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## **1.8. Defocusing - Opening into the Vastness**

This aspect is often missing in meditation introductions. One could say that the instructions for advanced practitioners begin here.

However, it is also valuable for beginners to be aware of this and start defocusing at an early stage.

Meditation is not an exercise in concentration. Although we initially need concentration to enter a meditative state, meditation itself is open and expansive mindfulness.

When we lead our awareness into expansiveness, we can begin to sense God.

### **Exercise: Visual defocusing**

What defocusing means can be easily experienced with the visual sense:

1. Hold both index fingers with outstretched arms in front of you.
2. Focus your gaze on the fingertips.
3. Slowly move your arms to the side until they are to the right and left of your body.
4. Try to keep both index fingers in view during the movement.

For this, you must increasingly defocus your gaze. In the end, the fingers are only at the edges of your field of vision - it is precisely this expansiveness of perception that is the goal.

We apply this approach not only to the visual sense, but also to feeling and all of the senses.

Defocusing means not only perceiving individual sensations but becoming aware of all sensory impressions as a whole. This leads us to an all-encompassing mindfulness in the here and now.

This is where sensitivity to the spiritual realm will open up later.

### **How does this work practically in meditation?**

In meditation, we can begin to notice an additional perception alongside our meditation object. For example, we feel both the touch of the fingertips and the breathing. Then we add a third sensation - such as the pressure of the ground.

Gradually, we expand our awareness: we feel the ground, the fingertips, the breathing movement, hear a sound, notice a thought or an inner image.

Everything belongs to being present in this moment.

Through defocusing, we eventually grasp all physical sensations simultaneously, hear what there is to hear, and perceive even subtle visual impressions with closed eyes.

Over time, our consciousness expands further - initially to the space around us, and later to the spiritual realm as well.

Basically, this would happen by itself, even without practice, if we meditate long enough. By practicing this during meditation, we prepare ourselves for these changes.

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