

# Five Aspects of the Five Ways - 2 of 4 ~ Shinzen Young

00:00:00 Each one of the five ways goes back to at least one, if not many, historical traditions  
00:00:17 that were developed around the world, and not exclusively in the East from Buddhism,  
00:00:22 but they also link to traditions from other parts of the world, the West, Christianity  
00:00:29 and so forth.  
00:00:31 Because as I say, I tend to see the worldwide contemplative tradition as a unity.  
00:00:36 You could look back from the five ways and you could see the whole history of the development  
00:00:42 of contemplation from its shamanic origins through the arising of civilizations and through  
00:00:51 the seminal discoveries of the Buddha particularly, and then the Mahayana sort of merging with  
00:01:00 Zen and what came out of that, and then the Vajrayana, and then the sort of more non-dual  
00:01:06 approaches.  
00:01:07 All of that is behind it.  
00:01:10 And I could go into a long talk and have elsewhere as to the rich historical origins of each  
00:01:19 of the five ways.  
00:01:21 They have a past, but they also have, I believe, a future because they represent reworkings  
00:01:30 of those traditions.  
00:01:31 I don't claim that these are those traditions.  
00:01:34 I am attempting to make, represent a secular modern approach to these things.  
00:01:46 The spiritual clout I don't want to lose, the liberating clout that each one of them  
00:01:52 can lead to classical enlightenment, can lead to what I believe is the core spiritual experience  
00:02:00 of humanity.  
00:02:02 Certainly don't want to lose that.  
00:02:04 Cultural trappings, doctrinal trappings, things that are based on mythology or things that  
00:02:15 don't seem to have an empirical basis or don't seem probable logically, I have tried to take  
00:02:25 that out, for better or worse.  
00:02:28 It's an approach that will work for certain people and not work for other people, like  
00:02:33 all approaches.  
00:02:35 Every approach has strengths and weaknesses, and that's good because different things work  
00:02:41 for different people.  
00:02:42 This is one direction that a person could take if they wanted to explore what can be  
00:02:48 done creatively with what has come down to us from the past.  
00:02:53 Just one possible way to go.  
00:02:58 If you look carefully at the five way system, you'll notice it's all built on binary contrasts.  
00:03:06 Binary means one-on-one, one-on-one contrast, like black versus white, that's a binary contrast.  
00:03:16 That's intentional because when you study, when you do functional imaging of brain changes  
00:03:28 as the result of whatever, meditation or anything else, you can't actually image the brain function.  
00:03:39 You can just have two contrasting conditions and compare them.  
00:03:44 I designed the system to work that way.

00:03:47 There's a contrast between tracking ordinary sensory activity and tracking corresponding  
00:03:54 restful states.

00:03:56 There's a contrast between intentionally creating positive feel-image talk and just observing  
00:04:03 any and all feel-image talk.

00:04:06 There's a contrast between working with the subjective somatic visual and auditory experience  
00:04:13 versus objective somatic visual and auditory experience.

00:04:18 There's a contrast between relative rest, where you're focusing on restful qualities,  
00:04:26 and absolute rest, where you do nothing, etc., etc., etc.

00:04:31 Any one of those presents itself as a natural thing that can be studied with the imaging  
00:04:41 technology.

00:04:43 When I say that the five ways have a future, hopefully, by that I mean they've been set  
00:04:48 up based on what I know that scientists need when they do this kind of research so that  
00:04:57 their effects can be easily researched in subsequent generations.