

# Meditation

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This article is about meditation and how it can improve your life. The ancients, long ago, sought a spiritual solution to unlock the mysteries of life and the Universe rather than the route of theoretical physics, quantum mechanics and thermodynamics entropy. They were able to relate to space, matter, universal consciousness and the desire for a higher plane of thought, a higher state of consciousness. Meditation originated in India as a spiritual exercise and religious practice which has a long tradition in Hinduism.



Mediation can take many forms and it is practised throughout the world. Perhaps, the most common (invariably those who practise it are unaware it is meditation) is lying back, closing your eyes and listening to smooth music. Unlike drink or drugs the impact of smooth music on the mind enables the listener to achieve a mentally clear and emotionally calm and stable state.

One can take it to the next step and purchase music which is specifically designed for meditation – the sounds of nature, swishing waters and of course electronic music that makes you concentrate on certain sounds within it. You can purchase CDs specifically designed for meditation and you can link to websites over the internet that provide downloadable tracks. Headphones that cut out all other noise should be worn for the best results.

Self-reflection is quite different from meditation. Many people will retreat into themselves and self-reflection of the soul is to be admired; it is a useful cleansing tool. However, it can also bring on depression, especially if you hold many regrets, and it can cause a withdrawal from social contact. For some, it is a fine balance, sometimes even a battle between maintaining a dark and insular nature or breaking out. When you meditate by listening to smooth music or a CD which is specifically designed to promote meditation, you are freeing your mind, turning off technology and shutting down any rampant thoughts, especially those which promote negativity.

Mediation can be practised anywhere at any time and as a means of controlling your emotions. The simplest form is to remain comfortable, close your eyes and concentrate on the sensation of your breathing.

Shaolin Meditation, takes it to a whole new level. It was first appreciated by a mass populace in the west thanks to Kung-Fu and the movies of 'Bruce Lee'. It is intended to let your mind become at rest

and appreciate the presence and lightness of the moment. Your entire body movement should become fluid and you should feel the energy within it. The purpose of this meditation is to fall in line with the frequency of nature, whereby you become immersed within it and learn to accept it. Shaolin Meditation is about bringing the mind and body into a state of balanced coherence. It is like a form of innocence and a sense of awareness that overwhelms the mind from somewhere deep inside; the peace you feel is quite incredible. Bruce Lee used it in his fighting techniques to develop razor-sharp reflexes but the average person can use it to develop a feeling of relaxed tranquillity in their approach to everyday life and social interaction.

Mediation is especially useful to counter –

- Grief
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Loneliness
- Loss of popularity in social media and social circles
- Regret
- Stress at work
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) - a mental health condition that's triggered by a terrifying event, or events (like war) either experiencing it or witnessing it.
- The creative mind – usually as a result of over thinking your writings, your plans, the future of your talents (celebrities invariable suffer from this)

All of the above malaise can lead your mind into acute insomnia which is very detrimental to your health. Perhaps, the creative mind is the hardest to counter because it is always thinking up new ideas and it cannot find sleep. For many, the natural progression is to prescription drugs and we read horrible stories of celebrities, who have become addicted to them. Many like Michael Jackson, Prince and Judy Garland have all died as a result of being unable to cope with the stresses, and the sleepless nights, brought on by the creative side of their profession. They all died of accidental overdoses of prescription drugs which they used to make sleep possible. Many youngsters and celebrities suffer from a 'loss of popularity' and their constant need for acceptance on social media and in social circles can have a serious impact on their lives.

If you have lived a very active life, it is possible that you have never stopped to look back, at least to any great extent. Life is full as you move forward, but as you become older and especially when you retire, you may have to come to terms with facing old age. For many old people who live on their own, loneliness in combination with depression is a serious malaise, it draws you back into the home. It creates an environment where an individual cannot find purpose and when they converse with anyone, they find themselves questioning their own words and continually analysing their social

interactions. Sadly, loneliness is also an issue for the young; all too often they require a constant need for acceptance on social media and in social circles. It is brought on through their anxiety to conform, to please and if they are ostracised from the group, many withdraw to a lonelier lifestyle. Doctors are quick to hand out anti-depression prescription pills, but it is not the answer; addiction to pills can destroy relationships and lives.

Those people who are disabled or infirm through very old age and live on the own, have the hardest time in facing loneliness. In the western world, in certain societies, many of the disabled and elderly are not looked after by their families. This is apparently predominant in the UK, or so the media would have us believe. However, I know of many loving families, where the young women and men are very attentive towards the disabled within their families, as well as their elderly fathers, mothers and even their other relatives. These loving families tend to reside close together in smaller communities. The disabled and elderly whose offspring and relatives are separated by distance, sometimes continents, can suffer a great deal from anxiety and loneliness.

Meditation can also assist in controlling anger, perhaps you have taken umbrage because of a reply on social media, perhaps you have a 'hair trigger' temper and blow off at the least altercation when someone criticises your words or actions? There are special anger management sessions you can attend that will help and you should take advantage of them because if you are continually involved in domestic arguments and your temper is raised and anger gets out of control, that is when accidents and even more severe incidents can happen. For centuries, philosophy has offered its own solutions to contain anger. One of them is mediation to achieve a mentally clear and emotionally calm and stable state. This does not necessarily have to be listening to calming music in the house.

Imagine you are in the car with your wife or girlfriend (anyone) and you are driving down the road. An argument ensues between you, with much anger on both sides. You quickly find a safe place to stop, you get out, and go for a short walk on your own. It gives your anger time to dissipate and this is usually because the interaction has stopped. Everyone is different; in some the anger subsides very quickly, in others it takes much longer. If you have learned meditation, you can channel your mind to replace the anger with calm thoughts and when you get back to the car, you immediately apologise for your behaviour. Controlling your anger can prove very difficult, especially if you desire to win an argument, but with practice it can be achieved – it is not an act of weakness.

Tackling anxiety, negativity, depression and loneliness can prove extremely difficult. I have listed some practical approaches below which may help -

- Practise meditation for at least an hour every day and learn how to apply it to your mind, even in the spur of the moment. The best meditation is listening to calming music or sounds for about an hour, but with practice you can learn to meditate anywhere, by channelling your thoughts on something that brings you peace and tranquillity.

- Replace the contemplation of grief, anxiety, negative thoughts and regrets with positive thoughts, including memories, images and any videos of your life that evoke enjoyment, especially laughter. Remember, regret is about things in the past that we cannot change, so we must learn and condition ourselves to look forward and move on.
- Put aside negative interactions like the newspapers, political debates on the television, social media and concentrate on embracing only positive interactions. Go out and enjoy nature, visit the zoo, take a walk in the park, meet people.
- Social interaction is all important, even a bus trip into the town and a walk about; anything to break the mind away from negative contemplation. Enjoy lunch in the town instead of always at home.
- When you are in conversation with anyone, listen carefully to what the other person is saying, and reply only when expected. Speak in a lower register and speak clearly and slowly. Never interrupt their conversation and always display empathy and respect without losing control of your emotions. Remember, *'the least said, the sooner mended'* and if anyone attempts to humiliate you, do not become angry, respond with good humour.
- Every action you undertake should be carefully considered and nobody, I repeat nobody, wants to hear about your loneliness, your regrets and your depression. If you keep talking about these problems, you have openly displayed your negativity to others, which may bring you, even more negativity when you get home? The majority of people for some inexplicable reason have very little empathy for a person who is negative and/or continually repeats their problems in company.
- If there is discontent within your family, and **you want** to restore the friendship, make an effort (no matter how hard) to patch things up. Make the first move, don't wait for them, as that call may never come? If you suffer from estrangement through your stubborn pride – you must learn to overcome it. If you **do not want** to restore the friendship, then you must put the past and the reasons for the discontent out of your mind and move forward. There is nothing worse than dwelling on the past because it will eat away at you and invariably it will lead to depression.
- Plan a project, something that you will enjoy, find a core purpose that will take you out of the house on a regular basis and which brings you peace and contentment. Many people who are lonely, start by enrolling in study courses and as a means to re-engage in social conversation with the other students.

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Adapted from [A Thesis on the Philosophy of Life](#)

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