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Introduction

Meditation is an ancient practice that is known to improve the spiritual, mental, and physical well-being of a person. Today it is also considered the highest form of relaxation. In fact tens of millions of people are known to practice this said activity worldwide. Meditation is also known to have numerous health benefits. It is being used to treat mental issues and other problems related to the body. In this guide we dive into the world of meditation and demystify the sometimes shrouded information and illuminate it for the inquisitive mind. Now, Have you ever wondered how did it start?

The Vedas of the Hindu traditions have the earliest records of meditation. Nevertheless, Hinduism does not have monopoly over meditation as a practice, since early records have also been found linking meditative practices to Taoism in China and Buddhism in India.

For many centuries, meditation has served practitioners well. In fact, it has become an accepted approach in dealing with various

psychological and physiological conditions that assail modern man. Today, meditation is generally recommended for people who need respite from suffering and stress.

The Purpose Of Meditation

In reference to its religious origins, meditation is originally intended as the means to an end, which is enlightenment or salvation. Through meditation, the end goal can be achieved because it is a practice that increases a person's awareness of the moment as well as spiritual understanding. Meditation is essentially a spiritual practice; however, its benefits go beyond that of the spiritual. Patanjali, an Indian sage referred to meditation as "self-realization" or absolute awareness of oneself.

In the early days of meditation, the practice could only be bequeathed by a teacher or guru to his student or disciple. Nowadays, anyone can enter into the meditative state and there are no religious sanctions, since the different religions of the world support its practice for as long as their basic tenets are followed.

From The Ancients To Modern Times

Historians believe that meditation was already widely practiced even before recorded history, particularly amongst the first Indian civilizations that emerged at the banks of the Indus and the Ganges. The best guess is that meditation has been in existence for as long as 5,000 years.

Religions were formed and all of these belief systems incorporated meditative practice based on their tenets and philosophies. The major religions that are known to promote the practice of meditation are Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism. Since then meditation has evolved into the structured practice that it is today.

Development Of Meditation

The Buddhists were the first to formalize the **practice of meditation** in India about 2,500 years ago. Gautama Buddha,

the founder of this world religion was the first to establish an organized approach to enlightenment that was founded on formal meditation. Buddhist scriptures clearly demonstrated the importance of meditative practice in the attainment of “Nirvana.” This form of meditation spread from India into Tibet, reaching China in the Second Century.

Historical records show that the very first translations of Buddhist writings into Chinese appeared in the 6th century. The Chinese played an important role in the increase in the variations of the forms of meditation, which are practiced today. Buddhism eventually became as important to the Chinese as Taoism and Confucianism. Buddhist principals and teachers were assimilated into Chinese culture and soon enough it crossed the sea to be taken in and embraced in Japan.

In turn, the Japanese were instrumental in developing the practice known today as Zen meditation. On the whole, meditation has many faces and it varies no matter where you are situated. One thing is for sure, Meditation can **benefit the body and the mind**. Now, Let us start this journey into the ancient

practice that can promote not just physical but also spiritual and mental health as well.

Chapter 1 – The Development & Origins Of Meditation

Meditation is now a systemized practice that dates back centuries. In fact, this practice started as early as the ancient time. One of the pervasive arguments that continues to rage about the subject concerns questions of when, where, and how meditation originated.

We may never know for sure, but as we have just seen in the introduction, looking at historical evidence points the location (Where?) as the Indus Valley and the time (When?) at around 4,000 to 5,000 years ago.

“How”- is a question that the experts are still at a loss for an answer, though there is an agreement among experts that informal practice of meditation could date back more than five millennia. It is simply hard to trace back how the practice was actually developed.

Today, meditation is an important activity in all the major world religions. Buddhists spend hours in the lotus position, aspiring to achieve what The Buddha realized after 49 days in the meditative state. Meanwhile, Catholic monks meditate by spending hours on end contemplating and meditating on the Word of God.

Meditation is dependent on the religion on where it is being practice.

Diverse Cultures And Civilizations

Early civilizations that thrived in China and Japan studied and developed meditation as well as the Indians. Historians often present the argument that meditation is an important element that helped define the spiritual practices of Eastern philosophies. This common element unites the need of humankind to understand himself, the Universe, and the interplay between the two, no matter what culture or religion he belongs to.

When a civilization starts seeking to improve spiritually and socially, then it is very likely that meditation is practiced not only by the religious leaders but by common folk as well.

Aboriginal cultures that existed in Australia at around the same time are believed to practice meditation. However, there is no definitive evidence on record that they did engage in meditative practices. In the meantime, Native Americans who lived centuries ago have passed on numerous cultural practices to their modern counterparts, one of which is meditation.

Some experts argue that the trance-like states entered by members of indigenous tribes during certain rituals qualify as a form of meditation. In this case, it is reasonable to assume that their ancestors, who occupied the same land centuries ago, were practicing the same method to achieve self-awareness and focused introspection, which is part of the current definition of “meditation.”

Siddhartha Gautama

One of the biggest influences on the development of meditation was Siddhartha Gautama who lived in India at around 500 B.C. Siddhartha Gautama would eventually bear the title, “Buddha”

after attaining enlightenment while seated under a sacred tree in the lotus position, which is an attitude of meditation.

The Buddha's teachings form the tenets of Buddhism, which is one of the major religions of the world today. The Buddha espouses meditation as a means to achieve Enlightenment, in the same way that he did.

Gautama Buddha was one of the first to establish and formalize meditation in the context of a religious tradition. Buddhist meditation as we know it today comprises four main components. These are **mindfulness, concentration, insight, and tranquility**. These foundations are inculcated in Buddhist meditation, which is one of the most popular forms of meditation being practiced even by non-Buddhists.

The history of meditation is very rich. It is interesting to discover where it actually originated. The most common questions about it are yet to be answered. No matter where it started, one thing is for sure Meditation has many benefits which we will uncover next.

Chapter 2 – Benefits Of Meditating Daily

There is so much to be gained from meditating every day, the health and vitality benefits are available to anyone who makes the time to practice this ancient and powerful practice. A way of life for many serious individuals, meditation is widely known and appreciated by people from all walks of life, however, not all practitioners are aware of the many benefits to meditating regularly.

Some people only choose to sit in stillness and silence because they are told or instructed to do so, like at a martial arts class, depending on the art being studied, it is common for many eastern masters to promote meditation before and after sessions for clarity and energy conservation before training, and after to calm the mind, allow energy to flow back to its internal bank and to revitalise the spirit. There is a reason why masters use meditation, and this alone should get your attention.

Same with other art forms like Chi Gong and Yoga, or healing arts like Shamanism or Reiki, these all rely on meditation to affect a variety of health and wellness aspects. The benefits of meditation when coupled with other similar practices are astonishing, seeing many people having fixed or improved many areas of their personal everyday lives, thanks to their smart choice to make an addition like meditation in their lives.

Used for enhancing concentration and information retention, great for studying, especially for people who have difficulty remembering details, just try 15-20 minutes of meditation before you begin with your study and you'll notice the difference that it makes.

Quite often people leave their studying until a time when they know there will be peace and quiet, but meditation can help you to filter out noise from the neighbours, the streets or classmates, whichever your situation is, consistent meditation will configure your mind to be able to cope diligently even in situations when you are under pressure, you'll find that you're able to keep your focus.

People who suffer from high levels of anxiety are in danger of developing high blood pressure, due to being anxious, constantly worrying and never really seeing things for what they really are. A change in their natural perception will emerge, wiping out the cause of such stress and apprehension. The thoughts become clearer because the mind is finally able to relax and with the mind relaxed, the body relaxes also.

When the body is allowed to chill it can receive things like vitamins and minerals more readily because the body is functioning correctly. The same is true for information; the mind retains and processes the information that it receives more quickly and easily when the brain is not overloaded with tonnes of thoughts that do nothing but swirl around upstairs causing mental fatigue and burn out.

The more pressure that a person puts on themselves to perform the less favourable their performance will be. You “get out what you put in” and if the mind is receptive to the input that you feed it with you’ll have a great balance going on between mind and body.

Businesses around the globe are now introducing well-being sessions to their workforce in order to maximise full potential among employers and employees. It is a new fad which is being used in more organisations than ever before.

Executives and managers are recognising the benefits of having staff who are mentally refreshed and free from fatigue every day. Such aspects are obviously an asset to any business or organisation, with performance being increased due to employer/employee well-being there is a general atmosphere of productivity and professionalism that attracts a similar attitude from other employees – the feel-good-factor is contagious.

People who suffer from nervousness have much to gain from meditation, for example; attending an interview for a much sought after career is not an easy task even for people who are naturally confident, but meditating beforehand can ease apprehension and remove much panic, cooling your internal system to the point of feeling completely relaxed and able to focus on the task at hand.

There is a great deal to learn from meditation, the main lesson learned is about yourself, your strengths and your weaknesses, why you are who you are and who you can become. It allows people to face the experiences that they've tried to bury, as the past tense is always a heavy burden to carry, the journey of your life will not get any easier if you are holding onto harsh memories. Such burdens cause serious damage and if carried for long enough then the damage could become permanent in some cases.

It takes courage and discipline to face the things that you'd rather hide from or totally forget about, meaning that you will be running and hiding for the rest of your life and that is no way to be living a life that is full of so many golden and unique opportunities.

Take a look at certain celebrities or famous people, not all of them had sweet upbringings and not all successful people were confident and error-free before they found their successes, many had to fight to get to where they are now, some of these stars had traumatic childhoods, others had different struggles, the point is that they did what they had to do to change things. This

indicates that they stood face to face with their *discomforts* and they persevered.

This does not mean to say that each and every person who has made it from despair to limelight has adopted meditation to their everyday lives but it does mean that they made a fundamental change with how they view life, as well as themselves, also it shows that they learned from the hard times enough to never have to walk backwards again. Meditation can help you to make such turnarounds in your life, it can point you in the best direction possible to start building your own personal empire.

Everyone has some reason for being alive, and you'll be able to learn exactly what that reason is as soon as you learn to listen to the messages that call for your attention, meditation will teach you how to listen actively, also, you'll be able to make sense of the messages that you receive.

Some messages come in the form of a stranger that you meet on the street briefly, or from a colleague at work, a television program could even be used to get a message across to you,

you'll know when the same message is given to you randomly by different people or circumstances. But beware, if not heeded soon enough it could be ages yet before the message or opportunity resurfaces – if it ever does. Meditating regularly will be one of the best things that any person could ever do to bring benefit to the mind and the body – long term.

Caring for yourself enables you care for others too, the quality that you give to yourself is the same quality that others will receive from you and this is why some people are more appreciated than others, because when they give of themselves the recipient can feel something genuine, even though at the time they may not realise it, but it's always the *feeling* that has people 'go back' for more. Energy is always in constant supply and meditating connect people to the Universal energy that is otherwise known as Life Force, without it we die.

Meditation is in everything that we do. That's the reality.

Whenever people are deep in focus about something dear to them or something they're trying to solve – they're meditating. Sometimes deep thought can take a person into a mild trance state which they may or may not remember, just like with

dreams; people always have them each time they're in slumber, but not everyone recalls them.

Religion is practiced by the vast majority of people on this entire planet, different cultures pertain to the teachings that are valid in their eyes, but all religions have many things in common with each other, one of those things is to offer prayer to the Creator, themselves or for someone/ something else that is dear to them – prayer is simply another form of meditation. It is not just sitting in stillness and silence but on different levels there are many impressive and awe-inspiring levels that can be attained if the practice is consistent and without a shred of doubt.

Spirituality is both in and out of this world and meditation is like a stairway to higher levels of spiritual nature. Many individuals have reached high levels of competency with ceaseless efforts and meaningful actions. Depending on what you are trying to achieve, with enough mental strength and emotional stamina you can get there sooner than you may think, but your level of understanding must evolve to higher heights if you are to realise any true potential about yourself.

Patience is developed with diligent practice, jumping from goal to goal without having completed the previous task is a sure way to build a fruitless habit which will see that you never complete any projects or lengthy tasks in your life. Everyone is trying to get somewhere whilst the majority of folk these days are too busy trying to *be somebody*, caught up in the social hype of being accepted by others – a trait that too many people share due to not being able to identify with themselves.

Instead of following the crowd, how about being original? Spend some time alone and listen to your emotions, they'll communicate with you when you meditate and provide you with valuable insights about yourself which can be used to forge a character that is unique and appreciated by you first before others begin to show their approval.

Life is about individuality, what can each and every person bring to this life? Something different, that's what each and every person can bring, a new thing. Everyone would be so bored if there were never a new invention, imagine a world without originality, not a great look, but there are some people who like to live that way, happy to never have to think outside of the box,

happy not to contribute something original, happy to rest with the mundane or the borderline and then there are those who recognise the abundant opportunities for progression in life and they actively seize the moment, grateful for the chance to create.

Give meditation a chance and you'll not look back, it is the one free tool that promises power and riches of all kinds, it is never late, it never argues and it is more patient than any human has ever been. The amazing things that have been documented about meditation and the masters who achieved great heights are testament to this amazing art, there are many deep levels for those who are looking to dive into the mystery that many people are just unwilling to try out.

Chapter 3 – Let's Begin Meditating!

In this chapter we will be covering how to become more relaxed, stress free person with meditation

As we know, meditation has been practiced around the world for hundreds if not thousands of years. It's a technique used to quiet the mind, body and it has the added benefit of relieving stress.

It can also bring focus and clarity. Many say that after meditating the problems they've been struggling with miraculously fade away. It has also been known to inspire people to be more creative as their subconscious thoughts come to light.

The most known form of meditation requires you to sit in a quiet room, on a pillow, cross-legged on the floor or in a comfortable chair. No matter which position you choose it's important to always make sure your spine is straight. It's a good idea to use the same place every day, at least in the beginning. The more

personalized your spot is the better. You can decorate it with candles, flowers, and pictures of the people you love.

As we have discussed before, the idea is to sit quietly, with your eyes closed, and focus on a point inside of your forehead. Try not to think of anything in particular, allowing your mind to become calm, and peaceful. If you find that your mind is 'chattering', don't try to control it, just let it finish what it is that it is working on, it will eventually quiet down.

If you're a beginner, you should begin with short ten to twenty minute sessions, each day. After a while, you will start to feel deep relaxation and joy during these sessions and you will be able to meditate longer.

Another technique is almost like a form of self-hypnosis. Begin by sitting in a quiet, comfortable spot, making sure you are facing a wall about eight feet away from you. Pick a spot or object on that wall, and make it your focal point. Looking at your focal point, begin counting backwards from 100, one number for each breath you exhale. As you do this, imagine yourself floating, and feeling

very relaxed. You will begin to feel your eyelids getting heavy, and may begin to blink.

Let your eyes slowly close, and as you continue to count backwards, imagine yourself as limp as a ragdoll, totally relaxed, and floating in a safe and comfortable place. Stop counting, and just float in your space. If any disturbing thoughts should come while in your space, just let them flow out again, and allow yourself to continue to feel safe and relaxed. This technique can help you to cope with stress, and discharge the tension that accumulates during stressful situations.

When you are ready to come out of this state of self-hypnosis, you can simply let yourself drift off to sleep, or you can count from one to three and exit. First, count one, and get yourself ready to exit. At two, take a deep breath, and hold for a few seconds. At three, exhale and open your eyes slowly. As you open your eyes, continue to hold on to that relaxed and comfortable feeling.

As you gain experience, you may want to increase the length of your sessions to thirty minutes or more as your schedule allows. In the fast-paced lifestyles of today, it is so important that we take care of ourselves mentally and physically. Including time for meditation is a great way to do that.

Chapter 4 – Different Techniques Of Meditation

To help broaden your horizons, here are a few of the most commonly practiced methods of meditation you can try.

- **Breath watching**

Can meditating be as simple as paying attention to your breath for a few minutes? Yes it can! Relax in whatever position works best for you, close your eyes and start to pay attention to your breathing. Breathing through your nose gets your diaphragm involved and gets oxygen all the way to the bottom of your lungs. As your mind wanders, just re-focus your attention on the air going in and out of your nose. Try this for a few minutes or longer and you will begin to feel its effects.

- **Empty Mind Meditation**

Meditating can create a kind of "awareness without object," an emptying of all thoughts from your mind. This technique involves sitting still, often in a "full lotus" or cross-legged position, and letting the mind go silent on its own. It can be difficult at first, particularly after a stressful day but with practice it will become easier.

- Walking Meditation

This one gets the body involved. It can be outside or simply walking back and forth in a quiet room. Pay attention to the movement of your legs, body and breathing as you walk. Try concentrating on the feeling of your feet contacting the ground. When your mind wanders, just keep bringing it back to the process of walking and breathing. Meditating outside in this way can be difficult because of the distractions. If you do decide to try it outside, find a quiet place with level ground.

- Mindfulness Meditation

A practice Buddhists call Vipassana or “clear insight” meditation, is the art of becoming deeply aware of what is here right now. You focus on what's happening in and around you at this very moment, and become aware of all the thoughts and feelings that are taking your energy from moment to moment. You can start by watching your breath, and then move your attention to the thoughts going through your mind, the feelings in your body, and even the sounds and sights around you. The key is to watch without judging or analyzing.

- Mantra Meditation

Many people find it easier to keep their mind from wandering if they concentrate on something specific. A mantra can help. This is a word or phrase that you'll repeat while meditating. In some cultures, an experienced master chooses it for you. If you are working on this alone, you can use any word or phrase that works for you, and can choose to either repeat it aloud or in your head as you meditate.

- Concept Meditation

Some meditative practices involve the contemplation of an idea or scenario. An example of this is the "meditation on impermanence," in which you focus on the temporary nature of all things, starting with your thoughts and feelings as they come and go.

There are many other types of meditation, such as the meditation on loving-kindness or object meditation. Each type has its own advantages and benefits.

Chapter 5 – Best Places To Meditate

Meditation has two main points to focus on; stillness and silence. In these two assets lies a depth of wisdom, healing and energy, but to obtain these fine benefits and a whole lot more you need to have a suitable environment to practice in. Noise is something that just cannot be completely avoided, although you can lock the windows in your home and close all doors, there will always be some sort of internal or external noise going on on due to the activities of others.

Life does indeed *go on*, and you cannot expect the world to come to a stand-still just so that you can meditate in absolute silence. However, with continued practice comes heightened skill, and so, filtering out the distant sounds of life and matter becomes an easier until it is as though you've filtered sound out completely.

Parks offer a natural atmosphere where you can connect with nature whilst being in the energy of the outdoors. Yes, this is a public place but as mentioned before, with practice comes an improvement of skill and at higher levels your concentration will be able to easily filter out external interruption. There is no real substitute for the abundant energy that is available in parks, forests, woodland, jungle etc. This energy will see you reaching

higher levels of competency at a quick yet steady rate because of your direct connection to nature.

Rivers are great places to meditate by as they offer the flow of the river which is symbolic in many ways to life, like having a good sense of direction about you in all that you do – a direction that 'flows' in one, focused direction instead of back and forth or haphazard due to indecision and a mind that is constantly crammed with thoughts that rarely serve any usefulness or direct purpose.

Meditating by a river can positively affect your energy levels, raising your vibration (energetic frequency) to a higher level, making the trance-state easier to accomplish and allowing you to keep your posture for longer, so as to lengthen your session with minimal discomfort or agitation.

Beaches can be fun places to meditate at, with the sea offering a cleansing atmosphere where the thoughts can be visualised as floating away with the crash of the waves. The sea is highly influential to the spirit, just the sound of the waves lashing against each other has been recorded countless times to be marketed as an essential meditational tool, providing the practitioner with the atmosphere of the sea inside of their home or studio class environment.

Gardens are usually peaceful and private spaces which are a part of the home, offering the benefits of nature and the outdoors inside the comfort of your own property or the place where you reside. Meditating in the garden has similar benefits to practicing meditation whilst in your local park, but there is a bonus that comes with practicing in your own garden and that is the privacy that you would struggle to find in a public space like at the park.

Places of Worship provide you with a sacred space after mass of any sort or even before a mass is scheduled to begin, you can pop into your local church etc. to find ample peace, tranquility and comfort. Even if there are others who come along to offer prayer, the majority of people will respect the sacred space as a place of worship and prayer, and so they'll be more likely to maintain silence.

Verandas can be very relaxing places to meditate if the surrounding environment is not overlooking a busy street or main road. Many places in the city have modern apartments that are designed with verandas, rooftop extensions or balconies in more high rise buildings, studio flats and private accommodation.

If you're lucky enough to live in a property that boasts a great scenic view, peaceful surroundings and privacy then you have a distinct advantage where your practice is concerned, so make

the most of such a wonderful daily opportunity and rise to new levels of consciousness.

Mountains are the greatest places to meditate as they promise heightened elevation in both the physical and emotional/mental planes to those who are able to make it to the mountain's peak. If you are not as fortunate to visit a mountain, let alone climb one then find yourself a hill in a park or the countryside, making sure that it is high enough, make the climb only if it is safe to do so and you will have a decent spot from where you can meditate at peace whilst in the sense that you are looking over the space beneath you. This alone will cause you to feel a sense of elevation.

Meditation is an internal thing, meaning that it is with you wherever you may be at absolutely any time. The beauty of this is that this magnificent powerful tool/ability is available to you at any time and that means you will always have the opportunity to raise your level of consciousness no matter where you happen to be at any given moment. You can be at work, at home, with friends, on the train or the bus, at any leisure.

And what if your circumstances are not so good and you happen to be in a place that you are not happy to reside at for whatever reason, you can use the gift of meditation to keep your mind strong and focused even if all you really want to do is fall apart

and break down – allowing meditation to guide, heal and re-energise you is the way forward here. Allow yourself the freedom in your mental space before trying to find this liberty externally, as all desired outcomes are owed to a conscious shift that begins inside. Find your core and tap your hidden power until you are able to use that power that has been dormant up until you made the conscious shift a reality.

Chapter 6 – Relaxation & Mindfulness

Uncovered

After a hectic day full of meetings, deadlines and family responsibilities, we all need a little bit of relaxation. While there are many ways that you can unwind and relax one of the most effective and easy ways is meditation.

The idea of meditation revolves around the bringing your thoughts to a focal point for a certain amount of time. With practice, this will help learn how to put your mind to rest and allow your stressful thoughts fade away. During meditation your breathing slows down, blood pressure is reduced, and your body becomes relaxed and rejuvenated.

According to the Mayo Clinic when you focus on one thing while you're meditating it allows your other thoughts to pass by. In a multi-tasking world, paying attention to just one thing that can be daunting task for many of us. An easy way to get started is to simply listen to your breathing.

- Sit comfortably so you're not distracted by physical pain, then close your eyes and listen to your breath.
- Breathe in and out through your nose, but don't otherwise try to control the rate or depth of your breath.
- When thoughts try to crowd in on your meditation, let them fade as you refocus on listening to your breath. Feel how it flows down your throat. Feel your abdomen expand. Stay here as long as you can.

Practice your meditation daily (if possible) and work your way up to thirty minutes per session. Don't get discouraged if this is difficult at first you will get better over time.

Here are a few of the most commonly used meditation exercises you can try for relaxation. They also help get rid of stress.

- Tense And Relax

Clench the fists and pull your forearms against your upper arms firmly. Keep all your muscles tight including leg muscles and jaws. Now breathe deeply for at least 5 seconds and then relax your body at once. You will feel the tension releasing sensations.

- Ideal Relaxation

In this meditation exercise, you have to close your eyes and focus on the perfect relaxation spot. This is different for everyone. Select a place where you feel at peace like the beach, under a tree or in a field of flowers then paint a picture of it in your mind. Now imagine you are going there and let yourself feel like you really are. With practice, this will help you create a wonderful sense of wellbeing and allow you to relax no matter where you are.

Relaxation Techniques

Did you know that knowing a few good relaxation techniques can save your life? It's true, you've seen the commercials on TV, heard the warnings from your doctor, stress is more than just an unpleasant of life, for some it's downright dangerous to their health. Over time it can cause illness and even death.

Eating healthy, exercising and disciplined practices such as meditation can help relieve that stress when they are included as a part of your daily life, but what if you don't have the time or motivation?

Well, maybe you don't have time to meditate for thirty minutes a day, but I'm pretty sure you can fit a few of these simple relaxation techniques in to your routine. They're so easy you won't even notice you're doing them.

- **Hug someone.** Giving a hug means getting one. As long as it's from somebody you don't mind hugging it can be really relaxing.

- **Interrupt your regular routines.** Go talk to someone new, or eat lunch outside. Just doing something that breaks you out of your habitual patterns can be an instant stress reliever.

- **Have a hot shower.** It relaxes your muscles, and any break from more stressful activities can help too. Some find that an alternating hot and cold shower is even more relaxing.

- **Watch your mind.** Spot the stressors lurking just below the surface (hunger, worry, a phone call you need to make), and you can resolve them and feel more relaxed. If you practice this mindfulness exercise, it may become one of your favorite relaxation techniques.

- **Laughing.** Proven studies show that it helps you relax. Think about the last time you had a good laugh. It made you feel good, didn't it? People take laughing for granted and it really is one of

life's best medicines. Watch a funny show or better yet chat with your most upbeat friend. It's guaranteed to help you relax.

- **Relaxing Music.** Keep your favorite relaxation CD at the office, in the car, or wherever you'll need it most. There are hundreds if not thousand relaxing music track especially for meditation. Do a quick search online, you may even find some free ones to download.

- **Take A Break.** Sometimes a change in scenery is all it takes to feel better. Simply leaving the room for a while can boost your energy. This can really help at work or in stressful settings. It's much better than getting frustrated or angry.

- **Exhale Deeply.** We've talked about this technique before but it's worth repeating. Try taking five deep breaths through your nose and exhaling deeply. Close your eyes and pay attention only to your breathing while doing this. It's like a mini-meditation session, and perhaps one of the quickest and most effective relaxation techniques you can use.

- **Drink Some Chamomile Tea.** Chamomile tea seems to have a calming effect on the nerves and quietly contemplating life while you sip is a great way to relive the days stress. If you're not fond of chamomile any hot tea without caffeine will do.

- **Take A Walk.** Often a quiet is all you need to feel better. If you have at least ten minutes to spare, walking is a great relaxation technique because in a way it's multi tasking. You have the quiet contemplation and the health benefits too!

Chapter 7- Improving Your Sleep With Meditation

If you are one of the many people in the world who suffers from a poor night's sleep then you will benefit from meditation as an addition to your everyday life. You probably lead a very busy lifestyle, working long hours or shift patterns, have children to care for as well as a spouse and then there's yourself; you obviously have needs that must be met too, otherwise you wouldn't be human.

Life will always be challenging, but when you find that you are struggling to maintain a decent sleep routine then you'll need to act swiftly to remedy this situation before it damages you. Most people are happy to visit the GP or their doctor for medication or some sort of drug to get the job done, but then you risk becoming dependant or addicted to the medication and this can prove equally as harmful to your overall health and wellness.

To function properly in life you need to be well rested, especially if you lead a hectic lifestyle, or perhaps your career involves much physical activity, sports or some form of training. Athletes and all sports persons know the risks of poor sleep routine, energy is recuperated during the resting phase, also, growth takes place with sufficient hours, so it is fair to say that those who have little to no sleep are missing out on vital development, both on a mental and a physical level.

Meditation is the key to relaxation, a jumpy mind will ruin any chance of sleep as this type of mindset is hard to quieten down, often driving many people into high states of anxiety and insomnia. When the mind is relaxed the body relaxes also, the reverse is not true. The body takes its cue from the thoughts that are created via images that we develop in our imagination.

Control is needed to keep any old thought from racing around in the mind, thoughts produce actions and if those thoughts are not controlled then the same lack of control will precede all actions, hence when a person is “out of control” the world responds in a hostile way – all of this due to a lack of sleep is a huge price to pay indeed. But it does not stop there, illness on a mental scale

can be the result of long periods of little or no sleep, like insomnia was mentioned earlier where sleep becomes seemingly impossible to achieve, but the ability to live in a coordinated way becomes lost, coping with the most basic of tasks becomes a struggle, libido can become a thing of the past and relationships take the brunt of it all as you find less time for those who matter to you because you just don't have the energy to keep up with yourself let alone with others.

Meditating is a way of life that needs to be practiced daily in order to benefit from it. The mind is capable of a great many accomplishments when it is sharp and *on-point*. The mind is the processing centre and so it must be kept in good working order for maximum benefit to yourself. One benefit of meditation is that it will relax those parts of the mind that are tensed and uneasy, bustling with too many thoughts, meditating each night before bed and each morning upon waking (if you managed to sleep at all) will strip away at the invisible layers that living life has accumulated with each day that passes.

The third eye becomes covered in these layers and we need our heavenly eye to perceive life better. Once these layers are

removed our intuition is at once improved, concentration is afforded and thinking patterns of old disappear leaving you with your new and super-infused mindset.

A mind that is calm, clear, happy and relaxed enough will allow for a decent sleeping routine. With this, you will feel as though you are a new person, you'll be armed with a tool that will always be around, as meditation will never change its ways like how people do, it will never disappoint you or let you down in any way, meditation is as it always has been; a way of life that can improve even the most wayward of minds, its power – unrivalled and unparalled. Heal yourself with meditation and earn a new life from sustained practice and diligence.

Record the slightest of changes to you lifestyle after making the addition of meditation each day and night, compare the differences in your mindset, note the changes in your thoughts, ask yourself how you feel before you hit the sack for a night's sleep and keep referring to your observations, as this will give you a detailed account of even the most minute of changes, and with the information gathered you can then make any necessary adjustments along the way.

Your relationships will improve beyond your wildest imagination, people will enjoy your company because you are less irritated and more calm and relaxed instead, able to hold a conversation instead of appearing disinterested because of frequent yawning owed to a night of *counting sheep* and staring at the ceiling, the four walls and out the window, wondering to yourself if you'll ever get some shut eye.

Your outlook on life will be refreshed and new ideas will enter into your thinking space, inspiring growth and development, success and fulfillment. Thoughts will feel as though they actually belong to you – because they do, your presence will be requested by new and interesting people, all of whom you can afford to make time for due to your newly improved time management skills. Life can seem like the enemy whenever you're tired and out of energy, but it is we who make enemies of our own selves by starving the mind and the body of its necessities, a mistake that is to be avoided at all costs if you are to make the most of your life.

Chapter 7 – The Sub Conscious, Dreams & Meditation

Dreams are an essential part of a person's spiritual development as they can shed much necessary light on shaded areas of life which can often prove difficult to navigate through. Without a true sense of direction people can become lost and confused, but there is a natural method for attaining mastery over the dreams that can develop foresight and understanding in any situation.

The subconscious is more like a tool of reflection as it knows no *reasoning* and so, cannot base its calculations on any emotional level; it merely responds to the input that you feed it with. Meditating daily is a fine way to develop the mind to become more receptive to dream time. With consistent meditation you soon gain the ability to recall what you dream of so that in your waking reality you can get to work deciphering the hidden meanings of your dreams.

Furthermore, your meditation sessions will teach you how best to communicate with your sub-conscious by ways of opening your mind to the world around you; new understanding about how your mind processes information will lead to further discoveries about the different conscious states that you know as the mentality. You will learn how to override the old subconscious programming, which affects the way that you function, how you communicate with others, the way that you embrace change and adapt to new circumstances, people and places.

The dreams that you encounter whilst you are asleep can be either prophetic or a relaying of a certain activity you were involved in that day/night before falling to sleep – perhaps you were watching your favourite soap show or movie right before you fell asleep, or you could have been reading a novel or newspaper story, in any case, your subconscious could see fit to impress this upon your dreaming vision.

As your subconscious knows no reasoning it will take this last input of the day to be gospel or important to you, hence why many people around the globe recall dreaming of the show they were watching before sleep, or the phone conversation they had,

or the dinner that they prepared for the family. In any case, the subconscious must be programmed to your expectations. Treat it as you would your laptop, PC or smart phone; input decides the output, no sense in expecting a computer to know emotional context, right?

The subconscious can be either your worst enemy or your best friend, how will you engage with your mind now? The mentality needs to be yours to control, not somebody else's property. There are some people who prefer to be told what to do in life as this type of lifestyle is seemingly easier for them to cope with, opposed to the idea of having to think for themselves as this is too difficult a task for them to cope with. Whilst there is no crime in being weak minded, there is a huge price to pay for people who would rather not have to face up to reality or the world in which they are living.

The price for hiding from responsibilities is a life of cowardice. Everyone knows that to be successful in life depends on how well a person manages their own responsibilities; this is where meditation can bring about ease of what most people would deem to be burdensome. Meditation can develop the awareness to

recognise that certain obstacles in life are merely challenges or stepping stones in the disguise of burden. Meditation allows people to make profound discoveries about hidden strengths that had always been dormant, deep inside of you, stirring in wait for you to 'tap' your hidden potential or genius.

When the subconscious state is controlled by you and not by the world and the subliminal realities created to manipulate folk, your evidence will be evident in your actions. Meditation can teach you how to reconstruct the mechanism of the subconscious state, making it bow in your favour instead of working against you without your knowing or understanding. The mind is powerful beyond recognition, a tool that has the ability to change lives. You can control this power with developed focus and new levels of intuition from dreams and the messages they provide – used as a road map to navigate your way through life in an almost effortless manner.

If you find that your dreams are just making no sense then sit quietly and focus on your breathing for a few minutes until you feel relaxed and the rhythm of your breathing has slowed itself slightly, next you will need to visualise the dream or whatever

you can remember about it and hold the image/s (that you're having difficulty with deciphering) in your mind's eye and focus until something is revealed to you. Interruption of any kind will lengthen this process as you will need to bring your focus back to the point of clarity and start again, but with continual practice you'll find ease in maintaining your concentration in silence and stillness.

Allow yourself to become anew with meditation as your number one guide in life, always one step ahead of this life-ride, knowing when to hold off from making an important move, being able to trust in your instincts and believe in your own intuition. Life doesn't get any better than this; having the control to put right what has always been so wrong, turning situations to your advantage, never being lied to again as your intuition will teach you truth in the words of others, always knowing where you are in life as well as knowing where you're going from one moment to the next – that golden sense of direction.

Want to live a life with no boundaries, no limits, having the ability to learn a new thing without having the doubt of failing the exams or struggling to understand complex studies, free from the

fear of the working world, free to revel in any and all challenges so long as you live.

Chapter 8 - Improve Your Marriage With Meditation

Marriage is meant to be a sacred bond between two lovers who pledge their devotion to each other for life, but reality soon kicks in as soon as the bliss of the wedding day has ended. Married life is not so easy to keep balanced and harmonious, the constant demands of life add pressure when people are least ready to entertain difficulty, and before you know it, stress kicks in and the harmony is then challenged, the marriage is *tested* and opinions begin to *lock horns* with each other.

Meditation can prove to be a valuable tool for these testing times if you're willing to engage with it daily and maintain diligent effort, a turnaround will be evident in a short time with cooperation on both sides – naturally. The mind needs to be cleared regularly of the daily build up of thoughts, worries, frustrations and fears, to name a few, the mentality needs clearing every once in a while if it is to work efficiently, and marriage needs exactly that; clarity and efficiency with regards to proper communication.

When a marriage has issues relating to communication it is sensible to back-off until the air is cleared and conversation can resume without tension or aggravation of any kind. This is the clarity that was mentioned earlier, it is important to communicate effectively in any marriage and meditation can help to relax an already tense and emotion-heavy mind.

There is no sense in trying to *get your point across* when you and your spouse are at a stand-off with each other. An argument or a heated debate usually sees two opponents who both feel equal amounts of conviction regarding their reasons for arguing, however, in any argument both parties are usually 'right' in their own minds – the point here is that no argument is ever won because both individuals are convinced that they hold the higher, moral ground.

Meditating can indeed cool those flames and bring solution to a home that is rife with tension and hostile thoughts between the married couple. Meaningful exchanges can be had between any spouse when the fire has been allowed to die out. Energy is recuperated at an astonishing rate, tempers are controlled,

moods become lifted and solutions are able to be discussed with equal input from both husband and wife for a better way forward.

Achieving such benefits can be swift if meditation is enjoyed regularly and nothing is forced. Just a willingness to commit to bringing about some much needed change along with 15 to 20 minutes morning and evening of every day, done together or separate at first, this is a mental tool like no other with the power to improve your marriage miles beyond what any argument could.

Meditation will lift burdens that you probably were not aware even existed inside of your being. Daily routine has that effect on people – married or otherwise – you think you know all there is to know about yourself when a real shocker comes along and gives you a reality check.

Avoiding such *rude awakenings* can be impossible without the correct mindset in place. A mind that is capable of observing all there is about a relationship is a mind that knows how to perceive itself. Know yourself, know your spouse and others, this is a rare

quality that many people lack due to not spending enough time with themselves, hence why many people are a product of society, some hardly know who they are – no sense of identity because they've been busy copying/mimicking the lifestyles of others because of a low sense of self-esteem or absolutely no sense of self-worth.

Meditation is a practice that has outlived many others, it's simplistic nature delivers a powerful package to uplift spirit, soothe minds as well as clear them, align chakras in order to help maximise their benefits of energy, healing is also found in meditation where the body's immune system and vital energies are able to do what they do best and sustain you.

Marriage needs a different kind of nutrition just like the body does, it needs nurturing like any worthwhile thing needs, caring for yourself is the best way to start caring for your spouse and your marriage, as providing the very best for yourself is the best way to provide quality for your loved one also. How else can you give to others what you cannot give to yourself?

You matter just as much as any other person in the world and must persevere for the sake of your marriage if you honestly believe that there is a marriage worth saving. And if there really is something that you feel can be rebuilt then it starts with rebuilding your own views on partnerships like married life, which is ultimately a partnership of sorts – no?

Choose a good time to sit with your spouse and discuss how you both feel about moving forwards with improving your marriage. If the response is positive then you can both arrange suitable times to sit together for 20 minutes in stillness and silence, simply observing the thoughts that appear in the mind, being careful not to argue with the thoughts that you may find hard to accept, just observe and let out recurring thoughts with each exhalation to maximise clarity of the mind.

Discuss what you felt afterwards with each other, research meditation forums and speak with others who have stories to share relating to their successes with meditation, allowing this to inspire you and your partner to maintain your efforts with an even brighter outlook. If/when you feel ready, think about joining a local meditation class or group where you can interact with

others who have a similar ambition to your own – it always helps to ‘bounce’ input/knowledge off of others – sharing the knowledge that you acquire on your journey to improve your marriage is key to obtaining even more valuable knowledge to supplement your efforts. Try making meditation an addition to your marriage today for change that lasts.

Chapter 9 – Healing Emotional Wounds

Emotional pain is considered by many people to be worse than physical pain because the latter will heal in a shorter time than the former. When people experience a traumatic situation some will try to move on without having dealt with the emotional wounds at their 'root' level. This is the reality for many people who do not know how to release old wounds that are attached to their emotions.

The benefit that meditation can provide is to identify the root cause and then to develop enough courage to confront whatever it is that is in need of your attention. Acceptance is near impossible for some people to deal with, especially for those who have suffered in some way, either at the hands of another or by a situation that was out of their control at the time – the only way to confront the inner demons of the past is to accept what happened as a necessary experience that served some higher purpose.

Arguing with the past is not favourable, such behaviour will not allow you to learn from the lessons that were disguised as an unfair or terrifying experience. Putting up walls or barriers to block out the past-tense will keep you rooted firmly in the hole from which you're trying to escape. Life with meditation will remove the excess thoughts that drive you deeper into a place of misery and despair.

Practiced daily, meditation will make difficult work seem easy, but at first it will seem like a tremendous struggle to sit in stillness and in silence for any length of time, long or short. Meditating offers tranquillity, calmness, it allows you to become open minded instead of closed minded all the while, new ideas will enter your thinking space and the things that you once struggled with become more simplistic and you will immediately recognise the difference in your attitude and your worldly views.

The best part of meditation is that the healing process that takes place is automatic once activated. Healing occurs whenever the mind is relaxed enough to affect the body in a relaxed way. There is no relaxation for the body without the mind being in this state

first, hence the old but famous cliché – *mind over matter* – it all begins ‘upstairs.’

Emotional healing can afford you a life that is rich with happiness, fun, excitement, friendship, great career fulfilment, creativity and an abundance of possibilities and opportunities for a stable and a secure future which you believe in. If any real healing is to occur in your life then you need to accept the things that you dislike or even feel a sense of hatred for, as holding onto these snares will keep you from living a fruitful life like you deserve. Many people go through a lifetime of living with depression due to something which happened so long ago, yet, when the opportunity comes around to make a permanent change it is often missed because some people do not recognise it as the golden opportunity that it is, and this is due to being ‘closed minded.’

Whenever you hear people trying to motivate and inspire others you might usually hear them say something along the lines of; “keep an open mind” or “be optimistic,” and they may not know what they mean by it at the time but there is a reason why we have these clichés. Having or keeping an open mind is an essential requirement for moving on in life. Being open minded

will allow you to spot the opportunities for advancement whenever they present themselves. You will be able to swiftly identify the hidden or masked potential that is nested inside opportunities that at first, may seem like an ordinary meaningless occurrence of some sort, but with your mindset being developed, you'll know what is before you each and every time.

This is what meditation can offer to you, the ability to avoid further potentially traumatising scenarios with the gift of foresight, and enough open mindedness to know the difference between something of value and something which holds no value at all. This is healing at its best, prevention is always better than cure but if a cure is needed then meditation is a choice that you would do well to make. Too many people are suffering needlessly each year after year, unaware that there has always been a way to put the past to rest and there was always the opportunity to start again and rebuild one's life to a satisfactory standard, only will power and perseverance are needed.

The body will respond to your demands but first it has a few demands of its own; rest and recuperation, nutrition, fitness, hygiene etc. and if these requirements are all met when the body

needs them then it will serve you without delay. The lifestyles that humans live is demanding to say the least, so many people make unfair demands on their bodies without providing the body with its requests, yet they expect a top performance and if this does not happen they become angry and they start with all of the self-criticism which overcomplicates matter further.

Physicality depends much on how you engage with your mind and your emotions on a daily basis. Meditation gives you control over your life, your body needs a guide as it cannot and will not guide itself without the necessary input from you, regular like clockwork. There must always be a good relationship between the mind and the body if any positive and lasting results are to be gained.

When the balance between mind and body is haphazard then illness can kick in, as the body will begin to draw on any reserves of energy that is meant for other purposes, the strain is then raised and because the body cannot cope with the imbalance it eventually shuts down. The mind needs to be nurtured with adequate care and attention, this way it is fit and able to serve

you, even when your demands are high, your body will manage to cope if you've tended to its every need.

Meditating aids the immune system in defending the body naturally against disease and infection, meaning that the immune system must also be kept in good working order to save you the hassle of falling ill every moment that a new bug is released to cause havoc and distress among people. Well, imagine not having to draw for tablets and other drugs because you are healthy enough to 'prevent' disease from making its mark on you – meditate and build yourself to such levels of immunity.

Sound too good to be true? It is as true as you make it.

Remember that the majority of diseases, bugs, and infections are not natural, therefore they do not already exist inside of you like how cancerous nodes do, they are not 'triggered' but instead they are external and this means that they have to invade the body before they can turn your life upside down for a time. However, if your immune defence is on top form because you've given it what it needs then it will be as though you've employed an army of warriors to do battle against the enemy – disease.

They'll make an airtight defence for you and the enemy will have no option but to retreat, leaving you free to continue on with your life, even unaware of the prior attack. The body will act on autopilot with enough meditation in place to develop it to such levels of independence. Only a need to maintain your efforts at staying healthy are needed once the body has its new input from you, it will soak up the new lessons like it would with nutrients, the difference will be felt by you and it will be recognised by others who may provide feedback to you about what changes they see in and about you.

More often than not, it is other people who will come to tell you what they notice. Like a person whose goal is to build muscle, if they've followed correct procedure and have persevered then others will see the results sooner than the practitioner will, because they are not in the mirror looking for the increase in muscle size each day, therefore they will recognise the results before the practitioner does. Life is indeed like that, when people concentrate more than is needed it is easy to *miss the point*.

This happens because too much of the mind's resources are being heavily taxed for one area of life, leaving the other important areas crying out for attention until they shut down.

You see it all the time with people who are over enthusiastic about gaining something or making something happen that they cannot see how far they've gone with their efforts, and before they know it, all is ruined because they put too much into their goal/desire and forgot about the rest of their life in the process.

This is another root cause of illness, neglecting other important areas of your life will mean that you spent the rest of your time trying to fix things, and that is no real way to be living life on this planet. Life needs to be experienced fully, and when people have to spend the majority of their days being bed-ridden because of their neglect or ignorance.

Healing is an opportunity to improve yourself on a level that many people are not really aware of. Chances are that you yourself have been unaware until now, still, what matters most

here is that you make a conscious decision to make a conscious shift in your everyday thinking pattern.

Self-help is the preferred method of survival in this world, because the help is from yourself, therefore you know what you'll contribute and you'll have no trust issues like you might do with people whom you have never met before. Becoming a centred individual is about drawing on the focus that is available at the centre or the very core of your being, shutting out external noise, controlling multiple thoughts enough to aid your concentration and being open to receiving that which is good for you.

Your life depends on you, the vessel that you were given to live out this life in must be properly tended to for maximum efficiency. How far you get along your own personal road or mission depends on how well you maintain that which you've been given. When meditating, a person can make huge discoveries that are life changing in positive ways.

Meditation can raise your level of awareness to heights that allow the body to help itself mend and repair naturally, without the majority of input that would usually be needed from you.

The important thing is to remember that you have a responsibility just like any other person does. Life will always present you with obstacles to your health, therefore, there is no sense in stalling your bodily needs because of laziness or procrastination, it just leaves a mountain load for you to have to contend with at a later date. Why put yourself through such a needless period of stress and why put your body through the *mill* if you're not going to provide the requirements that it needs to serve *you* better?

If you believe in *mind over matter* but you can clearly see that your daily actions are not aligned with these principles then you know you've got your work cut out for you. Make things easier on yourself by tempering the processing centre (mind) with regular meditation that will build the body's natural resources to do battle for you whilst keeping illness and disease at bay, freeing up lots of energy for you to make use of, opening your mind to the infinite possibilities that exist. Recognise the opportunity to change and steer your life in a new, rewarding direction, fit for

any eventuality, completing old projects and moving onto new ones.

Conclusion

Well, we've made it to the end of our introductory guide to demystifying meditation, hope you've enjoyed it.

Now, Looking to the future, many people mistakenly believe they don't have time to devote to meditation.

Contrary to popular belief, this practice doesn't require a special room and hours upon hours of inner reflection to be done according to a strict set of rules. In fact, meditation can be done in any quiet corner, including your living room, office, hotel room, or even the airplane.

In order to achieve the proper meditative state in some of these places, you may need to practice certain techniques or bring along special devices that will block noise and ensure quiet for your designated meditation time.

Consider joining a meditation group so that you can effectively learn the methods of meditation before you attempt to meditate in unusual surroundings. The techniques and methods you learn through a learned meditation instructor will help you accomplish your own personal goals of meditation and inner exploration.

Meditation does not have to be incredibly time consuming. Make it a point to dedicate a few minutes each day to your meditation goals and spend some time reflecting inward. Mornings are excellent times to begin meditation, since you are at the most at ease during this time and your home is probably the quietest. Consider waking up before the rest of your household to snag a few much needed minutes along in order to successfully complete your meditation process. This is critical for both men and women with children who find it hard to meditate amidst the noises and demands of children.

When you are on the go, don't leave your meditation practices at home! Consider snapping up a pair of noise canceling headphones to block out noise on trains, planes, or automobiles. This will allow you the greatest sense of peace and quiet so that you can continue with your meditation techniques. Bring along a special

meditation soundtrack of familiar tunes to which you can also block out unnecessary background noise in order to meditate.

Meditation can be an excellent way to unwind after a long day of traveling, so consider taking time to practice your techniques once you reach your destination. For individuals who are constantly calling hotel rooms home, it can be quite easy to miss your personal meditation space. For this reason, carry a small token or a few items with you on your travels to remind you of home. Consider bringing a favorite blanket, pillow, or mat to aid you in your meditation practices. Also, bring along a photograph of your family or friends to help with the homesickness.

Use scents to transport you to a more serene world.

Aromatherapy has been used in conjunction with meditation for thousands of years. Consider beginning your meditation to comforting or exotic smells of incense or candles. For individuals on the go, consider bringing along travel candles or a vial of essential oil that you can leave open to pervade the atmosphere

Well I hope our introductory guide has shown you everything you need to start the wonderful practice of meditation. Good luck for the journey and begin today!