

Guru Free Meditation:

15 simple ways to relax and create well-being
...in 5 minutes or less...
without a mung bean or an ashram in sight!



MAGGIE WEBBER



MAGGIE WEBBER - BIOGRAPHY

- Bachelor of Education, Diploma of Teaching, Uni. of Tas.
- Bachelor of Business Leadership, Uni. of South Africa
- Masters of Commerce, Uni. Of NSW

Since establishing her own marketing and management consultancy over 30 years ago, Maggie Webber has worked with corporations as well as individuals, providing them a variety of tools to increase their productivity, assist in managing stress levels and achieve greater work/life balance. Although she specialized in sports marketing, she has worked with a vast variety of clients including elite, professional athletes, executives and entertainers.

Whilst living in the US, (where her former husband, Brett Ogle, played on the US PGA Tour), she studied with the Dr Deepak Chopra, and became his first certified meditation practitioner in the Pacific Rim. Having taught over 2,500 people this practice, she has also added a number of other modalities into her tool-kit (including Life and Business Coaching and NLP) to assist her clients in reaching far greater levels of potential and balance in their lives.

Having been a highly sought after trainer and speaker in this field, seven years ago she decided to truly 'walk her talk'. This involved resigning her position on the Board of the National Speakers Association (NSW Division), where she had qualified as an Accredited Speaking Member, and reducing all her interstate and international travel. Now able to work from home, she focuses on her private coaching work, an internet marketing consultancy and also runs a successful network marketing business, which she believes to be the most fair and equitable way of doing business for all concerned. More important, working from a home base, has allowed her to always be available for the needs of her two children.

Maggie has always had the ability to see "the big picture", as well as inspire others with her vision. She has a talent for combining the creativity and innovation of entrepreneurialism with a pragmatic, focused realism. Her passion to share her journey has made her workshops and other public presentations unique, empowering, and easy to follow. Maggie now teaches individuals and small business and start-up owners, how to live a life in balance, a life where the cornerstones of success are personal integrity, respect for the individuals you work with, and doing business from the heart.



Her keynote topics include:

- ✓ A New Definition Of Success
- ✓ Soul Parenting™
- ✓ Putting The Heart Back Into Business™
- ✓ Return On Investment – In Yourself
- ✓ Time Out versus Burn Out™

She believes most of us are frantically racing around trying to find answers outside ourselves – in our careers, relationships and the material goods we continually collect. In these busy, high-pressure times we have become human doings not human beings, and we find it difficult to balance the different aspects of our lives. To survive the ‘cut and thrust’ of the world around, and to get the best from ourselves and the opportunities presented to us, it is imperative that we tap into some silence – because if we “don’t go within, we go without”.

Her belief is that the way of the future lies not only in creating a life of balance for ourselves, but in one that values people, the planet as well as making a profit.

The sincerity of her message and her extraordinary gift of communication has seen Maggie establish herself as one of Australia’s most sought after speakers in this field.

But it is as the single mother of Chris and Rachel that she finds her greatest reward, balance and joy.



Who has benefited from working with Maggie?

"Maggie is one of our finest teachers. Her dedication and commitment are truly infinite"

- Deepak Chopra

"Maggie Webber's work is fresh, innovative and right-on for businesses struggling in this new environment. She won't improve your business – she'll show you how to revolutionize it!

If you're stressed out, uncertain or worried about your future, you need to find a new way and Maggie is one of the best new ways I've experienced".

- John McGrath, McGrath Real Estate.

" Maggie is a vibrant, dynamic speaker, who uses her own personal life journey to help illustrate her subject matter - be it business, relationships, parenting, spirituality in life, stress management - to name a few. She has a powerful, life transforming impact on people who often discuss her talk when next we meet.

- Peter Brock AM., Peter Brock Foundation (Deceased.)

"Most people think meditation is an 'out there, transcendental' kind of thing. My experience is that it is an extremely concrete tool, which makes a very practical difference to one's life. It clears the mind, improves productivity and anchors one very firmly in the here and now. If enlightenment means lightening up, that's a great description of what Primordial Sound Meditation has done for me".

- Gavin Partridge, former Managing Director, George Patterson Bates Advertising – Sydney.

"I think meditation is so enjoyable and the feeling is something I've never experienced before. I'd recommend it to anyone".

-Brett Ogle, Professional Golfer and Foxtel "Golf Show" host.

"When I meditate twice a day, meditation gives me the opportunity to sort things out in my life. It releases stress and allows me to focus my energy 100 per cent on what I'm doing, be it working on my music, singing or playing with my children".

-Jimmy Barnes, Entertainer



I wanted to write to you after the success of the Stress Management programs for the State Rail Transit Officers. It was a difficult task as the groups gave many challenges to more than one presenter. The groups also demanded high standards and were quick to challenge anything they felt was not meeting that standard. I am of course, overjoyed to say that you handled them with aplomb and grace. It was clear in the way they interacted with you that you had struck up quite a relationship in a very short time; and in a subject of the kind you were facilitating (meditation and stress management), that can so easily go the other way. It came as no surprise to me therefore, to witness the ovation you received. An ovation, I hasten to add, that was not given easily or often throughout the ten weeks of the program, when other facilitators were working with the group.

May I add that your professionalism as a speaker was also clearly evident. You are a delight to work with. For me the program was a challenging one and had me at sixes and sevens on many occasions. I can truly say though that when it came to handling matters related to your contribution to the program, you took every barrier with a smile and good humor, and it made my work so much easier. I hope to work with you again Maggie and encourage you to use this letter with my best wishes as evidence of your professional high standards.”

-Kevin Lohan, Director – Endeavour Training and Development.

“For each of us, life is an on-going series of experiences that help us discover who we are, often by showing us what we don't want to be. These often-turbulent events are more powerful in shaping our "self-discovery" than all the so-called “good times”.

Maggie Webber has allowed her journey thus far to be utilized in an amazing way. Her accumulated wisdom has made her a most extraordinary, powerful and compassionate teacher. I have personally experienced Maggie's teaching of the Primordial Sound Meditation, and had her speak to a group of eighty women about coming “Out of the Shadow and into the Light”

They were transfixed, motivated and extremely moved by the opportunity.”

-Bev Brock, Director - The Peter Brock Foundation.

“I have known and worked with Maggie for over ten years, and she is unique. Her limitless energy and drive are engines for her passion and performance. Her knowledge, guidance and typical ‘lead from the front’ style have helped me enormously, and I look forward to working with her more in the future”.



Introduction to Meditation:

Studies have shown we have, on average, 60,000 thoughts a day – give or take a couple! Some days I swear I have had double that. My mind used to race ahead of itself, worrying about what may happen in my future, or stressing out about something that had happened in my past. And the sad thing was, between 93-95% of the thoughts I had each day were a repeat of the ones I had the day before; and 93-95% of THAT day's thoughts, I repeated again the next day - churning them over and over in my poor, exhausted mind, like a chattering monkey. What a waste of time and energy!

Does this sound familiar?

What made matters worse, constantly thinking about my past was going to do absolutely nothing to change it – zip, zero, nada! It was over. I used to believe the same rule applied when I was stressing out about my future. No problems. A few (thousand!) thoughts won't matter.

Wrong! In the past couple of years I have studied with a number of experts in the field of NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming). It was the people who focused on the "Law of Attraction" I was particularly interested in.

I have now come to realize that it was EXACTLY that worrying about my future that was 100% guaranteed to create it!!! And guess what? Stressing out about my non-changeable past definitely created more of the same in my present - AND in my future! Why? Because in life we get what we focus on, positive OR negative. And what we have manifested in our present, is an exact duplicate of what we have thought about and focused on in our past. An exact match! Nothing more, nothing less.

OUCH!

There IS light at the end of the tunnel though – and it isn't necessarily an oncoming train!

I have heard it said that "the past is history; tomorrow is a mystery; today is a gift - that is why we call it the present"! Can you see why "living in the now" is not some spaced-out, esoteric, flower-power kind of thing? It is absolutely imperative if we want to live our lives to our full potential, and enjoy all the health, wealth and well-being that is trapped or hidden in our bodies, just waiting to break out and run wild. Now there's a great thought....



But before I teach you these simple meditation techniques, let me give you a little background to where meditation came from, and a couple of personal examples to show how and why it works.

Background to the Practice of Meditation:

There are many, many kinds of meditation. Some are practiced whilst seated, some whilst walking, some with eyes closed, some with eyes open! They say one of the reasons Houdini could stay under water for so long was because he was meditating. But PLEASE, PLEASE do not try this, just to see if that was hearsay or not!! I DID, on my first scuba dive at the Great Barrier Reef. I was quite a few feet under water, started repeating my personal mantra, suddenly became gripped with terror, spat out the regulator, came up far too quickly.....and nearly got the bends! Not a nice experience at all. *You see, you will soon come to learn that we do not meditate for the experiences we are having whilst we meditate, but for how it affects our life when we come out of the practice. I nearly drowned learning that simple lesson.*

As you get more practiced in this wonderful art, and try different meditations that do not necessarily focus on the breath, then your breath certainly *does* get affected. But this tends to be with the much longer meditations that people practice, often with mantra, for 20 or 30 minutes, and sometimes even longer. More on that later...

So what is a mantra? Is it some strange voodoo sound that we have to chant? No, quite the opposite....in fact a mantra is (rarely) used verbally at all! (That is a "mantrum", which is indeed chanted or spoken out aloud.) The word "mantra" is from Sanskrit, the oldest language in the world. The word is made up of 2 parts: man = mind, tra = instrument of.... So it quite simply means (an) "instrument of the mind". A mantra is a 'meaningless thought'. And why do we need or use one of those? To take us away from the "meaningFUL ones"..... those 60,000+/- thoughts we have each day....(though sometimes I wonder if they are very meaningful, especially when we go over and over "the same old, same old" stuff!)

One thing that is for sure, to receive many of the benefits of meditation, you do not have to have to take up yoga classes 3 times a week, sit in the full-lotus position every time you practice it and become an instant vegetarian (though these all help, in their own way. I will explain why, at another time and in another place, for there is no need to concern yourself with those concepts now.)



It is also very important to note that meditation is not a religious practice. Anyone from any faith and culture can meditate, and it will not negatively affect their religion of choice one bit....in fact, it will quite likely enhance it.

Many people think that prayer and meditation is the same thing. This is also not the case. Prayer engages the active level of the mind, while the aim of meditation is to still it. Deepak Chopra says that “prayer is speaking to God (or Universal Consciousness, The Source, The Great Spirit, Intuition, Sarah....whatever you choose to call him/her/it.) **Meditation is listening.**” That is THE big difference between the two in a nutshell.

I must say, when I stopped asking God for “this, that and everything else - and where is it, or why is it taking you so long to manifest it for me”, things did start to change for me, and rapidly. When I finally started to listen to the reason I was on the planet, and how I could use my many talents, that I had so generously been given, to be in service to other people – (which is another way of describing my “Soul Purpose”) - then, and ONLY then, did my life REALLY begin to change for the better, *and* at an exponential rate.

For “Enlightenment” is not a destination, particularly one to strive for. Try too hard, and there’s one sure way you will take much longer to reap the benefits of meditative practice! This is so opposite to the way we normally live our lives....often so competitive, “no pain no gain”, “try, try, try again”. In fact the less we do in meditation, the greater the rewards. It’s more about choosing and allowing, *never* about trying. True meditation is forgetting about the outcomes, and enjoying the journey. Just consider the following words....

En....joy. En....lighten. Meditation is all about “lightening up”.
En ...theos. That’s where the word “enthusiasm” comes from, meaning “of or from God “.
In...spiration. – this word means Wisdom “breath from Spirit”.

When you break these words down into syllables, it all begins to make sense and the jig saw pieces begin to fit. It is like a light bulb that comes on in your head...and your heart!

Now why is it that some people who meditate look young, healthy and happy?

There are many health, well-being and ultimately (biological) age-reversing benefits you may gain from doing these exercises, which is why so many health practitioners are recommending meditation more and more. But when it was first “discovered”, thousands of years ago by the wise men (also called prophets, seers, sages or rishis), they were not too concerned about their blood-pressure



and finding ways to relax. They were pretty relaxed already, sitting up there in their loin cloths in the Himalayas, meditating for most of the day. Oh I wish! (I am definitely coming back next time as a rishi. I won't have to do 3 loads of washing a day, no driving the kids to football....Ahhhhh, dream on Maggie!)

Today, as we now have ways of accurately measuring such things as blood-pressure, hormonal levels, heart rate variability and more, through a variety of different scientific tests, we have found out there are many fabulous and very healing bi-products that are all a consequence of being in the meditative state. And that is all it takes. No drugs or scalpels required!

Some years ago, after studying with Dr Deepak Chopra and others, I made a choice to never take a chemically based sleeping pill or anti-depressant – even though, at that time and according to my local doctor, I would get very ill and/or “the wheels would fall off” my life, if I *didn't* take them!! With the extremely “stressful” situations I was going through – like a divorce, moving house 5 times and losing \$1/4 million in a property deal to name just a couple – these pills were considered the “normal”, traditional solution to all my stress!

Or there was the time I gave birth to an 11lb 4oz (5.2kg), and over 2 ft (62cm) long baby. My beautiful son Chris got into fetal distress because he was SO big, and got stuck half way through his journey into this world. The specialist was concerned he would lose him or me or both of us. So, much as I wanted to give birth as naturally and as drug-free as possible, I had to have a caesarian to save both our lives. Even with 42 stitches across my belly, less than 24 hours after Chris' birth I asked them to take away any and all pain killers from me....and for two main reasons. I didn't want the wonderful experience of my son's birth to be dulled or tainted any further, or for any analgesic to be passed to my son through my breast milk, setting up any possible addiction for him later in life.

You see, the pills would have solved nothing! Would they have changed any of the current circumstances in my life? Would they pay my bills or fix my relationship? All they could possibly do was dull some pain for awhile. They could only ever be like a “Band-Aid”™, a temporary measure at best, and a potential addiction down the track at worst). The events were not about to change. What I had to do was learn to change my “PERCEPTION OF, and therefore MY REACTION TO these events”.

The change had to begin within me. Forget anyone or anything else. So, to paraphrase Gandhi, we must ‘become the change we want to see in the world.’

When I changed my perception, I changed the hormonal reactions that had been occurring within me.



After meditating, those new, physiological reactions flooded my body daily with wonderful, healing, youthful hormones like DHEA, and Interferon, and Interleukin2 (one of the drugs often given for cancer.) And where did these healing hormones come from? From inside me....they had been there all along! I had just forgotten how to access them. Instead, my anger, blame and judgment had been creating some real nasties, flooding my body every few moments with way too much adrenalin and cortisol (the “stress hormone”), that was aging me in half the time I should be aging!

That is why the human body is such an amazing miracle. We do not need to get these wonderful, powerful natural pain killers and age reversing hormones from a bottle. Why? Because our body will create them by itself, if only we would stop blocking it and allow it to do the job it is crying out to do. (That is why my other company is called “Nature’s Pharmacy”, because that is what our amazing bodies are....a walking, talking “drug-store” - minus the ice-cream fountain!)

Since those early days, by learning and using basic meditations such as the ones I will teach you here, I now reduce or completely dispel any pain or disease with the power of my mind. If I can, so can you!

Another great added bonus is that I have reversed my biological aging process at the same time!! I cannot change the date on my passport (unless I get a false one – and I am not into anything that is false, like botox, so that wont work!) My age is 60 in June, 2015. Nothing I can do to change that one. But that is my *chronological age*!!!! And who cares about that? I am more concerned about my *biological/cellular/metabolic* age, which, when I had is tested 18 months ago was 48! Who needs plastic surgery and lipo-suction, when we can do it all, by ourselves- and for FREE!!!!??

Am I special or particularly clever? No! ANYONE CAN DO THIS. They just need to be taught correctly, and that is why I am introducing you to these concepts here, as a first step for you.

Although meditation can be used to reduce pain and has many other wonderful, physiological results, it was not initially used to ‘just relax, for the sake of relaxing!’

We can use sleep, or lying like a vegetable in front of the TV for that, because when we do either of these things, we get into a state called “restful dullness”.



You know what it's like after you have had an afternoon nap. When you wake up it takes a few moments to get rid of that fuzzy feeling, and get that razor sharp edge back to your thinking?

That is why television has often been described as “the opiate of the masses”, (based on Karl Marx’s famous quote about religion working in a similar fashion. These are his thoughts, not necessarily mine! Just imagine what Marx would say about the effect of all these computer games these days....but that’s another story.)

Meditation was initially used to get beyond ‘restful dullness’ into a state of ‘restful alertness’, where, to quote Deepak Chopra, we are able to “eavesdrop on the cosmic mind”. To have access to the spiritual aspects of our life, it is imperative to take time out to hear that ‘still, small voice’; that connects us with who we *really* are (not who our ego fools us into thinking, or what others tell us to believe about ourselves).

The result of regular 2 x 20-30 minutes of daily meditation practice, or even a number of short 1 – 5 minutes ones scattered throughout your day, will soon lead you to a place where you take some of the peace of ‘being in that state’ into everything you do and say in life. You literally ‘walk your talk’. In that wonderful, peaceful state we are no longer concerned about that destination called ‘enlightenment’ – we really enjoy the journey of discovery instead, with all its amazing twists and turns, as we head towards enlightenment – ‘lightening up’ along the way, of course!

Trust me, on this journey, there will be times when you sometimes feel that you have never meditated one minute in your life. There will be times when you feel frustrated and bored as you practice. These are all great signs, because they are a result of bringing up and releasing stress and toxicity, which is one of the main reasons we are meditating. So please do not judge yourself for these reactions and make yourself wrong. And you will surely be tested, time and time again, when you come out of meditation too. The more you meditate though, the more you become a witness to these testing times, instead of being caught up in the drama they can so easily create, if you allow them to.

Anthony Robbins says “confusion comes before a breakthrough”. Find peace and consolation in the fact that man’s first trip to the moon was on course only 3% of the time - but it still got there!



Which brings me to two final, introductory thoughts. One of the biggest fallacies about meditation is that when we sit down quietly, close our eyes and begin the practice of our choice, we will be in total silence and have absolutely no thoughts. And if we DO have a thought, we MUST be doing it all wrong! Not so. Trust me, anyone who tells you they are not having a thought when they are meditating is either asleep or, quite possibly, dead! Because, guess what?

IF YOU THINK YOU AREN'T HAVING A THOUGHT, YOU ARE ACTUALLY HAVING A THOUGHT, THAT YOU ARE NOT HAVING A THOUGHT! Do you want me to run that past you one more time???. The whole idea is to get BEYOND the thoughts, and when a thought does come in, to be ever so gentle with yourself, allow it to be, observe it and then go back to thoughts about your breath, or your mantra or whatever other tool you have chosen to use in that instance, to get past that tricky old mind of yours.

Isn't it a relief to know that? So you can stop the self-flagellation from this point onwards, OK?

Last, and definitely not least, and as mentioned previously, meditation is not so much about what is happening to you whilst you are doing it – like the amazing colors that you might see or the feelings you might have. It is more about the effect it has on your life when you come out of the session. It does not matter what technique you use. The whole point of the practice is that the more regularly you use it, the more your life will change. Your physiology will begin to change, especially your hormonal system, and your body will get more and more back into balance (or what we call “Homeostasis”.) Hence the saying, “Physician, Heal Thyself” The human body is such a miracle, if only we would treat it with more love and respect.

You will also notice you may become a much nicer person to be around (though others are more likely to notice this before you do. In fact, if YOU do notice any change in you first, and mention it to the others around you, they may think you are being rather egotistical, and wonder what all this “woo-woo” stuff is all about!)

You are also very likely to find that your intentions and desires are now being manifested much more easily and doors that were once closed now open more easily as well; Now you seem to be in the right place at the right time and meet lots of people who can help you reach your goals and even your dreams.



Everything seems to be so much easier, now that you are “in the flow”..... This is called synchronicity, and to me, this is THE greatest gift I have received from my meditation practice.

When I am no longer ‘in the flow’ or ‘in the zone’, (which is why I call my company by that name), it is a sure sign I am going back to living through my ego. It means I have now gone back to being a ‘human doing’ instead of quite simply a ‘human being’, no longer living my life in ease and grace we can all live with, if we so choose and, more important, allow.

Preparation for the Practice of Meditation:

It is really important to remember that your meditation time is YOUR time. Don't share it with the kids or the cat or even your partner....unless, or course, they are meditating with you - that's a whole different story. (Can't you just picture your pussy-cat doing the full-lotus?! Just joking!) So no, definitely NO pets allowed for the longer, seated (especially mantra) meditations - even sleeping pets. There's a definite reason for this, which I won't elaborate on here - you will just have to trust that I know what I am talking about.

As for short, walking practices, it is probably all right to take the dog - or even the cat - to the park, but pets can still be a real distraction, and this is YOUR time. There will be plenty of time to feed and play with Fido and Simba before and after you have done your practice. Still, be sensible about this – you don't have to move the aquarium every time you meditate, OK?

For seated meditations, you can use your bed, sit on the floor and have your back against the wall, with your legs out in front of you, or cross-legged if you so chose. But if you are going to use a chair or couch to meditate, these are best if they are comfortable yet high-backed, and in a place where you have little chance of being disturbed. When I say comfortable, it is best that it is not TOO comfortable; that is, not too soft and spongy, with little support for your back.

It is always best to be just that little bit uncomfortable – so you still have a very slight sense of awareness – and to ensure you do not fall asleep. If possible, your legs should be evenly balanced and no kneeling with legs tucked up under your rear, (unless you are using a meditation stool.)

Having said that, there is absolutely no reason why you have to sit cross legged, let alone in the full-lotus position. We can leave that till you go to live in the Himalayas!



You can sit with the palms of your hands facing upwards and resting on each of your thighs, or hold your thumb and fore-finger together in more traditional pose. There is a more esoteric reason as to why this hand position is adopted, but you do not need to concern yourself with that now....or ever, in fact! One good thing about holding your fingers this way though, is it serves as a trigger (or what some people call an “anchor”) to remind the mind that you about to get into a peaceful state.

This is pretty well all you need to know for any seated meditations.

Your eyes do not have to be closed for most of the simple, verbal practices. (or for the outside/walking ones either – unless you want to end up in a lake or under a bus!)

But I do suggest, as soon as you feel comfortable, get into the habit of closing your eyes with your inside, seated practices. The main reason for this as that it takes your focus inwards, away from any possible outside activity, and so you are less likely to get distracted. After all, as Neale Donald Walshe said in “Conversations with God”.

“If you don’t go within, you go without!” So true.

Just before we get started, do you want to know WHY it is worth spending your precious time meditating in the first place?

Let me summarize the reasons why.....



25 great reasons to learn to meditate!

- ✓ To sleep better
- ✓ To have more energy
- ✓ To improve concentration
- ✓ To eliminate fatigue
- ✓ To reverse the effects of aging
- ✓ To improve eating habits
- ✓ To increase sensory perception
- ✓ To experience unconditional love
- ✓ To release toxins from our physiology
- ✓ To become non-judgmental
- ✓ To help make the right choices
- ✓ To lighten up and be carefree
- ✓ To unfold the silence in your life
- ✓ To increase creativity
- ✓ To reduce stress
- ✓ To restore memory
- ✓ To get in touch with your true self
- ✓ To fulfill your desires
- ✓ To become more intuitive
- ✓ To give up bad habits
- ✓ To have better relationships
- ✓ To enhance your daily living
- ✓ To reconnect to your Spirit
- ✓ To experience higher states of consciousness
- ✓ To help create world peace

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So are you getting excited?

Are you ready to get off the treadmill of your life for just a few moments and draw a breath or two? A few minutes is too long? How about we start with a ONE minute exercise then? And guess what.... No ashram or guru is required!!

Throw all expectations to the wind....

Let me walk by your side as you take your first few steps on what is often called "The Road Less Traveled".

I am SO excited for you, because I know what you have is store.

Time to begin...

May you have many blessings and much abundance, in all areas of your life.

Namaste.

Maggie



Meditation # 1: Getting to the Heart of it all.

1. *Sit comfortably and close your eyes.*

2. *Picture in your mind a person, place, thing or an event that is really causing you to feel unsettled or even distressed. What emotion do you feel right now and where do you feel it in your body?*

3. *Now put your attention on your heart – that area in the centre of your chest. Imagine you can breathe through your heart, and take a few, slow and gentle breaths into your heart area.*

4. *Go back to the picture in your mind? As you imagine it, ask your heart:*

“What is a more peaceful and compassionate way that I can choose to react, to that person or situation that I have been allowing to stress me out?”

5. *Wait for your heart’s answer.*

(Invariably, it is very different to the reaction you had in Step 2.)

6. *Slowly open your eyes.*

One minute! That’s all it took. With practice, you can get this meditation down to 15-20 seconds... or even less! It’s great for in the traffic, or if you feel a case ‘queue rage’ coming on.



Meditation # 2 – Instant Calmer!

The purpose of this simple meditation is to substitute those seemingly incessant ‘monkey-chatter thoughts’ about every day life, with more calming thoughts about our breath – for our breath, after all, is the source our life-force. In many Eastern practices, the breath is considered to be the junction point between the mind and the body, so when we put our focus on our breath – (something that we often take for granted, and yet would not survive very long without!) – there is little chance for us to think about the bills we have to pay, or whether the dog has been fed.

You do not have to close your eyes for this practice, though, as mentioned before, it is a better habit to get into eventually, (to take your attention within and not let it be dissipated on things outside you.) Hands on thighs or hold thumb and forefinger together...but only if it is comfortable. This is about your comfort and relaxation, and not about following set rules. OK?

1. *Sit in a comfortable position and place.*
2. *As you slowly breathe in and out, count the breaths you take. On the inhale say “In”; on the exhale say “Out” 1.*

*So, breathing slowly, In, Out..... 1;
In.....Out.....2; In.....Out.....3.
When you reach 3, go back to 1 and start again.*

(Some people prefer to say “Inhale.....Exhale”..... which makes the breaths last longer. I find “In....., Out” much more simple to use and therefore much easier to remember. It’s up to you.)

The aim of this practice is not to think about your breath, but more to feel it. Simply observe your breath, and do not try to change it in any shape or form. If it wants to quicken, let it....if it wants to slow down, allow it to do this too. It may be quite shallow or it may be deeper....literally, go with the flow of your breath as it passes in and out through your nasal cavity. If you want to use your mouth, that is fine - though you may end up with a slightly dry throat.



The other aim of the practice is counting in the correct order – 1, 2, 3. Then back to 1.

3. *If while you are doing this, you find yourself thinking about anything else except how your breath feels, or whether it is number 1, 2 or 3, then, very gently (no whipping yourself allowed!), go back to the thought of your breath. If you lose track of what number you were up to? Easy...just go back to number 1 and start afresh.*

It's all about choice. There will be plenty of time to think about the bills to be paid and whose birthday you forgot at another time! So, as soon as you notice any foreign thoughts coming in, gently go back 'down to the count'. As you become more used to it, you can count up to 10. It is recommended you don't go any further than that though, as the numbers get too long and hard to say....then you start to think too much, which defeats the purpose of the exercise!)

This is one of my favorite meditations, for though it may seem a little difficult to focus the first few times, it gets so much easier with practice. And this practice is truly 'meditation in a box'. Just like my lunch, I can take it or do it anywhere! In the car, at the bank, doing the washing....all with my eyes open of course!



Meditation # 3 - THE BIG CHILL OUT!

1. Where to Chill:

- ✓ Take yourself away to a quiet place, by yourself

2. What to do next:

- ✓ Close your eyes
- ✓ Scan your body for any feelings of tightness, pressure or pain...any kind of blockage
- ✓ Choose one and put your attention on it

3. Questions to ask in your mind:

- ✓ What shape is the discomfort? (Round, square, 3D)
- ✓ What size is it? (Be as exact as you can be)
- ✓ How deep is it?
- ✓ What color is it?
- ✓ What is the texture of it? (Hard like metal or wood; soft like rubber; or is it liquid?)
- ✓ On a scale of 1 – 5, with 5 being as painful as you can imagine, what score would it rate?

4. And now:

- ✓ Repeat these questions 3 – 4 times. With every series of questions, the score of the tension should decrease

Or, another really effective version of this exercise is:

Step 4 (alternative) Gently keep your attention on the pain. Imagine it moving from the spot it is in, slowly moving, moving, moving - until it picks up a little momentum, and finds it's way to your closest arm or leg.



Not focusing hard on it but just observing its progress down your arm or leg, watch it till it gets to your fingers or toes. Witness it as it reaches the tips of those fingers or toes, till it moves out of the end of them, and out into the atmosphere around them.

5. Wish it “all the best”, and thank it for the lesson it left you....for pain is often a great teacher!

6. Slowly open your eyes, sit gently for a few moments, then get up slowly.



Meditation # 4 : Walking Your Talk

The best thing about this meditation is that you can get your exercise at the same time - two for the price of one! You can do it wherever you take a walk, be it to and from the office, on the treadmill, up and down the stairs, or even if you are lucky enough to have some time out for a walk in the country. The only thing is you will need to walk more slowly than you usually do. So don't try it if you are late for work! If you are on a treadmill, do it during your warm up or warm down.

1. *Begin each in-breath with the word...."In" and each out-breath with the word "Out". Say "In" as your left foot touches the ground and "Out" as the right one does the same.*

This is not an exercise concerned with trying to control your breath and how fast, slow, deep or shallow it goes; just simply about observing it.

2. *As you inhale, count how many steps you take; as you exhale, do the same. As you walk and breathe you are saying "In, 2, 3; Out, 2, 3.*

The idea of saying "In.....Out....." is to help you focus on the breathing and the walking (rather than the counting the exact number amount of times you THINK you have to make a step!) This is "certainly not a case of "We're in the Army now! Like One, two...one, two...Attention!"

So, please, be gentle on yourself and note that sometimes your inhale may be shorter than your exhale or vice versa. Also, the numbers you count may vary each and every time you inhale or exhale. This is ALL fine. Just breath, walk, count and observe.

You will find, as is the case with all meditations, your mind will wander. That too is OK, as long as when you realize this, you bring your attention back to walking and counting your steps as you breathe slowly in and out. In this meditation you are using the counting as your 'instrument of the mind', (mantra) to bring it back when it wanders. That is correct meditation practice.

But if you realize you are no longer counting, and stay with those other, random thoughts that you have allowed to distract you, you are no longer meditating – you are quite simply day-dreaming, and the effect on you is not nearly so beneficial.

So, enjoy "walking your talk".



Meditation # 5 : Taming the Flame

1. Find a place in a darkened room, and sit comfortably with a straight back.
2. Place a candle in a safe holder, and set it alight. Place the flame about 12-15 inches away from your eyes.
3. Before you begin this exercise, gently make a commitment to yourself that you will not move, or think or have any emotions while you are doing it.
4. Stare intently at the flame for a few moments. You will notice that the flame is rather like the shape of a water drop, and the bottom of that droplet is darker in color. That is the part to focus on.
5. Whenever your attention drifts away, bring it back to the core of the flame. The purpose of the exercise is not to think about anything else – your evening meal, what would happen if the candle wax dropped or burnt your skin, or how a little flame can become a raging bush-fire. Your thoughts, and when they do, come back to that dark spot at the bottom of the droplet.
6. Continue this for two to three minutes, then quickly blow the flame out, and close your eyes.
7. Almost immediately, you will begin to see the droplet shape of the flame as if it has been painted onto the back of your eyelids. (It's actually really cool!)
8. Observe this image as long as you possible can (without opening your eyes.) Watch it as it shimmers, changes color and flickers, as if the original flame is actually being projected like a movie onto the screen of your eyelids. It's shape and form may even completely morph into something else - though, if you stay focused and keep your eyes closed, you will recognize it as the original flame.
9. With time, and practice, you will be able to visualize the image for as long, if not longer, than the original flame you observed. Now that is really flexing the muscles of your mind!



Meditation # 6 : Zen Again.....

You may have seen a video about a number of Buddhist monks, in their golden robes, walking in a straight line and in absolute unison. They have been doing it for awhile, so they have dropped their training wheels and have got a bit of speed up!! Even so, it can still look a little odd to the uninitiated, so if you are concerned that someone may think you have been employed by Monty Python's Ministry of Silly Walks, then you had better practice this one in private for awhile. (But who cares about extra people's opinion anyway?)

1. Find a place – a path or hallway is perfect – where you can walk for at least 10 paces, and in an absolutely straight line.
2. Now begin walking, as slowly as you can (without actually falling over).
3. As you take a step, name in your mind each part of the actual movement of taking it. As you lift your foot from the ground say “up”; as you move it forward through the air say “forward”; as you put your foot back down on the ground again say “down” and as you move to the other foot say “change”. Then begin the cycle again: “Up, forward, down, change. Up, forward, down, change”, focusing on the foot being moved all the while.

In the beginning, it is best to take at least 10 seconds per cycle for each foot.

As you become more proficient at focusing on one foot at a time, you can start to speed up a little. You may even want to name just the “raising” and “lowering” part of the process. Be careful though....there is no such thing as ‘safe speeding’, so don't speed up too much.

Or, of course, you may want to go in the other direction entirely. I don't mean walking backwards...though some monks do! No, I mean slowing things right down until you take 30 and even up to 60 seconds per step.

Now that REALLY takes discipline and self-control.



Meditation # 7 : It takes two....

“Ahhhhhh!” Just saying that word and I relax. I used to practice Jappa some years ago. (“Om” in the mornings and “Ah” in the evenings, using a wonderful CD called “Meditations for Manifesting” by Wayne Dyer.) There are many spiritual words that use this sound, including Allah or Shalom. One way this sound works is because the vibration of “Ahhhh” sound really comforts one’s Central Nervous System, (and works on many other deeper levels apart from that as well.)

One really lovely exercise using the “Ahhh” sound is actually done with a partner. This is usually someone you are very close to, like your life partner or a very close (and understanding) friend or family member. (My mum, dad and siblings all seem to think I have antennae coming out of the top of my head, so best of luck with your family!) I have also done this exercise in hospitals and hospices, where the patient can be actively involved, but sometimes isn’t even consciously aware that this beautiful healing gift is being given to them.

- 1. Choose who is going to be the person who is the speaker and who is the listener. (I was going to use the terms “giver” and “receiver”, but trust me - both parties receive a lot from participation in this exercise, especially if they are intimately involved. If only all marriage guidance counselors could use this practice, for not only does it (re-) build rapport, and can be used to build and often regain trust. It’s a wonderful exercise!)*
- 2. The listener then lies comfortably with their eyes closed and breathes normally, whilst the speaker sits close enough to watch the rise and fall of their partner’s chest, and to hear their inhales and exhales.*
- 3. As the speaker focuses on the rise and fall of their partner’s chest, they aim to match them as closely as possible, both in length and depth of breath. The speaker makes their own in-breath silently, but the out-breath they make with a verbal “ahhhhhh!”, almost as if they are saying it as a sigh or with the same energy as we say “phew!”*
- 4. The listener should not try to change their breath in any way – not its speed, or its pitch or its rhythm. They should not aim to hold their breath, or adjust it in any other way – all they should do is just keep breathing!*

The amazing thing about this exercise is that there can come a time when it is as if two people’s breath becomes as one, and so it really does promote a very loving and compassionate tie between two people, and can really go a long way to heal any emotional wounds between them. So if – no, make that - WHEN this exercise works for you, don’t be too concerned if they are doing it for more than about five minutes. You just never know how much deeper it is working at healing both your hearts.



Meditation # 9 : Listen to your Heart.

That old Tamala Motown song said it so well. If you do not take the time...just a few seconds in fact...to “stop, look and listen to your heart”, you do not have any real hope of ever hearing the messages it is so often trying to give you.

Did you know that your heart actually has over 60,000 neurons, otherwise known as brain cells? There is a clear two way communication between the heart and the brain, which although this was only thoroughly and scientifically tested in the twentieth century, has been suspected and written about since the early Greek civilization. Please don't think your heart is just some pump. It is that, but oh, so much more.

Let's think about this. My resting pulse is about 68. That means my resting heart is pulsing at just more than one beat a second. As you come to practice daily and for longer times, your heart-rate can slow down considerably while you are actually meditating. (But if it stopped beating for more than a few moments, I would not be writing this book for too long, or doing anything else for that matter!)

Therefore, to actually count it's beats, is not only a remarkably powerful thing to do for focusing your attention, but I find it instantly raises your respect for what is undoubtedly one of the most important and amazing organs in your body. So let's begin...

1. Put your attention and your hand onto your heart.

(You can also do this with the pulse in your wrist or in your neck, but I believe the exercise is far more powerful when you put your hand on the source of the beat ...literally!)

2. Count each beat. 1, 2, 3, 4 and so on. Even if it is for just one minute, it will be of tremendous benefit to you. Eventually and with practice you will find if you time yourself for a minute or two, the less number of beats you will count. If you lose count, go back to one and start again.

3. Initially as you keeping counting, you may notice your heart starts to race or may even skip a beat.

This does not mean anything is wrong with your heart....who knows, it may just mean you are in love! But it can still be a little unsettling, or for some, quite nerve-wracking the first few times it happens

4. If some fear comes up, just observe it, and, as soon as you feel comfortable again, go back to counting your heart beats.



5. If you want to add an extra dimension to this simple yet very powerful meditation, have a feeling of gratitude or appreciation as you hold your heart. This emotion has the highest vibration of all emotions, and it really will add to the power and the effect of what you are doing.....even if you are doing it for just one minute.



Meditation # 10 : Watching the Detective

This exercise is more about observing and detaching from the type of thoughts you are having and the content of them. We have done some counting in some previous meditations, where we counted our breaths or our steps. Now we are going to count the actual thoughts themselves.

1. *Before sitting in your favorite meditation position, make sure you have some means of timing a minute, either on a clock or your mobile phone. (If possible, don't let the ring tone be too loud, as it is really quite stressful to the body to be snapped out of sleep or some other form of repose, by any loud or strident noise. It is called an "alarm clock" for a very good reason!)*
2. *Sit down comfortably and close your eyes. As soon as a thought comes into your mind, count it as "1". Then the next immediate thought is "2".*

You aren't supposed to be the slightest bit interested in or concerned with what the thought is about. Remember, if you stay focused on one or a single string of thoughts, you are no longer meditating....instead you are daydreaming. And as this is such a short meditation, you would only end up having two or three thoughts, which defeats the purpose of the exercise.

It is rather like going to the mall to do some people-spotting. The whole idea is to just 'spot' and observe as many people as possible, to watch all the different shapes, sizes, races, ages, different styles of clothing and so on – not to just watch the same 2 or 3 people all day. How incredibly boring! So as we have already had some experience with counting meditations, and returning our wandering thoughts to the particular kind of meditation we are doing at the time, you should be able to release each thought once it is counted and move on.

3. *Just keep a tally of all your thoughts, including such thoughts as "Oh no – I have lost count....was that 7 or 8" or "I am not having any thoughts" (which of course is a thought!) Your thoughts may be one word or a string of many. Your mind may even try to picture them like the 'pull throughs' on the bottom of an advertisement. Just go back to your counting. These thoughts will come in no particular order, pace, pitch or rhythm either. This is just what we want, so keep counting.*

There are some kinds of thoughts that are much more resilient than others – usually they are about a relationship or a person, place or thing that we want or don't want in our life. These can be those 'slippery little suckers' that just don't want to leave, and instead keep hanging on in our minds.



If a thought is particularly troubling or stubborn, it will be there when you come out of your meditation, so you may want to write it down then.

Remember it is not the type of thought that is the challenge for us - it is what our perception of it is, and how we react to that perception.

So don't judge your thoughts. Just count them!



Meditation # 10 : Driving you wild

The following meditation is not given to you, step by step. Instead it is my thoughts on turning one of the most potentially stressful things, that many of us do each day, into something that can become an enjoyable and often quite healing experience.

Have you ever got into the driver's seat of your car, closed the door, turned on the ignition, driven for say half an hour, arrived at your destination, turned the car off - and as you open the door, you suddenly realize you do not have a clue as to HOW you got there?

Isn't that scary? Driving a car is potentially one of the most dangerous things we do in any given day, yet it is fascinating as to how many people drive while texting on their mobile phone, eating, taking CD's in and out of their player, putting on their make-up (hopefully that cuts out 50% of us!) and/or talking to someone or something else at the same time. I even saw a lady with a big Labrador dog in her lap, licking her ear the other day, as she turned the corner. Yep, and you guessed it...her mobile was in her other hand, attached to her unlicked ear, as she turned the wheel. Heaven forbid!

We seem to forget that we are driving many tons of metal and litres of fuel, and this is apart from the human life we may also be carrying at the same time. It is as if we are driving unconsciously. I always say to my mantra meditation students: "What do you do if your mantra comes into your mind whilst you are driving?" Remember - a mantra is a meaningless thought, something to take you AWAY from the meaningful ones and eventually into that special place called "the Gap" (the name for the silent space between our thoughts). So the last thing you want to be doing when you are driving is using such an 'instrument of the mind' to take you away from your everyday thoughts. You want to be doing exactly the opposite - focusing on the road and the other drivers, and having clear thoughts such as: "I need to turn right here". We need to be driving with focused, conscious thought.

I had a dear friend, Peter Brock, who was a very famous Australian racing car driver. He and his partner actually were at the start of my spiritual journey, giving me books, holding my hand (as I hope I can do for you), guiding my gently on my spiritual journey. Peter was such a great driver, they used to call him "King of the Mountain". When he drove, he had the concentration power of a Yogi. Nothing, nothing would break it, even at the neck-breaking speeds he drove.



A few years ago, he had pretty well retired from his highly competitive driving, and just drove in more social and fun events. He was driving in an event called 'the Targa' in Western Australia, just on some country roads. Pretty safe roads really; not tarmac, but with only a little loose gravel, and no really great speeds required.

Maybe that was the problem? Maybe he felt he didn't need to focus as well as he used to when he was racing in the Bathurst 500, or some other world class event? Even if it were just for a split second, he let some thought about his past or his future creep into his mind and that was enough. If he had been in the present, it just wouldn't or couldn't have happened. He spun his car, and hit his head on the right side. In seconds the color drained from his face and his wonderful life was over.

God rest his amazing soul.

I have a painting he did for me that I look at each morning as I wake and each night before I sleep of a wise-man in a turban, called "Wisdom from the East". Let us learn from the legacy that Peter left us with.

A drive in the car can be a one or two minute thing or up to a two hour focus. This obviously depends on the length of the trip. (We should never drive more than two hours without a break, even if it is just to get some water and do one of our other 2 or 3 minute meditations, to recharge our batteries. For the time span for 100% human concentration is actually 20 minutes!)

Although I am not giving you specific steps here as in our other meditations, the key is not to focus on the speeds we can achieve, but to put our 'attention on our intention' to stay safe, meanwhile honoring other drivers on the road and their safety at the same time. If you think about this consciously, there is actually a lot to focus on. Not just the road in front of us, but also to both sides and behind. Those side and rear vision mirrors should be checked every 30 seconds or so. (Trust me, as I type this, I realize how many of my own guidelines I have been breaking.) We need to consider the road and weather conditions, roadwork and variable speed limit signs, red light and speeding cameras, cyclists, buses, L and P plate drivers, others drivers who may often take short cuts (like SOME taxi or courier drivers...this is not a judgment, this is a fact!) Phew. It can be tiring just to think about it. It makes me want to catch a bus and let someone else take responsibility for driving me around.



The other main reason I wrote this is as a lead in to another meditation, because, just like on a golf course, we can tell a lot about a person's personality by when and how they are driving their car. More important is how they perceive and react to other drivers and especially to lots of traffic on the road. I can always tell I have not been doing enough meditation, when I start getting all huffed and puffed in the traffic.

My former husband used to say: "Maggie, you must drive as if every other person on the road is an idiot". Although that sounds like a very harsh judgment to have about everyone else, and implies that you think you are right and they are all wrong, if you look at it from a different perspective, it is actually a very smart and quite compassionate way to think and thing to say.

It means that you will be focused on doing and being the best you can, taking full responsibility for all your actions and yet allowing for others weaknesses at the same time. That's a bit like life really.

So how are you in heavy traffic or when there are some road-works? Do you let them get to you? Will you getting upset move any of the traffic faster and create an extra lane for you? Unlikely! It will not change a thing except what is happening in your physiology. You will pump heaps of acid into your stomach, and, more important, block any rational let alone creative thinking, so that you may possibly even miss an opportunity via a side street that you didn't ever realize was there before. (Dan Milman in "Way of the Peaceful Warrior" tells a lovely story about this.)

I used to really dislike driving, but now I use my car as my 'University on Wheels', and always have some kind of self –development CD playing quietly in the background or some nice, calming classical music, just working it's way gently into my subconscious.

If I am at the lights, or at a standstill, I do a quick breath counting meditation – Instant Calmer! Or I may do a thought counting one instead, just for a change.

As a smile begins to creep over my face, I glance at other drivers when we have come to a stop. Just the way they look at you is enough to make your day! They all are wondering what you have been up to, and within seconds they are wanting 'some of what you are on'. So your cheeky grin may end up helping to make their day become better too. Try it some time....smiles are definitely contagious!



Meditation # 11 : Weight Loss for the Mind

I first did this meditation when I was away doing “Seduction of the Spirit” with Deepak Chopra and his team, at Beaver Creek in Colorado. Let me tell you, it is a lot more difficult to do this meditation than you would first think – yet it is so worth doing. It is one that can be done for just 2 or 3 minutes ...and that is fine. When you do it for a whole meal, or better, at every meal in one day, then the benefits are immense. It is easier to do when you are on your own, but with focus, it can most certainly be done in a group. (There was over 1200 of us doing it at the one time in Bearer Creak!)

1. Prepare your meal and have it directly in front of you.
2. Sit comfortably (and give thanks for your meal, if that is your custom. Some gratitude for our food never goes astray.)
3. Do a short exercise to clear your mind. The ‘Instant Calmer’ one is a good one.
4. Begin to eat your meal. Observe every movement you make. Picking up your utensils, moving the knife back and forth as you cut you food, whilst the fork holds the food in place; moving the fork slowly to you mouth; the taste of the food as it touches your lips; how the taste changes as you chew and mix it with saliva; how many times you chew; the sensation as you swallow; how do the textures change as you eat different foods; what does the food smell like as it comes close to your mouth and nose
5. You can either label each action as you make it; the other alternative is to simply observe each action and savor the touch, taste, smell, sight and sound of it as you make it. Which ever method you use (labeling or observing the sensations), ensure you maintain it throughout the full time that you are doing the exercise.
6. To help increase your focus on the task at hand, you may want to change which utensil goes in the left hand and vice versa. That simple little twist creates yet another paradigm shift.

This exercise not only helps you appreciate your food, and hopefully the person who prepared it for you a lot more, it also slows the whole eating process right down. It is also interesting when you do this, that you feel fully satiated when you have eaten considerably less than you would normally. For that reason, an added benefit of consciously observing and appreciating your food at meal-times for a few weeks, is that it is also a great way to drop unwanted few pounds.



As with all the meditations we have learned so far, be aware of any thoughts as they surface in your mind, observe them and then put your focus back on the steps involved in eating your food. All kinds of thoughts may come up such as “I haven’t even finished chewing the last mouthful, and “I am trying to force in the next”, or “my dinner is getting cold”; or “there are starving people all over the world who could be enjoying this” or “I wish I had someone to share this lovely meal with”. As you have these thoughts, you may also have some emotions come up with them such as guilt or greed or sadness or appreciation and even joy. Observe them all, be gentle on yourself; and as soon as you realize you are thinking about anything else, return to focusing on every step of eating your food.



Meditation # 12 : Forgive and Forget

This is such an important yet simple little meditation, but it is often quite a difficult one to do, especially with someone we are or have been very close to.

Trust me, I know first hand. I did this exercise about my former husband only 2 days ago. The words of forgiveness were stuck down so far in my throat it took me the full five minutes of the meditation to actually voice them. But once I finally spoke them, the relief was immense; and I could feel a great weight lifted from my throat, shoulders, and my heart because I had finally 'spoken up' at last. That is why, for the first few times you do this exercise, it is preferable to choose someone with whom you are no longer all that upset. Or practice first with someone you do not know that well or have no attachment to.

- 1. In your mind's eye, visualize someone you feel has caused you pain or you have allowed to hurt you in some way. (Remember, it is our choice to let someone hurt or upset us.)*
- 2. Visualize this person as clearly as you possibly can. Their face, their hair, their build and so on.*
- 3. Imagine you are looking in their eyes and say: "I forgive you for any hurt you have caused me. I forgive you for....." and then go on to describe the details of the situation you are forgiving them for. Picture the situation and both of you in it, as clearly as you can. Repeat your forgiveness sentence a number of times until you feel you are really taking ownership of what you are saying, and truly believe it.*

It is very important to note that by forgiving someone their actions, you are not implying that you agree with what they did and said, and that you condone or bless their behavior in any way. This meditation is about forgiveness, not acceptance of anything you felt was a wrongdoing, or that hurt you in any way. You are forgiving them and NOT their behavior.

- 4. As you do this you will undoubtedly have similar feelings to those that occurred at the time, coming to the surface. Allow these feelings to come up, because it is holding them inside that can close down your heart and prevent a number of other parts of your body from working properly too.*

Holding onto emotions such as hurt, anger, guilt and betrayal will eventually make us very ill. Remember there is a lot of truth in the saying "our organs cry



the tears we don't allow our eyes to cry". So through forgiving the other party, release these feelings and let them go free.

5. Finally do not now judge yourself because such feelings have come to the surface. As you release them, it is very healing to forgive yourself for having them, if you feel that will help you.

Remember, you ARE a living, breathing and feeling human being!



Meditation # 13 : The Whole Body Relaxation Technique

I first experienced this meditation when I was 13 years old during my Drama classes. (That's 45 years ago!). I used to do this class every Saturday afternoon with a lady called Mrs. Large - indeed she was...larger than life in fact! When I think back to those times, they were some of the happiest, most relaxed and certainly the most fulfilled memories I have.

Deepak Chopra says that meditation can become very addictive, because direct contact with our Soul (in Sanskrit this is called "Atma Darshan"), and ultimately Spirit, is the most pleasurable experience anyone can have. This may sound a bit 'out there' and that is fine. Whether you believe this or not, one certainly comes out of even a short meditation feeling a whole lot better than before you went in. I certainly used to 'hang out' all week for Saturday afternoons, because the great feeling got each time was so addictive. But I did not end up with a bad cough and schizophrenia, any needle tracks in my arms or having to have the septum of my nose rebuilt!!

So if you are going to become addicted to anything, try a blast of happy hormones each day from meditation – it's a great addiction to have!

1. *Find a place to lie down comfortably and close your eyes. (Your bed, a yoga mat or some carpeted floor is just fine.)*
2. *Imagine yourself lying on a bed of clouds. Soft, fluffy, white clouds that keep you warm. As you sink into your cloud, you feel very safe and secure. There is no need to think about anything else at this time, just the wonderful experience you are having right at this moment.*
3. *As you lie there put your attention on your toes. Tense your toes, hold for 4-5 seconds, and then relax them.*
4. *Next picture the soles of your feet. Tense them, hold for 5 seconds, relax.*
5. *Your ankles, tense, hold, relax.*
6. *Your calves, tense, hold, relax. Then thighs, tense hold and relax*
7. *Hips, tense hold and relax. Buttocks, tense, hold and relax*
8. *Genitals, tense, hold and relax.*
9. *Stomach, tense, hold and relax.*
10. *Solar plexus, tense, hold and relax*
11. *Centre of chest, tense hold and relax*
12. *Shoulders, tense, hold and relax.*
13. *Upper arms, tense, hold and relax*
14. *Elbows, tense, hold and relax*
15. *Lower arms tense, hold and relax*
16. *Hands into a fist hold and relax.*



17. *Work back up the sections of your arms, tensing and relaxing each part.*
18. *Shoulders, tense, hold and relax*
19. *Neck, tense, hold and relax.*
20. *Jaw, tense, hold and relax.*
21. *Mouth, tense, hold and relax.*
22. *Nose, tense, hold and relax.*
23. *Cheeks, tense, hold and relax.*
24. *Ears, tense, hold and relax.*
25. *Eyes, tense, hold, and relax.*
26. *Forehead, tense, hold and relax.*
27. *Top of your head, tense hold and relax*
28. *Now go back to your toes, hold. The soles of your feet, hold; Ankles, hold. Quickly run up every part of your whole body that you tensed before, till you get to the top of your head and hold, hold, hold for as long as you can. Then let go... with a huge sigh. There is a 'rush of relaxation' you can feel going through your whole body. It's feels fantastic!*
29. *In your mind's eye return to lying on your white, fluffy cloud. Sink into it, Feeling safe, happy and very secure. Keep your eyes closed for at least 30-60 seconds.*
30. *Gently open your eyes. Get up slowly and only when you feel comfortable about doing so.*

This whole exercise can be done in less than five minutes, but if you can allow yourself more time, say 10-15 minutes then do so. The rewards will be much greater.



MEDITATION # 14 : HOLD THAT THOUGHT

The famous German philosopher Nietzsche once said “when you label me, you negate me”. In this next exercise we are going to learn to label our thoughts and in the process, negate some of the power they have had over our mind-up till now. We have counted them in ‘Watching the Detective’. This time we want to observe, ever so briefly, the content of them.

Before you begin, make a list of the types of thoughts you regularly have in your mind. This can be a mental list, but I find it works much better if you write them down on paper before you begin.

As a guide, my list is as follows:

1. Intention thoughts: (I would rather call them intentions instead of goals...there is a whole different energy to the two words.) These are thoughts I regularly run about short, mid and long-term achievements I dream of, from improving my fitness level, to owning my dream home, to building my well-being centers with organic farms in various countries around the world, to mentoring entrepreneurs whilst they stay at these centres.

2. Worry thoughts: such as “where is the money going to come to pay the mortgage this month?” to “I hope I am being the best mother I can be” and so on. (I have been a “worry-wart” since I was a child, and this is one of the main reasons I got into meditation in the first place. It’s is WHAT I do about the worrying – thank goodness for meditation – that makes all the difference.)

3. Action planning thoughts: These are systematized, detailed thoughts where I plan my day, week and year. Although I can be very focused when I want to be, and take massive action when it is required, I am much more a big picture, visionary type of thinker, and the ‘devil is in the detail’ has never been a real strength. To have these kinds of thought I need to be quite self-disciplined to even have them. Nevertheless, they are very necessary in my life...and everyone else’s.

4. Critical and/or judgmental thoughts: I have these regularly, and as mentioned above, they are usually ones that turned on myself. My inner critic can be a very hard-task master, and needs to listen (to my soul) more and speak its mind less. Sound familiar?



5. **Creative thoughts:** as mentioned, I am a visionary. I am gifted with many creative thoughts every day...UNLESS I allow myself to get back on the treadmill of life and block them coming in and though to me. When I work with others to ground some of these thoughts, and then take action them, we can move mountains and be of great service to others as we do so.

6. **Happy, joyful, grateful thoughts:** sometimes these just flow like a fountain. At other times I need to be more present about being appreciative for the many great talents I have and the many wonderful things I have in my life. So before I sleep at night I write a gratitude diary, and note down 5 things at least each day. Sometimes, after a long day, it is something as simple as: "I am grateful that I can go to sleep now!"

7. **Judgmental thoughts:** the funny thing about making a judgment about a person, place or thing is that your perception can be positive or negative or even somewhere in between. It is still a judgment though..... That is the big difference between merely observing and holding onto a thought, and looking at it every which way.

8. **Angry thoughts:** yes, anger can be just as much an addiction as sex, drugs and rock and roll ever will be. It took me many years to realize that I have an angry, impatient, frustrated cycle that then leads into overwhelm. If I stand back and witness myself, so that I don't get so caught up in the drama, I can see this cycle playing out time and time again.

9. **Kids thoughts:** this is more a category of thought than a specific type. My kids' thoughts actually include all the types of thoughts above!!!! Again, if I step back and witness my thoughts, so many of them are about my amazing children. So if that is the case, then I forgot one main type in the list above and that is Pride thoughts. HUGE amounts of pride about my two children.

There are probably more, but these are the main ones for me.

So what are your types and categories of thought? Keep your list to 10 or less.

When you have completed your list-just jotting them down quickly will be sufficient:

1. *Sit down comfortably and close your eyes.*
2. *Observe each thought as it flows into your awareness.*



3. *Only observe each thought for as long as is required to put it into one of your categories. (Remember, if you stay with the thought you are no longer meditating. At best you are daydreaming; at worst, you are often tormenting yourself!)*
4. *Once you have put a label on it, wait for the next one to arrive in your mind and repeat the process.*
5. *If it seems that absolutely no thoughts are coming into your mind, just relax and be gentle on your self. They will come. (They already have, because you just had the thought that you didn't have a thought! Remember?)*
6. *If you have a thought where one of your labels does not seem to fit, this is not the time to panic.... "oh no, I don't have the right label". Just make a new one that fits, let the (newly labeled) thought go, and wait for the next one.*
7. *Observe your thoughts for 3 to 4 minutes.*
8. *Stop the labeling, and keep your eyes closed for 1 minute.*
9. *As you open your eyes, go back over and scan the experience you have just had. Which type of thoughts did you have the most? Which ones easily came and went? Which ones were those 'slippery little suckers' that kept wanting to overstay their welcome?*
10. *Interesting huh...especially when we remember that every thought we have we choose to keep or not.*

As Abraham Lincoln said, ""we are as happy as we make up our minds to be"....or as sad, or as angry or as grateful.



MEDITATION # 14 : MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

1. Close your eyes. (Allow 10 seconds)
2. Gently allow your awareness to be on your breathing. Simply observe your breath as you breathe in and out. (15 seconds)
3. Innocently be aware of your breathing. Do not try to control or alter it in any conscious way. (15 seconds)
4. As you observe your breathing, you may notice that it changes in some way. It may get faster or slower, deeper or shallower. There may even be times when it appears to have faded away completely. No matter how your breath changes, continue to observe it innocently, without resisting or causing any change to it. (15 seconds)
5. At times your attention will drift away from your breath to thoughts in your mind, sounds in the environment or sensations in your body. Whenever you realize you are not observing your breath, gently bring your attention back to your breathing. (15 seconds)
6. Remember to let go of any expectations you may have about the practice. If you notice that you are focusing on a mood or emotion, or looking for a particular experience to occur, treat this like any other thought, and gently bring your awareness back to your breathing.

Now continue meditating gently.
(10 –15 minutes)

7. Please keep your eyes closed, but stop observing your breath and just sit easily. (2-3 minutes)
8. Now you can start to move and gently stretch as you open your eyes slowly.

It is recommended that you practice this technique twice a day, sitting comfortably with your eyes closed for about 15 – 20 minutes.

MOST IMPORTANT! *After you stop focusing on your breath, always remember to take at least 1 or 2 minutes before you open your eyes. This allows you to come out of your meditation slowly, before resuming your daily activity.*



I trust you have enjoyed reading about these 15 ways to meditate, and that you will choose 1 or 2 that will become your favourites. The benefits you will gain from their practice will be immediate, on your mind and body, even if your “inner critic” wants to doubt that.

For more information on tips and techniques to help you achieve a ‘healthy mind in a healthy body’; visit: www.healthywealthywisegroup.com.

If you would like to learn Primordial Sound Meditation Dr. Deepak Chopra’s mantra meditation; please visit: www.inthezone.com.au