



## **You Are Not a Prisoner, by Andrew Cohen**

Q: Why is it important to practice meditation consistently?

A: You meditate to remind yourself that you are not a prisoner. Â If there is power in your meditation, if your experience of the Ground of Being is deep and profound, you will discover and discover, over and over and over again, that you are not a prisoner. Â You are not held captive by your own mind, nor are you imprisoned by your emotions. Â It sounds simple, but its so easy to forget. Â If all you're aware of is the endless roller coaster ride of thoughts and feelings, of course you will believe you are trapped. Â

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The Ground of Being is a deeper, infinitely more subtle dimension of your own consciousness that simply cannot be perceived by gross faculties of the conditioned mind and ego. Â You can't see it; you can't taste it; you can't touch it. Â So even if you have directly experienced the unconditioned freedom of that empty ground, when you return to the world of conditioned mind and ego, you are likely to doubt it. Â The mind simply cannot cognize this ground, and the ego cannot know it. Â That's why its very important to meditate as much as you can. Â If you meditate regularly, with a strong intention, you will keep rediscovering that you are not a prisoner. Â You cannot recognize that enough. Â Until your conviction in your own freedom is unwavering, and you're able to prove it through unbroken consistency in the way that you live, you should meditate everyday as if your life depended on it. Â You 'need' to keep having that experience. Â Each and every time you realize that you're not a prisoner, you gain a deeper confidence in the limitless, inherent freedom of that empty ground that is your own deepest Self. Â It builds a conscious conviction in no-limitation, and, as I teach it, this is the most significant purpose of meditation.

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--Andrew Cohen