

Meditation for Prakruti~ Dr. Indu Arora

Meditation: The royal road to success and freedom.



What is Meditation?

Meditation means “Dhyana” in Sanskrit which means to contemplate.

”Dhi” means the mind/ mental faculties

“Ayan” means discipline.

Meditation in literal sense means the way/method/process to discipline the mind and its thoughts, to harness its full potential .It is amongst one of the eight limbs of Ashtanga Yoga which leads to Samadhi or liberation or enlightenment.

Development of the mind/ mental faculties leading to awareness, tranquility and wisdom though all the focus in meditation is on mind, but at a subtle level it is characterized by calming down the breath. Life is easier when we take time to breathe.

In the words of an enlightened master Swami Sivananda

“Meditation is the only royal road to the attainment of freedom”

Benefits of Meditation

The brain waves of meditator’s show why they're healthier. Neuroscientists have found that meditators shift their brain activity to different areas of the cortex—brain waves in the stress-prone right frontal cortex move to the calmer left frontal cortex.

By: Colin

Neuroscientists have found that meditator’s shift their brain activity to different areas of the cortex - brain waves in the stress-prone right frontal cortex move to the calmer left frontal cortex. This mental shift decreases the negative effects of stress, mild depression and anxiety. There is also less activity in the amygdala, where the brain processes fear.

Guidelines for Meditation

The following are the important points regarding the basic technique & stage of meditation.

- 1) *The regularity of Time*
- 2) *The place of Meditation*
- 3) *The most Effective Time* - The dawn & dusk.
- 4) *Direction* - North or east or northeast
- 5) Be regular and consistent in your practice.
- 6) *Clothing*: Preferable loose cotton clothes which allow you to breathe and feel relaxed and comfortable for the free flow of prana or energy.

PART I : MEDITATION ON BREATH~ VATA Prakruti

Introduction: Breath is common property that anyone can meditate on. At the same time, of all the meditation topics there are, it's probably the most beneficial to the body, for when we're dealing with the breath, we're dealing not only with the air coming in and out of the lungs, but also with all the feelings of energy that course throughout the body with each breath. If you can learn to become sensitive to these feelings, and let them flow smoothly and unobstructed, you can help the body function more easily, and give the mind a handle for dealing with pain

Various ways of meditating on breath:

1. On incoming and outgoing breath as an observer.
2. **Mantra with Breath**
3. **Ratio Breathing:** Meditate on the disciplined two phases or four phase breath.

A: On Incoming and Outgoing Breath: We can focus on breathing in several different qualities, one by one. The first is peace – as you inhale feel that you are breathing peace into every part of your being. On the outgoing breath imagine you are breathing out anything that is unlike peace – any restlessness, stress, negative thoughts or feelings.

After several minutes feel you are breathing in cosmic energy from the universe, purifying and energizing every part of your being. With each breath a river is flowing through you, a river of life force and cosmic energy, displacing tiredness, stress, negative thoughts – imagine you are exhaling the negative qualities, extracting them on the outgoing breath.

B: Mantra and Breath:

As you breathe in Chant internally “OM” and as you breathe out chant internally “OM” feeling the echo of this chant within yourself.

In most systems of meditation, there is a particular spiritual result that is sought. This may be trance, vision, or clairaudience. This is not, however, the end goal of Meditating on breath with Mantra. There is a higher meditation, in which you enter a state of consciousness with meaning beyond your own mind. In this state of meditation, you *remove the illusions, delusions, cravings, loyalties, and prejudices*. These states produce *emotional ignorance* within your everyday consciousness. When these states have been removed, you see the reality.

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C: Ratio Breathing:

In Ratio breathing one take the number of counts and the ratio of Inhalation and Exhalation as a parameter to discipline and meditate on breath. By doing so, we discipline and harmonize the breath, thereby creating calm waves and relaxing the nervous system.

One as a beginner may start with *Two Phase breathing* where the ration of Inhalation to exhalation is 1:2 which means you breath out twice as much as your breathe in. for example, inhale for a count of four and exhale for a count of 8. If it feels more comfortable, inhale for a shorter or longer count, but maintain the ratio of 1:2 by always breathing out for twice as long as you breathe in.

MEDITATION ON LIGHT~ Tratak~ PITTA Prakruti

Introduction: Tratak (fixed gazing) Meditation is a traditional basic exercise to acquire concentration and control the mental waves. Tratak has many potential uses, but the word may simply be translated as (intense) concentration. Actually it means an unbroken gaze or attention fixed on an object, a steady gazing at a particular point or object without winking - looking at or into it. Tratak means “one that is broken yes existing in one line. It is derived from the word “truti”. It is a method of joining things, which are in linear fashion, creating a line of radiance with gradual efforts. 1 nimesh = time taken to close and open the eyelids once. A 30th of a nimesh = a tatvar, and a 100th of a tatvar is called truti.



Object of Focus: The object need not be material; it could be a thought, an inner symbol, a psychic center, etc. Though this is one of the six purification exercises, it is mainly intended for developing concentration and mental focusing.

Tratak is included both as a part of the Hatha Yoga as a cleansing process, and it is very useful for students of Hatha Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, and Raja Yoga.

WHY TRATAK:

There are three reasons for performing Tratak:

1. **Therapy.** Relaxation and eye exercise. If you use Tratak as an eye exercise to strengthen your vision and get rid of glasses, you would do it slightly differently from the description that appears later in this chapter. Certainly you would also use a candle, but instead of closing your eyes before tears come, you would keep

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- them open as long as you can and try not to blink even when tears stream down your cheeks. But rest your eyes and close them now and then. To improve your vision, you should do Tratak for five to fifteen minutes every day.
2. Pineal gland responds the heat and light energy. When the light falls on the eyes, the lens captures it and reflects it to the back lobe of the brain where the pineal gland transforms it into light and heat energy and feeds on it. This energy activates this gland, which further affect all the glands.
 3. It decreases the Rajasic guna and increases the sattva. It pacifies the excess pitta.

***By arresting the unconscious movements of the eyes, tensions are released in the brain.*

2. Concentration. Tratak can be used to attain greater calm and concentration for studying, work, etc. - and to attain higher 'powers', such as in Prana Vidya (knowledge of energy currents in the body), healing of yourself and others by directing this psychic energy and concentrating on tense and diseased areas.

***Tratak gets rid of fatigue and results in natural, effortless concentration.*

3. Meditation. Tratak is used for its therapeutic values and as a preparation for more extensive higher Yogic techniques. Many other Yoga and meditation exercises are enriched by the use of Tratak, which makes the mind sensitive and receptive to finer states. Meditation on light activates the third eye, i.e Ajna Chakra which and also the pineal gland.

Different types of Meditative Tratak:

1. **Outer Tratak/ (Bahir Tratak)** gazing on an outer object, image, etc., with open eyes
2. **Inner Tratak/ (Antar Tratak)** gazing or directing one's attention to an inner object without using ordinary sight, usually with closed eye like breath, heart beat, chakras etc.

General Procedure For Outer Tratak, using Candle flame.

- *Find a quiet and comfortable place.* Sit right in front of a lit candle. The flame is at eye level or slightly higher and the candle is three to four feet away from your eyes, find the right distance for yourself, the level of your eyes and the candle flame should be in a horizontal line. Your back should be straight and your body motionless as long as you hold this position.
- *Make your body completely calm.* Experience the body's form the whole body, until you are one with it. Let your mind be soft, and allow a spacious awareness to wash gently through your body. Simply feel the sensations of sitting, sidestepping with your mind the tendency to image your body, to interpret, to define or think

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about it. Just let such thoughts and images come and go without being bothered by them, and attune to the bare sensations of sitting. Try to put aside all thoughts of the past and the future and stay in the present.

- *Observe the breath in your nose.* Feel how air goes in and out of your nose. Become aware of your breathing, focusing on the sensation of air moving in and out of your body as you breathe. Feel your belly rise and fall, the air enter your nostrils and leave your mouth.
- When you feel calm, open your eyes and *look into the flame.*
- Look at the little glowing point at the top of the wick. *Look at this point without blinking* - look as long as you can – without straining -without blinking -until tears come, or just before tears come.
- When you feel a need to close your eyes, do it, but don't move. Sit completely calm and motionless, with closed eyes and look at what appears on your retina when you have closed your eyes. After a moment a light point is sure to appear. This is the print of the flame on your retina you see now a little star a glowing point.
Look at it as long as you can.
Does it move?
- Let it move up to the center between your eyebrows, look at it there. If it wanders elsewhere, do not follow it. Keep it at the eyebrow center as long as you can. Sometimes the point vanishes then appears again and then disappears. And the point or background may change colors perhaps the point turns black and the background light, go on looking at it until it disappears.

PART III: MINDFULNESS MEDITATION~ KAPHA Prakruti

Introduction: Mindfulness Meditation, also referred to as Insightful Meditation, requires or allows individuals to be aware of their surroundings, to develop a sense of sensitivity in perceiving every moment, and enabling them to accept stressful situations, instead of avoiding them. By being aware of the inner state of our minds during Mindfulness Meditation, we can accept difficult situations in our lives without much resistance. *Mindfulness is not thinking, interpreting, or evaluating; it is an awareness of perception. It is a nonjudgmental quality of mind which does not anticipate the future or reflect back on the past.*



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The general idea of Mindfulness meditation is inspired from the teachings of Buddhist Meditation called *Vipassana*, taught by Gautama Buddha about 2500 years ago.

Difference between Mindfulness and Concentration:

Mindfulness meditation is also known as insight because the intention is to gain insight as to the true nature of reality. While concentration involves the practitioner focusing their attention on a single object, in mindfulness meditation practice, every aspect of experience is welcomed and appreciated.

With concentration practice, we give the attention a target that keeps us anchored in the present moment. The target can be a physical object, or more commonly, the breath. We give the mind something consistent to focus on and this becomes the object of the meditation. When we distract we consciously bring the focus back to the chosen object. We do this as many times as distraction or thought occurs, without chastising ourselves for having failed or getting emotional about it.

With mindfulness meditation, we take on the role of an impartial observer of everything that passes before our attention. Our intention is not to be focused, but rather to be mindful, that is, to be fully aware and awake of what is going on in the present moment. Often the breath is still used as an anchor to the present moment in mindfulness meditation, but apart from that, no attempt is made to direct the attention.

Whatever thoughts, so called distractions, sounds, images, ideas, or feelings arise, nothing is excluded. Everything is welcomed. We simply pay attention to whatever is there. We do not judge or evaluate. Whatever happens, whatever occurs is okay – we just sit quietly and observe.

General Procedure:

- Find a quiet and comfortable place. Sit in a chair or on the floor with your head, neck and back straight but not stiff. Allow the body and mind to become utterly relaxed while remaining very alert and attentive to the present moment. Feel the areas of your body that are tense, and the areas that are relaxing. Just let the body follow its own natural law. Do not try to force or fix anything.
- Let your mind be soft, and allow a spacious awareness to wash gently through your body. Simply feel the sensations of sitting, sidestepping with your mind the tendency to image your body, to interpret, to define or think about it. Just let such thoughts and images come and go without being bothered by them, and attune to the bare sensations of sitting. Try to put aside all thoughts of the past and the future and stay in the present.
- Become aware of your breathing, focusing on the sensation of air moving in and out of your body as you breathe. Feel your belly rise and fall, the air enter your nostrils and leave your mouth. Pay attention to the way each breath changes and is different. Feel your body with an awareness that arises from within your body, not

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from your head. Gently sweep your awareness through your body, feeling the sensations with no agenda, no goal. Allow your body to anchor awareness in the present moment by just staying mindful of these sensations.

- Watch every thought come and go, whether it is a worry, fear, anxiety or hope. When thoughts come up in your mind, don't ignore or suppress them but simply note them, remain calm and use your breathing as an anchor. After some minutes of awareness of body and sounds, bring your attention to your natural breathing process. Locate the area where the breath is most clear and let awareness lightly rest there. For some it is the sensation of the rising and falling of the abdomen. For others it may be the sensations experienced at the nostrils with the inhalation and exhalation. You can use very soft mental labels to guide and sustain attention to the breath. "Rising/falling" for the abdomen and "in/out" for the nostrils. Let the breath breathe itself without control, direction, or force. Feel each breath from within the breath, not from the head. Feel the full breath cycle from the beginning through the middle to the end.
- If you find yourself getting carried away in your thoughts, observe where your mind went off to, without judging, and simply return to your breathing. Remember not to be hard on yourself if this happens.
- As the time comes to a close, sit for a minute or two, becoming aware of where you are, not striving or anticipating, not pouncing on sensations in the present, not bending back to what was just missed or reflecting on what just happened, keep inclining to the totality of the present moment. Keep anchoring easily, deeply, restfully. Just one breath at a time and then gradually get up.

As a body, I am inert and dead, but as the soul, I am eternal and immortal!

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti!