the physical reality in which we are standing during those moments. We seem to disappear into our thoughts, and these inner worlds become our reality.

We all know the story of the sage who awakens from a dream about a butterfly wondering which is the truth: was he dreaming about a butterfly, or is a butterfly now dreaming about him? Many traditions, and mystics in general, believe that our mundane reality is nothing but a dream that we sustain throughout each day and that we constantly create new elements in this dream. For each of us, our relative reality is our individual dream.

In addition, a mystic would say that each person is a vehicle of divine expression. Our actions, words, and thoughts act out divine providence, and some believe that free will also plays a role in this process. So we are not simply robots, doing things that are preordained, but are free agents, so to speak, who individually affect the way life unfolds. When we are confused (which is most of the time), we confuse things that influence the way the world turns. When we are clear, the expressions of our actions are also clear.

The foundation principle of Abulafia's practice, according to Kabbalah, is that worlds are created with primordial sounds ("And God SAID, let there be light."). Vowels represent these primordial sounds. Five vowels in particular are considered to be primary, with the others as secondary. As described earlier, the five primary vowels of Judaism are Oh (as in *tow*), Ah (as in *pa* or *ma*), Aa (as in *say*), Ee (as in *bee*), and Uu (as in *do*).

For Abulafia, each vowel is associated with a specific head movement, which is graphically represented in the adjoining illustration. The movements are connected with the way vowels are written in Hebrew. The sound Oh is a dot over a letter, thus we raise our head upward and then return to center when intoning this sound. The sound Ah is a line under a letter—we turn our heads toward the left shoulder, parallel to the ground and then return to center when sounding this letter. The sound Aa is represented by two dots on a line parallel to the ground, so we do the reverse of the last movement—we turn our heads to the right shoulder

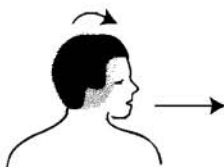
Fig. 4—Abulafia's Head Movements



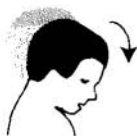
Chanting the sound **Oh**, slowly lift your head and then return to center.



Chanting the sound **Ah**, slowly turn your head to left and return to center.



Chanting the sound **Aa**, slowly turn your head to the right and return to center.



Chanting the sound **Ee**, slowly lower your head and return to center.



Chanting the sound **Uu**, looking straight ahead, slowly rock your head forward and backward and then return to center.

and then return to center. The sound Ee is a dot under a letter, thus we lower our heads and return to center when making the Ee sound. Finally, the Uu sound is represented as three dots on an angle, and it is represented by a dot in the middle of a vertical line. The associated head movement is forward and backward and then returning to center. At first these head movements are emphasized when we intone each respective vowel sound. After a short time, the movements become very subtle, but we always have a sense of each movement when doing this practice. This helps us sustain the sequence of sounds, which become fairly complicated in advanced practice.

In Chapter 2, we learned a system of vowel sounds and visualizations that are associated with the Tree of Life. The practice of that technique leads one to a state of balance and harmony. Abulafia's system is somewhat different. His sounds represent vowels, as they are written in Hebrew, coupled with specific head movements. While the earlier system was calming and settling, Abulafia's system is more directed toward developing clarity and concentration. His method is easy to describe, but takes considerable practice and commitment to master. Yet, it offers the practitioner a potential to develop extraordinary skills in concentration. The development of concentration is the foundation for all advanced spiritual practice.

When the selected vowels are used with names of God, it is as if one is creating new universes. As mentioned earlier, the most transcendent God-name is the tetragrammaton y-h-v-h. When each letter is pronounced, this name would read *yod-hey-vov-hey*. However, in the basic practice of adding the vowel Oh, for example, to the four consonants, we would derive *yoh, boe, voe, boe*. With the vowel Ah, it would be *yah, bah, vah, bah*.

Sitting still, emptying your mind, chanting these consonants and vowels with full focus and clarity, you are emulating the essential creative force. By keeping

sharp and unconfused, you are creating pure universes of unadulterated sound vibrations. You should attempt to practice in that purity of heart.

LISTEN TO TRACK 3

Abulafia basic chants

It is much easier to learn this practice by doing it than by reading it. Turn now to Track 3. (A written description of the practice is included in the Appendix.)

COMBINING DOUBLETS

One of the fundamental techniques taught by Abulafia is to chant “doublets.” A doublet is made up of a vowel combined with a consonant/vowel. Starting with the vowel Oh, a complete round could look like Oh—Yoh, Oh—Yah, Oh—Yay, Oh—Yee, Oh—You, Oh—Ho, Oh—Ha, Oh—Hey, Oh—He, Oh—Hu, Oh—Voh, Oh—Vah, Oh—Veh, Oh—Vee, Oh—Vu, Oh—Ho, Oh—Ha, Oh—Hey, Oh—He, Oh—Hu ... followed by another complete round like this but beginning with the Ah vowel. This round would be followed by one beginning with the Aa vowel, then one with the Ee and finally one with the Uu.

Notice that this description may seem confusing when you read it. The logical part of the brain wants to “figure it out.” But once you actually begin to experience the chanting process on a somatic level, with the body, you will see that it works much more easily than logic had suggested.

Begin by inhaling while simultaneously internally making the sound of the vowel. Then, with each exhalation, you will make the respective consonant. Always remember to move the head slightly as you make each sound, as this movement will assist your ability to stay with the correct sequence. Now please turn to Track 4, and you will soon experience a flow that will carry you through the practice.

LISTEN TO TRACK 4

Abulafia doublets

ABULAFIA'S PURE SOUND PRACTICE

The Oh Sound

1a. Imagine that you want to make a pure Oh sound. Now do it, chanting Oh on a full exhalation. Notice your mind. Each time it drifts, gently come back to the sounding of Oh. Feel where this sound vibrates in your body. Continue chanting the Oh sound three times, completely covering the entire exhalation with the sound.

1b. Continue making the Oh sound three more times, but as you are sounding the vowel, *slowly and gently raise your face and head* a few inches, as if you are looking up at the twelve on a large clock in front of you. Return to center as each exhalation comes to an end, so you will be moving your head three times, once on each exhalation. Now rest quietly for a few moments.

The Ah Sound

2a. Imagine you want to make a pure Ah sound. Chant Ah for a full exhalation. Each time the mind drifts, gently bring your consciousness back to the sounding of Ah. Notice where this sound vibrates in your body. Continue with three Ah sounds, completely covering the entire exhalation with the sound.

2b. As you are sounding Ah three more times, *slowly and gently move your head and face* toward your left shoulder as if looking at nine o'clock on a large clock in front of you. Return to center as each exhalation comes to an end, so you will be moving your head three times, once on each exhalation. Now rest quietly for a few moments.

The Aa Sound

3a. Repeat 2a for the pure Aa sound.

3b. Repeat 2b for the Aa sound, this time *moving your head toward the right shoulder* (three o'clock) and returning to center on each exhalation.

The Ee Sound

4a. Repeat 2a for the pure Ee sound.

4b. Repeat 2b for the Ee sound, this time *moving your head down toward the floor* (six o'clock) and returning to center on each exhalation.

The Uu Sound

5a. Repeat 2a for the pure Uu sound.

5b. Repeat 2b, this time with two movements: First, *push the head gently forward, looking forward*, as if moving the head into the middle of the clock. Next, *pull the head back to center and continue pulling back slightly behind center*. Finally, return to center. Both forward and backward and then returning to center are all done on each exhalation while simultaneously sounding the Uu.

Thus, we have five sounding vowels and six directions: up, left, right, down, forward and back, representing the six directions of space. During this practice, we become the center of the creation of a multitude of pure universes in all directions. This is very powerful, deeply settling, with extraordinary benefits on the level of purification.

REPEATING THE SEQUENCE

The order in which the head motions are described above is a sequence that in Abulafia practice is always followed: up, left, right, down, forward, and backward. In addition, these head movements are always associated with the vowel sounds: Oh (up), Ah (left), Aa (right), Ee (down), and Uu (forward and backward).

Now add the y-h-v-h, doing a round of vowels for each consonant: yoh, yah, yay, yee, yu; ho, hah, hey, he, hu; vo, vah, vay, vee, vu; and finally repeating ho, hah, hey, he, hu.

Practice this sequence of head movements and make the associated sounds, one per exhalation, for at least ten minutes, extending each exhalation to comfortable lengths. Listen to the sound of your own voice, feel the internal vibrations as the sound shifts, and allow the mind to rest as much as possible.

The important part of this initial process is to embody the sounds and head movements in a way that the sequence becomes natural and automatic. The head movements themselves should become increasingly subtle, so as not to make yourself dizzy, but they should always be done in some way, even if only an inch or so of each movement. It will not take long before you will not have to refer to the chart, but will in fact have an automatic ingrained relationship with the sounds and head movements.

VOCAL CHANTING AND SILENT CHANTING

Practice this process each day for at least fifteen minutes, but no longer than forty-five minutes. When you feel comfortable doing this sequence with your eyes closed, you can alternate vocal chanting with silent internal chanting, in which you continue to hear the sounds in your mind but you do not vocalize them.

While vocal chanting can only be accomplished on exhalations, internal silent chanting can easily be extended to both inhalations and exhalations. When

vocalizing, be sure to start the sound precisely at the moment you begin to exhale and to coordinate the completion of the sound with the end of the exhalation. When shifting to silent chanting, it is still important to synchronize the inner sound with the exact moments of beginning and ending each inhalation and exhalation, to the best of your ability. The object is to immerse oneself in the experience of the breath and its sound.

One way to do silent chanting is simply to follow the sequence of consonants combined with the regular sequence of vowels. There are numerous possibilities for determining which of many variations you will undertake. See the following charts.

VARIATIONS ON ABULAFIA'S Y-H-V-H

BREATH PRACTICE *(reading down each column)*

(Notice that each column could switch exhalations for inhalations and could be read from the bottom up instead of the top down; thus each column represents four possible variations, giving a total of sixteen variations. Column A is the easiest; Column C is the most difficult.)

(Keep in mind to minimally move the head according to the inner vowel sound: Oh (up), Ah (left), Aa (right), Ee (down), Uu (forward and backward).

		A	B	C
Inhale ...	1	Yoh	Yoh	Yoh
Exhale ...	2	Yah	Ho	Ha
Inhale ...	3	Yay	Voh	Vay
Exhale ...	4	Yee	Ho	He
Inhale ...	5	You	Yah	You
Exhale ...	6	Ho	Ha	Ho
Inhale ...	7	Ha	Vah	Vah
Exhale ...	8	Hey	Ha	Hey
Inhale ...	9	He	Yay	Yee
Exhale ...	10	Hu	Hey	Hu
Inhale ...	11	Voh	Vay	Voh
Exhale ...	12	Vah	Hey	Ha
Inhale ...	13	Vay	Yee	Yay
Exhale ...	14	Vec	He	He
Inhale ...	15	Vu	Vee	Vu
Exhale ...	16	Ho	He	Ho
Inhale ...	17	Ha	You	Yah
Exhale ...	18	Hey	Hu	Hey
Inhale ...	19	He	Vu	Vec
Exhale ...	20	Hu	Hu	Hu

ABULAFIA'S BREATH AND CHANTING PRACTICE WITH DOUBLETS

Each doublet is made up of an initial vowel, to be whispered internally on each inhalation, followed by a consonant on the exhalation. We will give here only the easiest form. There are many possible variations that the advanced practitioner will be able to work out on his or her own. Keep in mind to minimally move the head according to the inner vowel sound: Oh (up), Ah (left), Aa (right), Ee (down), Uu (forward and backward).

Y-H-V-H doublet sequence beginning with the vowel Oh.

Instructions: Read the columns vertically, top to bottom, first all of A, then B, C and D. Inhale the sound Oh silently, exhale and vocalize the respective vowel sound in a quiet whisper. Breathe normally, do not rush or intentionally lengthen the breath. Eventually the entire practice can be accomplished silently. When the Oh sequence is completed as shown, continue with the Ah sequence on next page.

	A	B	C	D
Inhale	Oh	Oh	Oh	Oh
Exhale	Yoh	Ho	Voh	Ho
Inhale	Oh	Oh	Oh	Oh
Exhale	Yah	Ha	Vah	Ha
Inhale	Oh	Oh	Oh	Oh
Exhale	Yay	Hay	Vay	Hay
Inhale	Oh	Oh	Oh	Oh
Exhale	Yee	He	Vee	He
Inhale	Oh	Oh	Oh	Oh
Exhale	You	Hu	Vu	Hu

Y-H-V-H doublet sequence beginning with the vowel Ah.

	A	B	C	D
Inhale	Ah	Ah	Ah	Ah
Exhale	Yoh	Ho	Voh	Ho
Inhale	Ah	Ah	Ah	Ah
Exhale	Yah	Ha	Vah	Ha
Inhale	Ah	Ah	Ah	Ah
Exhale	Yay	Hay	Vay	Hay
Inhale	Ah	Ah	Ah	Ah
Exhale	Yee	He	Vee	He
Inhale	Ah	Ah	Ah	Ah
Exhale	You	Hu	Vu	Hu

Y-H-V-H doublet sequences beginning with the vowels Aa, Ee and Uu.

After completing the Ah sequence, the practice continues with an Aa sequence, simply substituting Aa as the vowel sound, then an Ee sequence and finally a Uu sequence. The completion of the Uu sequence is considered one full round.

Many students practice until they are able to do a full round at the beginning of each meditation period. This requires considerable concentration and significantly deepens one's practice when a round is accomplished without mistakes. When the above sequence is mastered, new sequences that are more challenging can be developed by the student.