



Meditation

From Meditation to Dhyana

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What is Meditation?

Meditation is the original state of the higher self, a state of perfect harmony with existence. The mind receives constant feedback from the senses that interact with the world, which becomes a distraction for the mind. Once we are able to pause and control this constant feedback (pratyahara), we are then able to focus at will on one thing and one thing only (Dharana), or concentration. Only then, meditation (Dhyana) will begin to happen, and the transition from the gross to the subtle will begin.



Why Meditate?

Meditation has different stages, so every stage brings with it different benefits. Generally speaking, meditation brings the mind and the self to its natural tune, allowing it to vibrate and be in sync with the natural universal rhythms. Therefore, meditation can bring benefits to literally everyone in every aspect of their life.



To master meditation, first, you must have control of posture, breath, and senses. Posture allows us to sit still. Controlled breath helps us control our senses, and controlled senses help the mind find steadiness. A steady mind will find its own path to meditation.

Most minds are in a state of seeking movement and constant engagement with the senses; therefore, they are in a constant search for change. Meditation cannot happen in such a state of constant change. Therefore, it is important and almost necessary to bring yourself to a more balanced state. As it is said in Yoga and Ayurveda, one should move from Rajas to Sattvas, from motion to stillness, from chaos to calmness.

Preparation

How to achieve meditation

There are different layouts, but what they all have in common is that they help bring the mind to the space where meditation can happen. In traditional Yoga, the most common path is that of Raja Yoga. You don't have to be a Yogi to succeed in meditation, but you have to find or create a path that helps the mind be still. The answer lies in lifestyle and habits more than in techniques and methods. A lifestyle that is conducive to a calm state of mind will lead that mind into a meditative state without much effort.



General Guidelines

- Face east or north
- Practice in a calm quiet place
- Make it predictable
- Practice Asana beforehand
- Practice pranayama beforehand
- Remain still (little to no motion during the practice)
- Don't eat right before nor be too hungry
- Don't use music
- Take notes (at least at first)



What will happen when meditating?

QUIETNESS!!!



How do you know you're doing it right?

- It becomes easier to deal with life.
- Things that would normally trigger you won't.
- It becomes easier to make choices.
- You experience a sense of inner peace regardless of the circumstances



Conclusion

Meditation is like eating healthily. You can't just have one healthy meal and expect to live a long, healthy life. The ultimate goal is achieved by cementing the habit.



Practice

Count of 7 technique

It is a very simple concentration technique that aims to improve our concentration. Concentration is key to reaching meditative states; it is, in fact, essential to be able to concentrate on demand.



How to Practice?

- Counting in Blocks of 7: Start by counting your breaths in blocks of 7. This means you count from 1 to 7, focusing on each breath.
- Reset to 1: Once you reach the count of 7, reset your count back to 1. This signifies the completion of one block.
- Add 7 with Each New Block: As you continue meditating, with each new block, you add 7 to your count. So, after completing one block (counting from 1 to 7), you would count from 1 to 14 in the next block, then 1 to 21 in the third block, and so on.
- Repeat: You keep repeating this pattern throughout your meditation session. The idea is to maintain your focus on your breath and the counting, helping you stay present and centered during your practice.



The Catch

- Every time you lose count, forget the count, or your mind sidetracks, you have to reset all the counts and start from the very beginning.
- Set a timer, start with 5 minutes, and add a few minutes every 3rd day or so. After the timer is over, stop the counts and take a few minutes of silence focused on the breath.

