

The Dyad By Edrid (Edward A. Riddle), and used with permission by Bill Savoie: 8/28/2017

This is a brief outline of instructions you can give people to teach them how to do Dyads. It describes the basic rules of the dyad. The end section lists some of the dyad instructions we have been using.

Set Up

Since this is a two-person meditation technique, first find a partner to work with. Sit down with the partner at a comfortable distance apart, facing each other. You can sit on chairs or sit on cushions on the floor. The partners should be at the same height, though. Sit with your back straight and with your head balanced above your spine. Keep your body relaxed and your breathing free and easy (not controlled).

At any point in time, one person is the active partner and the other is the receptive partner. Arbitrarily choose who will be active first. It changes every five minutes, so it really doesn't matter who starts.

Dyads are usually 40 minutes long, consisting of eight 5-minute periods. At the end of each 5-minute period, a bell rings and the partners change receptive and active roles. Each person, therefore, gets four active periods and four receptive periods.

Social Covenants of the Dyad

The partners make certain agreements to prevent interpersonal relationship issues (with their partner) from interfering.

Both partners are encouraged to be open to real interpersonal contact and to the truth. Both approach the dyad with the intent to be present for each other, to allow the other the freedom to experience whatever comes up for them, and to be open to any communications about what comes up. The receptive partner does not have to agree with what the active partner says, but should listen and try to understand.

They also agree to keep what is said during the dyad in confidence and not gossip about it to others. In addition, they agree not to comment about what the other says, not during the dyad or even afterwards. If something about their partner or what their partner said comes up while they are active in the dyad, they just let it go and focus on their own process.

Receptive Partner

The receptive partner has two roles: as the one who starts and stops the practice interval, and as the receiver of the active partner's communications.

Start/Stop: to start a 5-minute practice interval, the receptive partner gives the active partner his instruction. When the bell rings ending the period, he says, "thank you" to acknowledge the work done by the active partner and to indicate that the period is complete. Except for the instruction at the beginning and the "thank you" at the end, the receptive partner says nothing during the 5-minute period.

Receptive: As the active partner works on his instruction, the receptive partner just listens and tries to understand whatever the active partner says, keeping attention fully on the active partner for the whole five minutes. He endeavors to be an empty listener, and doesn't mentally judge or evaluate (good/bad, right/wrong) what the active partner says. He doesn't try to lead or teach the active

partner, nor does he try to sooth or take care of the active partner. He also avoids drawing attention to himself. He just receives from a state of emptiness and with an open heart.

Active Partner

At the beginning of the 5-minute interval, the active partner receives the instruction from the receptive partner and then sets out to comply with the instruction. This is either contemplating or attempting to perform some action, depending on what the instruction requires. He then communicates to the receptive partner what came up from his doing the practice. On average, the active partner should spend about half the time doing the intent of the instruction and half the time communicating what comes up.

When the active partner communicates, he does his best to get the receptive partner to understand what he is saying. He watches to see if the receptive partner is getting it, and does his best to make the message clear. He does not comment in any way on what his partner said during his turn as the active partner.

The active partner works on the same instruction (or set of instructions) for the entire 40-minute dyad.

Giving the Instructions

When the receptive partner gives the instruction, he should use the same exact wording each time. Try not to add extra words like “please” or “OK, so tell me...” or anything like that. Keep the wording clean.

The receptive partner should “mean it” when he gives the instruction to his partner. He gives the instruction as a request, for example, “Tell me what awareness is.” He is requesting that they really do this and then he listens to what they say in response. Even though the process might sometimes seem repetitive, you should avoid getting into a zombie-like state where you just say the words without meaning them.

Both partners should know what the instruction is trying to accomplish. If they don’t, they should discuss it with the instructor or with each other and get it clear before the dyad starts. In other words, keep it real.

The descriptions for the instructions presented here (below) are usually clear enough to get the process going on the right track.

Multiple instructions: some practices have multiple instructions. You do each one in order, and then repeat. To move to the next instruction, the active partner indicates with a nod or “OK” when he has completed the one he is on. The receptive partner then acknowledges with a “thank you” and gives the next instruction. You don’t have to finish all parts of an instruction set in one 5-minute period, but if someone seems to never quite get to the last instruction in a set, you can encourage them to be briefer. At the start of the next 5-minute period, they always should begin with the first instruction again.

Responding to the Instructions

There is no “right answer” to the dyad instructions. We are not looking for the partners to say the right thing, whatever that might be. The instructions are meant to help you explore your own mind so that you become more aware of your own states of awareness and how they function.

The active partner's responses are what come up when he attempts to comply with the instruction, nothing more, and nothing less. (If something comes up that is not important or relevant, they can just express it briefly and let go of it.)

The active partner should feel free to say whatever comes up as a result of his attempt to comply with the instruction. He should give himself some room to just truthfully explore what is arising in consciousness, without regard to its being deep, profound, or particularly relevant. If something comes up with emotion, he should show that emotion to his partner. The emotion, however, should not be directed at the receptive partner, but just shown to the partner. For example, if anger arises, it should not be directed at the receptive partner but just expressed into the space of the dyad.

The active partner should not directly evaluate or in any way comment on his listening partner. If something comes up about the listening partner, the active partner should either let it go, or take full responsibility for it, recognizing it as his own condition. He should never "lay a trip" on his partner. When referring to his listening partner, the active partner softens the contact by saying "another" instead of the more direct "you". For example, instead of saying, "I don't trust you," you'd say, "I don't trust another," or even, "I am noticing that a feeling of distrust of another is arising in my awareness."

Choosing an Instruction To Work On

Every person can choose the instructions they want from the Dyad list. They can stay with a single instruction or can change it at the beginning of any dyad.

At some Open Dyad Practices, everyone worked on the same instruction. I made a list of the instructions they would work on for each dyad period. I'd give a short talk on each instruction before its dyad. This worked well.

Dyad Instructions

There are a lot of instructions that have been used over the years within the dyad. Some are for clearing out mental barriers, some are for confusion clearing, some are for gaining certain abilities, and some are used in the Enlightenment Intensive context, and in weekend, or evening workshops.

Tell me the nature of another.

Tell me who you are.

Tell me what you are.

Tell me what another is.

Tell me what life is.

Tell me what understanding is.

Tell me what Love is.

Tell me what Death is.

Tell me how life is fulfilled.

Tell me what God is.

Tell me what this is.

Tell me what the body is.

Tell me the purpose of Life.