



## **Serenity Prayer, by St. Francis**

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
Where there is injury, pardon;  
Where there is doubt, faith;  
Where there is despair, hope;  
Where there is darkness, light;  
Where there is sadness, joy;

O Divine Master, grant that I may not  
so much seek  
To be consoled as to console,  
To be understood as to understand,  
To be loved as to love;

For it is in giving that we receive;  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
And it is in dying of the self that we are born  
to eternal life.

- St. Francis of Assisi

In just a few sentences, this prayers seems to say it all. At the intellectual level, we may understand the words very well and can applaud its message, but the difficulty lies in practicing it. One can agree, for example, to "love" rather than "be loved", but until we internalize it by real practice, there is no value to the words. This can be easily practiced in our daily lives, but mundane desires and goals often shift our focus and we return to serving/pleasing ourselves. Meditation, then, serves to make conscious what has become sub-conscious; by thus bringing our weaknesses to the forefront, we continue the "dying of the self".