

Exercise of the Blossoming of the Rose by Roberto Assagioli, M.D.



From earliest times, certain flowers have been regarded as symbols of the Self in both the East and West. In China one finds the "Golden Flower," in India and Tibet the lotus, in Europe and Persia the rose. Examples are to be found in the *Roman de la Rose* of the French troubadours, the "Rose Eternal" so exquisitely evoked by Dante, and the rose at the center of the cross that is the symbol of a number of spiritual traditions.

Generally, the Self has been symbolized by the already opened flower, and although this is a static representation, its visualization can be quite stimulating and evocative. But even more effective in stimulating our superconscious processes is the dynamic visualization of a flower—that is, its development from a closed bud to the fully opened bloom.

Such a dynamic symbol of development corresponds to a profound reality that underlies human unfoldment and all of nature's processes. That is the intrinsic vitality or "livingness," working with irresistible pressure from within to produce ongoing growth and evolution. This inner life force is the agency that ultimately liberates our consciousness from its entanglements and leads to the revelation of our spiritual center—the Self.

Procedure

1. Sit quietly and comfortably. Close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, and relax your body.
2. Imagine a rosebush, with many flowers and buds. Now turn your attention to one of the buds. The bud is still enclosed in its green leaves, or sepals, but at the very top a rose-colored point can be seen. Focus on this image, holding it in the center of your awareness.
3. Now, in a slow movement, the sepals start to separate, turning their points outward and revealing the rose-colored petals, which are still closed... The sepals continue to open until you can see the whole bud.
4. Next, the petals also begin to unfold, slowly separating... until a fragrant, fully opened rose is seen... At this stage try to smell the perfume of the rose with its characteristic and unmistakable scent.
5. Now imagine that a ray of sunlight shines on the rose, giving it light and warmth... Take a few moments to experience the sunlit rose.

6. Look at the very center of the rose. You will see appearing there the face of a wise being, full of understanding and love for you.

7. Talk to him or her about whatever is important in your life now. Feel free to ask questions about what is meaningful to you: life issues, direction, or choices you may need to make. Take the time you need to communicate in this way. (If you like, you can pause at this point and write down what happened, amplifying and evaluating further whatever insights were gained.)

8. Now identify yourself with the rose: imagine that you become the rose, or that you take the whole flower inside yourself... Be aware that the rose—and the wise being—are always within you and that you can get in touch with them and draw on their qualities whenever you choose... Symbolically, you are this flower, this rose. The same life that animates the universe and has created the rose is enabling you to awaken and develop your innermost being and all that radiates from it.

9. Now imagine that you become the whole rosebush...Be aware that you are firmly planted in the earth, drawing nourishment from it ... Your leaves and flowers are growing upward, nourished by the energy and warmth of the sun's light.

10. Become aware of other rosebushes, other plants and trees—all animated by the same life energy, all part of the same planet, of the greater whole. Take some time to experience this... Then, whenever you like, open your eyes.

11. You may want to write about what happened or draw a picture, paying special attention to your dialogue with the sage, and to any insights that the exercise brought you.

Reference

Assagioli, R. (2000). *Psychosynthesis, A Collection of Basic Writing*. Amherst, Massachusetts: The Synthesis Center, Inc. pp. 188-190.