

Trumpeter (1995)
ISSN: 0832-6193
IRONING AS MEDITATION

Joan Donaldson
Trumpeter

Writing and ironing are two activities in which I have been involved in many parts of the world for several decades. While the phenomenon of writing is one that learned minds have been examining for centuries, ironing, which is practiced virtually throughout the developed world, remains largely unstudied. Such neglect leads one to speculate whether, as an intellectual activity, ironing has been under-rated.

There will be those persons, unfamiliar with ironing in any but a theoretical sense, who balk at the idea that ironing can be taken seriously. They will claim that it's a physical activity (some would say a *boring* physical activity) with no relationship to the intellect beyond the learning of a few rudimentary skills. They would, by and large, be correct. However it is the very repetitiveness of the physical requirements of ironing that make this activity lend itself so well to contemplation, and to meditation.

While the hands get about the business of bringing order to a wrinkled world, the mind is free to muse, to ponder, to study any subject considered to be important at the time. Or the practitioner might prefer to set the mind free of constraint, to allow it to pursue whatever apparent vagueries present themselves. This must surely be one of the purest forms of meditation, and can frequently bring surprising results. The faith required to permit such uncontrolled mental freedom is often rewarded in unexpected ways. New avenues of thought, and also of action, can be exposed. One becomes aware of hidden capacities and potentialities.

It can be argued that a similar effect is achieved by a person on a long distance drive. In that situation physical activity can become virtually automatic and reactive, thereby freeing the mind. Although there's some merit in the comparison, the act of driving also alerts the body's subconscious, preparing itself to avert or to respond to unexpected occurrences. The body of the person who is ironing, on the other hand, isn't required to be ready for sudden accidental death, and can be considerably more relaxed), a fundamental requirement for meditation.

It is perhaps time for serious examination of the potential of this meditative force, virtually hidden amongst us for so long. While it must be clear that contemporary topics (the environment and global unrest, to name just two) are being examined daily in this context, all over the world, it would be interesting to discover whether a more organized approach might, for example, affect global consciousness. It may be that we have here an entirely new field for scholarly investigation.

Citation Format

Donaldson, Joan (1995) *IRONING AS MEDITATION* *Trumpeter*: 12, 4.
<http://www.icaap.org/iuicode?6.12.4.6>

Document generated from IXML by ICAAP conversion macros.
See the [ICAAP](#) web site or [software repository](#) for details