

Meditation Can Improve Lifestyle

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Abstract – Meditation is not a technique but a way of life. Meditation means 'a cessation of the thought process'. It describes a state of consciousness, when the mind is free of scattered thoughts and various patterns. The observer (one who is doing meditation) realizes that all the activity of the mind is reduced to one. The aim of the paper through a light on how mediation helps to Improves the different ways of like of human being further this paper highlights the 8 ways of mediation benefits are Meditation reduces stress, It improves concentration, It encourages a healthy lifestyle, The practice increases self-awareness, It increases happiness, Meditation increases acceptance, It slows aging The practice, benefits cardiovascular.

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INTRODUCTION

Meditation is a means of transforming the mind. Buddhist meditation practices are techniques that encourage and develop concentration, clarity, emotional positivity, and a calm seeing of the true nature of things. By engaging with a particular meditation practice you learn the patterns and habits of your mind, and the practice offers a means to cultivate new, more positive ways of being. With regular work and patience these nourishing, focused states of mind can deepen into profoundly peaceful and energized states of mind. Such experiences can have a transformative effect and can lead to a new understanding of life. Meditation is a practice of concentrated focus upon a sound, object, visualization, the breath, movement, or attention itself in order to increase awareness of the present moment, reduce stress, promote relaxation, and enhance personal and spiritual growth. Meditation techniques have been practiced for millennia. Originally, they were intended to develop spiritual understanding, awareness, and direct experience of ultimate reality. The many different religious traditions in the world have given rise to a rich variety of meditative practices. These include the contemplative practices of Christian religious orders, the Buddhist practice of sitting meditation, and the whirling movements of the Sufi dervishes. Although meditation is an important spiritual practice in many religious and spiritual traditions, it can be practiced by anyone regardless of their religious or cultural background to relieve stress and pain.

IMPORTANCE OF MEDITATION

- ❖ By daily practicing meditation you will become a calmer person. There will be a mental serenity in every task you perform. Each day you will have a different experience so never think about the day gone by, but on the present.
- ❖ Today's life is full of stress, which further influences our day to day activities. Meditation helps in reducing stress by affecting your nervous system. Meditation reduces the production of stress related hormones like cortisol and increases the production of good chemicals like serotonin.
- ❖ Sound sleep is very important for the proper functioning of the body. When your mind works faster than required, you do not get proper sleep. Regular meditation helps in relieving stress and thus improves the quality of sleep.
- ❖ Less stress means more happiness. You will live a happier and healthier life with meditation.
- ❖ People suffering from anxiety and depression must mediate daily for 15-20 minutes. Mediation also helps in controlling anger.

- ❖ Meditation enhances energy gain from inner sources.
- ❖ You live a disciplined life and cultivate good habits.
- ❖ Improved concentration is the result of meditation.
- ❖ It is believed that meditation improves the immune system and thereby helps in controlling blood pressure and lowering blood cholesterol.
- ❖ Meditation slows down aging.
- ❖ Meditation provides emotional stability.
- ❖ By making meditation a routine, a consciousness develops and gradually you will reach a point of highest consciousness.
- ❖ It will help you learn about yourself as well as the mysteries of life. It will give meaning to your life.



➤ Meditation reduces stress



"Meditation is mind without agitation," Narasimhan says. Stress creates agitation and is something most of us deal with on some level. And it's increasing, given the rising use of anti-anxiety medications, notes Stanford University researcher Emma Seppälä. Meditation allows people to take charge of their own nervous system and emotions. "Studies have shown improved ability to [permanently] regulate emotions in

the brain," adds Seppälä, who is also the associate director of the Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education at Stanford. "It's very empowering."

➤ It improves concentration

"I'm more centered and focused in everything I do. I don't find myself getting as distracted anymore," says Sara Robinson of Indianapolis, who did the Sahaj course last February. The ER nurse and sky-diving instructor adds that multitasking is easier. At least one study has shown an improved ability to multitask, Seppälä says. "Meditation has been linked to a number of things that lead to increased ability to focus, memory ... We've seen this at the level of the brain." Greater concentration is related to the increased energy meditation provides. "It connects you with your real source of energy," Narasimhan says

➤ It encourages a healthy lifestyle



"I tend to want more things that are better for me," Robinson says, adding that she eats more fresh foods and has cut out nearly all alcohol. She also stopped smoking. Susan Braden, who lives in Takoma Park, Maryland, and also did the Sahaj course, says the practice has made her apply the Hippocratic oath -- "First, do no harm" -- to herself. "You just want to put good things in your body," she says. That means "closest to what's natural. So if it doesn't look like a tomato, I wouldn't eat it." Braden also gave up coffee, replacing it with tea.

➤ The practice increases self-awareness

Before Zaccai Free, a District of Columbia resident, began meditating in college two decades ago, he had a very short fuse – to the point, he says, of wanting to commit acts of violence. Meditation taught him to recognize his own anger and become more detached from it. It cleared his mind and calmed him down, he says. Mostly, "it made me more comfortable in my own skin," adds Free, who does many types of meditation, including Sahaj, Agnihotra, laughter and walking meditations. "When you take more time to dive inside yourself, you are more comfortable showing who you are." It increases

➤ **Happiness**



"Meditation puts you on the fast track to being happy," says Ronnie Newman, director of research and health promotion for the Art of Living Foundation, the umbrella organization for the Sahaj meditation course. Studies have shown that brain signaling increases in the left side of the prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for positive emotions, while activity decreases in the right side, responsible for negative emotions, Newman says. The other benefits of meditation, including increased self-awareness and acceptance, also contribute to improved overall well-being. Meditation increases acceptance. Braden was a high-profile senior policy advisor in the State Department, constantly on the go to trips around the world, until seven years ago, when she was struck by multiple sclerosis. She turned to meditation, and her world view flipped. "I have a disease which really brings you back to yourself," Braden says. "Meditation helps me accept that. You explore your inner self and realize that's just as big as traveling to Burma." For Braden, learning to meditate has been harder than learning Arabic. "It's a lifetime job. But it changes how you feel life, and it's made it more enjoyable for me," she says.

➤ **It slows aging**



Studies show that meditation changes brain physiology to slow aging. "Cognition seems to be preserved in mediators," says Sara Lazar, a

researcher at Harvard University. Lazar adds that mediators also have more gray matter – literally, more brain cells. Lazard's colleague, Elizabeth Hoge, did a study that showed that mediators also have longer telomeres, the caps on chromosomes indicative of biological age (rather than chronological). That meditation lengthens life "may be a bit of a stretch," Hoge says. "But there is something about meditation that is associated with longer telomeres ... [perhaps that] it reduces stress and its effects on the body." The practice benefits cardiovascular and immune health. Meditation induces relaxation, which increases the compound nitric oxide that causes blood vessels to open up and subsequently, blood pressure to drop. One study, published in 2008 in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, showed that 40 of 60 high blood pressure patients who started meditating could stop taking their blood pressure medication. Meditation also improves immunity. "I hardly ever get sick anymore," Robinson says. "I don't think I've had a cold since I started this."

CONCLUSION

Such experiences can have a transformative effect and can lead to a new understanding of life. Meditation is a practice of concentrated focus upon a sound, object, visualization, the breath, movement, or attention itself in order to increase awareness of the present moment, reduce stress, promote relaxation, and enhance personal and spiritual growth. Meditation techniques have been practiced for millennia. Originally, they were intended to develop spiritual understanding, awareness, and direct experience of ultimate reality. The many different religious traditions in the world have given rise to a rich variety of meditative practices

Regular practices of meditation helps to improve the function of the human body that is psychological benefits. Regular practices of meditation psychological factors which are more powerful than physiological factors meditation helps in improving all psychological factors. Regular practices of meditation helps to improve the Spiritual factors.

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