

## MEDITATION: Purpose and Practice



Meditation is an intensely personal and spiritual experience. The desired purpose of meditation is to channel awareness into a more positive direction by totally transforming one's state of mind.

The entire process of meditation comprises the three stages of concentration (*Dharma*), meditation (*Dhyana*) and enlightenment or absorption (*Samadhi*). The individual preparing to meditate usually starts off by harnessing awareness, such as focusing the mind onto a certain object. Once attention gets engaged, concentration turns into meditation or Dhyana. And through continuous meditation, the meditator merges with the object of concentration.

There are two major meditation techniques. The first technique, concentrative meditation that focuses the attention on the breath, an image or a sound, in order to still the mind and allow a greater awareness and clarity to emerge. Sitting silently and focusing on dynamics of breathing is concentrative meditation in its most basic form. Anxiety causes breathing to become shallow, rigid and uneven. In contrast in a state of tranquility and calmness, breathing is slow, deep and even.

The second technique, mindfulness meditation is to increase awareness of the inundation of "sensations and feelings" around oneself. Here one experiences every aspect of the environment without consciously thinking about or reacting to it, thus gaining intense calmness and clarity. Meditation leads to a state of consciousness that brings serenity, clarity, and bliss. The "normal" state of mind is actually quite abnormal, receiving sensory stimuli and often reacting physically and emotionally in an uncontrolled way.

Meditation is a practice that gives balance physically, emotionally and mentally. Today, meditation is increasingly utilized to treat anxiety, stress, and depression. The "deep rest" meditation dissolves stress and facilitates better choices through clear thinking.

Meditation is important to all aspects of our wellbeing. All of us are confronted everyday with tasks to do and often this leads to worry that in turn inhibits clear thinking towards finding solutions. A few minutes of deep meditative concentration goes a long way towards resolving the problems and

worries that confront us.

Here are simple eight steps over a period of just 10 minutes daily at sunrise to begin your journey to master and practice meditation for healthy and happy living for life.

**1. Don't worry about where and how you meditate**

Sit somewhere comfortable, with a good ambiance. You can start meditating sitting in a chair or on the floor with crossed legs.

**2. Think about yourself and how you feel**

How does your body feel? What are the positives and negatives in your feelings? Are you feeling anxious, restless, busy, tired or energetic? Thoughtfully analyze your feelings.

**3. Sit calmly for at least one minute**

Try to focus on one thing. As a beginner, try to stay focused for one minute, and then, every two days, slowly increase the time to reach your target of 10 minutes or more of daily meditation.

**4. Count your breaths**

Keep your back straight and take 3 slow deep breathes. Then, try to find your normal breathing pattern and practice it during the rest of the meditation. You need to be aware of the sensation of the breath as it enters and leaves the nostril. At first, you will feel very busy, probably even busier than you were when you started, but is because you will start to be aware of all the things that are going on in your mind. Try to count your breaths from one to ten and repeat.

**5. Stay focused**

You will be tempted to follow the multitude of thoughts in your mind as they arise, but you need to resist and to focus on the sensation of the breath. Keep on focusing until you start feeling more relaxed and you can completely focus on your breath. You can also imagine your body scan, starting from your head to toe.

**6. Develop a positive attitude!**

Try to approach things with a calm and positive attitude and embrace the realities of good and bad issues. Accept everything that is happening in your life. Do not forget that the good things will make you happier and healthier, and the bad things will help you to build a stronger mind and give you life lessons.

**7. Notice sound, light and nature**

It will make you more attached to nature and your surrounding and thus appreciate the power in it all. This will help you to heal your body and mind.

**8. Don't worry about if you are doing it correctly or not**

There is no one practice for perfect meditation. Identify the things that can bother your mind, and try to think in a logical and coordinated manner. That is meditation.