

“Meditative Process and Design Process”, Proceeding of the 9th Sarasatr Conference, Chulalongkorn University, by Sareena Sernsukskul, 20-21 Oct, 05

Abstract

This ongoing project started eight years ago attempts to relate my personal experience in meditation to the design process. I first experienced meditation over ten years ago at Wat Ampawan in Singburi. The tradition I was introduced to was Samadhi. Breathing, the most basic form of existence was seen as the fundamentals of meditation. However, both meditative breathing and meditative walking were the focus during the practice. The process of meditation as I simplistically understood then was concentration in an undisturbed environment. It was only later that I had a deeper understanding of it as the state of mindfulness of the moment.

The ideas that regularly emerged during the one year of research done at the beginning of this project were concentration and repetition, giving rise to the question of how these could be integrated into the design process. The issues of meditation as a personal experience and of representing the now and the idea of doing nothing were also considered. If design indeed was defined as a plan that communicates to an audience, can a piece of work produced from one's personal world and out of spontaneity be considered as such? And can doing nothing be achieved in the demanding fast paced world of design? Were the meditative process and the design process a dichotomy? The research was experimental in nature depending mostly on practical findings as meditation is based more on experience than theory. However, literature as enhancement of understanding towards these issues was also used. The conclusion to the one year of research, however, remains limited as the understanding of meditation is synonymous to the understanding of life and vice versa.

The second phase of the research is ongoing and hypothetical. It shifts to the meditative process as mentality rather than as physicality where meditation is considered as a context for creativity.