

DEDICATED TO
GAYTRI MAA

True Story of Yogini

We all know that this book talks about spiritual management. We started searching for god, how, where and when so that we can find god and accept him as he is. With the help of this book we have to show you that direction from where we can actually seek self-realization.

The writing of the book was written in a very simple and easy language so that everyone can easily understand it. It is a truth that the lady who I am referring here in this book has given me the opportunity and blessing to write and publish this book.

My words are not very typical that no one can understand it. The path of spiritual management is like walking with a nature that the god had itself presented. This story is about a lady who while living a normal and sedentary lifestyle has founded god and accepted him in her life and had freed himself from the materialistic world. She was able to do all this with the help of spiritual energies.

The life of a lady who I am referring here is born in a small village. She was the second child of her parents. In total she had 7 sisters. She always fulfilled the need of brother in her family. She completed her education and post-graduation as well as bachelor of education. She had chosen a person in her life who is a doctor. Her family also focused on values and ethics. She herself do not know how she got shifted to the path of spirituality without even knowing the way. Her life partner is a well simple man with high morals and values. Firstly they had fight regarding their materialistic life because it is not possible to live a materialistic life without a fight. They both had a son.

In 1982 she accepted her guru Shri Shri Yogananda Parahamhansa and also accepted all her teachings and values in her life. In this process she became attached to the morals and values of her guru and accepted all his energies. With the help of yoga and meditation she had balanced herself in such a way

that outside things cannot affect her. While fulfilling all the responsibilities of a wife she had balanced both the role beautifully. She only eats one or two times in a day and dedicated her full time to the process of meditation. She meditated every day for about 18 hours in a single day. I can say all these things because I had watched all this with my eyes. Each and every process has taken place in front of my eyes.

On 18 and 19 February 1998 she had performed meditation while staying in the process of death. This means that at that time god has interfered while she was meditating. That process is so energetic and powerful that for the full 24 hours her breath was not working but she was experiencing the whole process of circulation of spiritual energies. The people associated with her had also experienced similar type of circulation. Till now the people who had experienced all this is still far away from understanding the whole process of spirituality. She is still devoted to god and guides many of us in attaining the path which leads us closer to god. Yoga, meditation and exercises are the path which leads us closer to god.

In today's date her every work is done with the permission of god. Sometimes the nature's effect has effect on her body also. The main aim of this book is to tell people about the real meaning of spirituality and people should get motivated by listening to her life's journey. Even today she shares her values with everyone and is continuing the path to walk towards gods.

UNIT-I

INTRODUCTION OF SPIRITUALITY

INTRODUCTION

Define and experienced by the author “knowing oneself for oneself by oneself is called spirituality”.

Spirituality involves the recognition of a feeling or sense or belief that there is something greater than myself, something more to being human than sensory experience, and that the greater whole of which we are part is cosmic or divine in nature. Spirituality is the broad concept of a belief in something beyond the self. It may involve religious traditions centring on the belief in a higher power, but it can also involve a holistic belief in an individual connection to others and to the world as a whole. Spirituality and religious activity have been a source of comfort and relief from stress for multitudes of people. While people use many different religions and paths to find God or to express their spirituality, research has shown that those who are more religious or spiritual and use their spirituality to cope with challenges in life experience many benefits to their health and well-being. Spirituality is something that's talked about a lot but is often misunderstood. Many people think that spirituality and religion is the same thing, and so they bring their beliefs and prejudices about religion to discussions about spirituality. Though all religions emphasise spiritualism as being part of faith, you can be 'spiritual' without being religious or a member of an organised religion.

Spirituality is the state of having a connection to God or the spirit world. An example of spirituality is praying every day. Concern for that which is unseen and intangible, as opposed to physical or mundane.

Something, such as property or revenue, which belongs to the church or to a cleric.

In modern times, the term both spread to other religious traditions and broadened to refer to a wider range of experience, including a range of esoteric traditions and religious traditions. Modern usages tend to refer to a subjective experience of a sacred dimension and the "deepest values and meanings by which people live", often in a context separate from organized religious institutions. This may involve belief in a supernatural realm beyond the ordinarily observable world, personal growth, a quest for an ultimate or sacred meaning, religious experience, or an encounter with one's own "inner dimension".



In simple terms, spirituality is a worldview and a way of life based on the belief that there is more to life than what meets the senses, more to the universe than just purposeless mechanics, more to consciousness than electrical impulses in the brain, and more to our existence than the

body and its needs. Spirituality usually involves the belief in a higher form of intelligence or Consciousness running the universe, as well as life after death. It exists to satisfy the deeper human thirst for meaning, peace, mystery, and truth. It is a certain way of being. To get there, there are many things to do. This is like a garden in your house. If the soil, sunlight or stem of a plant is in a certain way, it won't yield flowers, you have to do something. You have to take care of those things. So if you cultivate your body, mind, emotions and energies to a certain level of maturity, something else blossoms within you that are spirituality.

According to Kees Waaijman, the traditional meaning of spirituality is a process of re-formation which "aims to recover the original shape of man, the image of God. To accomplish this, the re-formation is oriented at a mold, which represents the original shape: in Judaism the Torah, in Christianity there is Christ, for Buddhism, Buddha, and in Islam, Muhammad." Houtman and Aupers suggest that modern spirituality is a blend of humanistic psychology, mystical and esoteric traditions, and Eastern religions.

Modern notions of spirituality developed throughout the 19th and 20th century, mixing Christian ideas with Western esoteric traditions and elements of Asian, especially Indian, religions. Spirituality became increasingly disconnected from traditional religious organisations and institutions. It is sometimes associated today with philosophical, social, or political movements such as liberalism, feminist theology, and green politics.

Types of Spirituality-

Mystical Spirituality

This type of spirituality is focused on the intuitional part of the soul. People who have mystical spirituality believe that there's a greater

unity to every experience in life. Every experience goes beyond the material or physical world, and everything can be brought into one greater unity. For example, people with this type of spirituality may support the idea that everything happens for a reason. There's a greater explanation behind everything and that would be what unites all the different experiences.

Transcendence / Enlightenment Type of Spirituality

The transcendence/enlightenment type of spirituality is all about ascending to a higher level of understanding or so-called spiritual awakening. When you experience enlightenment, the concerns of the Ego within no longer exist and you awake to full consciousness, starting to see the world with different eyes, no longer affected by the things that used to bother you. Being among the most popular kinds of spirituality, this type bears a different name within different cultures: Nirvana, serenity, tranquillity, etc.

Authoritarian spirituality

Authoritarian spirituality is about believing in some hierarchical power or some spiritual elite who is a ray of light to your path of spirituality. People practicing this spirituality follow a set of laws and rules set by the authoritative figure. This kind of spirituality is usually related to religious beliefs. This can make people fundamentalists who exclude other religions which can cause religious conflicts.

Intellectual Spirituality

Knowledge is the backbone of this kind of spirituality. If you resonate with this sort of spirituality it's likely you enjoy learning, reading and watching videos about spiritual theories. Often your opinions will change as you learn and grow.

Service Spirituality

This spiritual life path is quite common and those who associate themselves with it live life in service to others. They believe that spiritual inner peace will be obtained by helping other people. Expecting nothing in return for doing well for those who need it is a selfless act which brings many to their spiritual self.

Social Spirituality

Experiencing spiritual awakening when you are surrounded by other people explains this type of spirituality. Many people practice being around other people when searching for greater spiritual purpose in life. Being in religious groups is one way to experience this spirituality. However, this can also be achieved with any other form of a group exercising, nature-related activities, meditation, etc. Social spirituality is usually experienced when you are surrounded by similar people. Being around like-minded people who are also in search of a spiritual purpose in their life gives peace and strength to people who practice social spirituality.

Serving Type of Spirituality

A serving spirituality is one in which you feel at ease and experience spiritual peace when helping others without asking anything in return. It's worth noting that this type falls under the category of types of non-religious spirituality. People with this type of spirituality often embark on the path of service that's all about active selflessness, relying on giving 100% of their energy and never expecting any good deeds from others just because they are givers. This is their way of finding peace and getting rid of any negativity in this world.

Spiritual Traditions

For the past 19 years, I have been exposed to several wisdom traditions, seeking to understand the essence of their philosophy, the practice and

methods involved, and the goal. I've looked into Zen, Theravada Buddhism, Occultism, Taoism, New Age, Yoga, Vedanta, etc.

These traditions share many common practices, principles, and goals – and yet there are profound differences in approaches, beliefs, and worldviews. This post is my effort of putting it all together and presenting an overview of the common goals and practice of different spiritual paths.

You don't need to follow an institutionalized religion in order to have a fruitful spiritual life. This doesn't imply, however, that you reject tradition.

Tradition is there to serve you, and it would be silly to throw away the collective development of mystics over millennia and try to reinvent the wheel. Find a wisdom tradition that speaks to your heart, then study and practice the core of it. Just don't outsource your spiritual journey – own it, explore with your own feet, experiment with the teachings, and trust your own discernment.

Here are just a few examples of spiritual goals:

- **Buddhism:** achieve the cessation of suffering (enlightenment, nirvana); see reality for what it is; uproot the mental defilements.
- **Yoga:** purify the mind so to achieve liberation (moksha); uniting the individual soul with the universal Soul; becoming one with the Absolute Consciousness; be the true Self.
- **Vedanta:** realise the true Self; dissolve the knot of the ego, which limits pure Consciousness to a body-mind.

- **Sufism:** experience divine revelation; surrender to God; serve God.
- Christian Mysticism: experience union with God; the kingdom of heaven; feel the love of the creator.
- **Daoism/Taoism:** live in harmony with the Dao; cultivate body, mind, and spirit; cultivating and sublimating energy.
- **Kabbalah:** learn the ultimate laws of the universe; know the creator and oneself, and live accordingly.
- **Jainism:** liberation; salvation; karmic purification; become a perfected-being (Siddha).
- **Shamanism:** live in harmony and connection with Nature; develop knowledge and power to work with invisible forces; serve the spiritual welfare of the community; heal the soul.

Regardless of how the goal is framed, and the philosophy behind it, wisdom traditions ultimately offer us techniques for personal transformation, for moving beyond our personal shell. This can be for the sake of growth, service, transcendence, overcoming suffering, union with a higher principle, internal freedom, happiness, etc.

Signs of Spiritual Awakening-

Spiritual awakening is a term given to describe a subjective experience in which an individual's ego transcends their ordinary, finite sense of self to encompass a wider, infinite sense of truth or reality. At first, the spiritual awakening process can feel overwhelming and confusing. It can feel like everything you thought to be true about your life was a lie, and as such, you may feel "disconnected and detached from the things and people you used to enjoy." Spirituality is the soul of Indian

culture, which was developed to make everything in a better state for the entire mankind. But in the influence of western culture and development of our logical overview, we have completely neglected our ancestor's sacraments. Anyways the time is changing and proving the importance of spirituality in our life.

So the basic question is how spiritual awakening can transform a person into a better human being? And this can be elaborated in a very simple yet effective and proven manner. Awakening is nothing but self-realization. Realization is nothing but developing a vision to see the truth as it is. And the truth is nothing but the fact, which has a clear statement about a certain dimension. Thus awakening is the development of a state of mind, which can see the truth and can accept the fact without the involvement of judgment and clarification. Awakening gives a person a certain kind of vision through which he can clearly understand the situation, people and things along with the circle of life. It means an awakening ensure that a person no matter what the condition is, but he will be ready to accept and face the situation. Even in the worst condition or the most profound situation, a person will not be affected by the ego, greed, lust or jealousy. He will be ever conscious of what is happening and why it is happening. Therefore he never loses his temperament, his wise thought process, his calmness and his basic human element.

Through awakening, a person comes out of the circle of past and future and start living in every present moment. He never regrets his past and he never gets worried for the future as he understands the fact that he cannot change what has happened and even cannot alter what is going to happen. So is that mean an awaken person becomes a dumb or do nothing? The answer is NO. It doesn't mean he accepts means he becomes effortless, but he certainly ensures that the things which are out of his control are useless to think or act upon, so he breaks the

circle and lives in a present moment. Because life is not in the past or future, it is residing in each present moment. And those who live in present tend to live more joyful than anyone else in the world.

Signs of a Spiritual Awakening



Awakening also gives immense calmness on excessive thoughts. As we have evolved a thoughtful minded being, our mind is also grown like a supercomputer. But this computer never gets on sleep mode until fully shut down. It has become unstoppable. Henceforth these excessive thoughts make us engaged all the time even in decision making, day to day living, loving, suffering and experiencing with all irrelevant fear, anxiety, depression, worry, daydreaming and negative thinking. Unnecessary thoughts are always harmful to us as those things which only exist in our mind, are precisely putting impact on our health and our life. In such life, a person leaves behind the basic fundamental of his life that is living without any fear or worry. And to live without any fear or worry, one needs to be surrender. He should be surrender to himself only, as he has hidden all the powers in the universe as long as he evolved them one by one with the help of spirituality.

Feeling a Sense of Connection-

Connection comes from shared humanity. This can occur when you find yourself taking interest in your community. This can include volunteering at your local food bank or shovelling your neighbour's walkway. You have a heightened awareness of the creatures you share the planet with. You might decide to stop eating meat or you might catch yourself trapping flies and spiders rather than killing them.

**Increased Empathy and Intuition**

You find yourself listening less to what people say and more to the feeling or intention behind their words or actions.

Feeling Drawn To Nature

We may get distracted when walking outside (even during a busy day) around nature just looking at flowers, birds or the sky.

A Noticeable Change in Your Behaviour

Perhaps the most essential and authentic signs of spiritual awakening can be observed in your daily behaviour. Compulsive, neurotic, and

addictive behaviours are symptoms of the ego or lower soul. The Spirit or Higher Self has no such tendencies. The Spirit isn't driven to meet basic needs because it's already whole and complete right now. So when you feel this completeness, moment to moment, it's a good sign of spiritual awakening.

You Become Self-Aware

When you focus on yourself and pay attention to which you are and what makes you tick, you are one step closer to spirituality.

You Can Finally Let Go of Attachments

It is common to realize that unhealthy attachments are the root of suffering. Letting go of the attachments is a sign that you are on your way to spiritual ascension.

You Change Your Past Habits and Routines

As you slowly become spiritually awake, it is natural for your daily routine to change. The things that brought you joy in the past are now substituted by new things that become a high priority (e.g. spending more time in nature).

You Experience Higher Vibration Sensations

A sign you might be having a spiritual awakening is the feeling of energy or high vibrations in your body. For example, when you're meditating, they tend to come on. Sometimes really strong. Other times, they can occur randomly.

Uses of Spirituality-

Suffering is the initial door of spirituality for many people (usually in the form of anxiety, grief, or fear). When our mind depends on external things for happiness, its experience of happiness will be unreliable, impermanent—just like external causes are. It has been rightly coined

as “stock market happiness”. Since suffering is a mental phenomenon, and spiritual practices are a means to transform one’s mind, it is a wise way of seeking a better life. Hence, there is a drive to seek happiness and peace internally. Or to at least to diminish the suffering that we are experiencing. Spirituality helps us gain balance, independence from external cases, and a greater appreciation of life.

To find purpose and meaning

Exploring spirituality can help people find answers to questions they have about philosophical questions.

To cope with feelings of stress, depression, and anxiety

Spiritual experiences can be helpful when coping with the stresses of life.

To restore hope and optimism

Spirituality can help people develop a more hopeful outlook on life.

To find a sense of community and support

Because spiritual traditions often involve organized religions or groups, becoming a part of such a group can serve as an important source of social support.

Impact of Spirituality-

- You may feel a higher sense of purpose, peace, hope, and meaning.
- You may experience better confidence, self-esteem, and self-control.
- It can help you make sense of your experiences in life.
- When unwell, it can help you feel inner strength and result in faster recovery.

- Those in a spiritual community may have more support.
- You may work at better relationships with yourself and others.

Benefits of Spirituality-

Improved Emotional State

Spirituality can promote close family and friendship bonds and help people cope with physical or emotional pain and other life stressors. It can also offer people a strong sense of community, particularly for those who are part of a spiritual group or community. Regularly gathering with like-minded people can help prevent feelings of isolation. People who are spiritual generally have a more positive outlook and live happier, more productive lives.

Reduction in stress

Chronic stress is harmful to both physical and mental health. We do lose sleep, have tense muscles, headaches, feel on edge, and become exhausted and way too often not very pleasant to be around. Unrelenting stress is dangerous for us. Adopting spiritual growth habits has been shown to considerably reduce stress in individuals.

Reduce depression

Depression, a mood disorder that causes persistent feelings of sadness, guilt, and hopelessness, can interfere with daily life. Depression is often treated with medication and talk therapy. But some studies suggest spirituality namely mindfulness meditation, prayer, and yoga can also alleviate its effects.

Live without fear

The second specific way how spirituality can make us happy and healthy is to realize that we are not the mind. Today the world is full of

hospitals and treatments for Mental Health. People are suffering depression, anxiety, and even thinking about committing suicide. This is because the mind lives with fear and worry and therefore we are unable to live a life of bliss and peace. But when we become spiritual, then we realize that we are not the mind. Those seeking spirituality realize that when we try to find the mind, where it is, we cannot find.

Reduce Blood Pressure

When you get stressed, your body receives a flood of hormones that are meant to help fight off the situation causing such a disturbance. The body increases blood pressure (BP) by causing the heart to beat faster and your blood vessels to narrow. Over time, repeated stress and BP elevations can lead to hypertension. A spiritual practice can serve as a great complement to any type of treatment to lower blood pressure because not only does it help to heal the physical body, it also supports the mental and emotional body. It's easy to want to seek the magic pill to cure all chronic illness and health problems.

Improved Self Confidence and Fitness

Being part of a spiritual community or having close community ties can help boost self-confidence and mental outlook, which in turn can lead to taking better care of yourself. Some people find physical activities, such as taking a walk in a beautiful park or participating in a yoga or meditation class, to be a spiritual experience. Exercise pumps oxygen into the body, increasing blood flow, while simultaneously elevating mood and reducing blood pressure.

Overall improvement in mental well-being

Spirituality can help improve overall mental health. The benefits of religious rituals can be experienced through spiritual growth by being

internally connected, completely aware, practicing mindfulness, and having a greater sense of community.

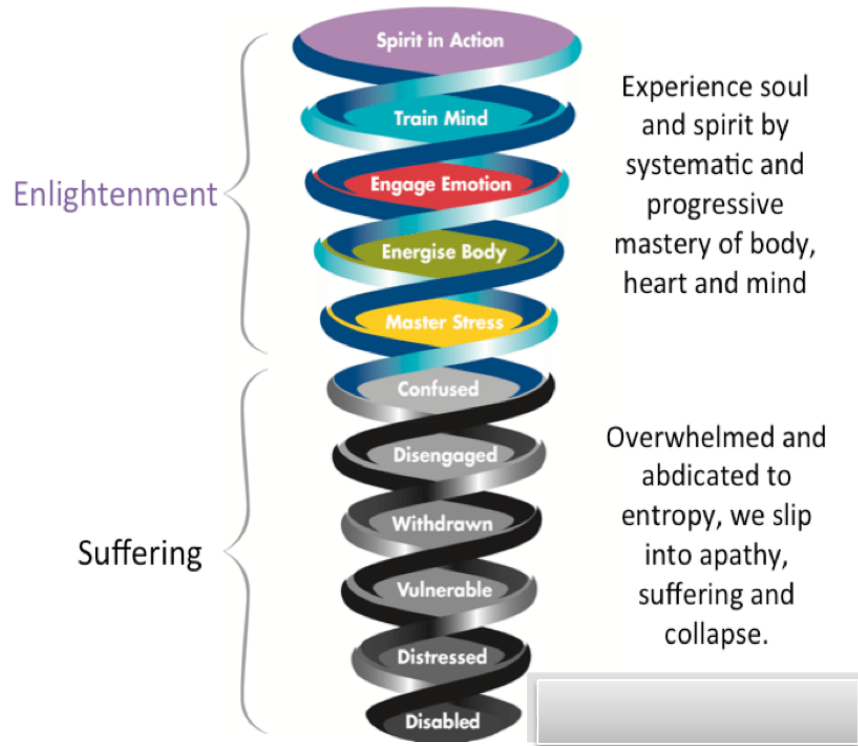
Liberation

The most important benefit of spirituality is to make us happier and healthier by being liberated from the constant cycle of death and rebirth which will make us return to earth again and again and to suffer. Not only do we get freedom from suffering on earth, we also get liberation from rebirth.

Increase longevity

Reduction of stress, blood pressure, depression, and anxiety, combined with an increase in social interaction and gaining immune system strength, consider all these aspects. Each aspect taken up individually can help to improve longevity. On combining the wide-ranging benefits, the results can be far more positive.

Spirituality is about studying the inner self of yours, and how different universities law affects an individual. Whereas religion is all about worshipping to god. Both of them are neither wrong nor right but different. In religion, an individual believes in outside power known as god whereas spirituality is the belief in inner power. Spirituality is a very personalized approach followed privately. An individual explores and practices spirituality on his own. Whereas religion is a more kind of group activity where like-minded people socialize with each other and practice religion. Spirituality is more about finding truths, fulfilment, connections, truths and many more. Spirituality would encourage all humans to follow their ways and make stories. It would help humans to set a journey of self-discovery and enlightenment which can be only limited to the inner self.

Tips for Spiritual Growth-**Volunteer or help others**

If you don't have a faith community, that's okay. Another way to feel connected to your spirituality and faith is to find a cause that matters to you and to give back. You can work at a food pantry, become a mentor or tutor or foster an animal. Doing so can grow your community and connect you with like-minded people. By helping others, it'll also give you a sense of purpose and gratitude.

Think positive

If you find yourself thinking negatively, immediately switch to thinking positively. Strive to be in control of what enters your mind. Open the door for the positive and close it for the negative.

Develop the happiness habit

Always look at the bright side of life and strive to see the good, funny and positive in everything. This will help you develop a happy state of mind.

Happiness comes from within you, when you do not allow negative thoughts and feelings to fill your mind. Do not let external circumstances decide your happiness for you.

Try yoga

Yoga is a physical technique that can help improve your spiritual wellness by reducing emotional and physical strains on your mind and body. Yoga is taught at all different levels and can help lower stress, boost the immune system and lower blood pressure as well as reduce anxiety, depression, fatigue, and insomnia.

Take time to meditate

While managing your time and daily tasks can be hard, it is crucial to devote time to connecting with yourself. Whether in the morning when you wake up, during your lunch break, or before you go to sleep, take five to 10 minutes to meditate each day.

Spend time in nature

Whether you live in the mountains, the desert or near the beach, spending time in nature can boost your spiritual health. You can't help but disconnect from your phone, your day and your troubles. Even just a few minutes watching the birds, the trees swaying in the wind or the crashing waves on the shoreline can be therapeutic.

Modern Spirituality-

Spirituality and its meaning have changed over time, turning more into a journey of self-discovery instead of blind devotion to religious deities. Science prevails as the dominant paradigm, and many of us no

longer believe in the punishment of hell to maintain a religious practice. However, our hectic modern lifestyle is making us increasingly interested in spirituality. We find ourselves looking for peace of mind to turn our focus inward and step away from the whirlwind of anxiety we are constantly enduring. By combining Self Control, The Gentleness, Faithfulness, Goodness, Kindness, Patience, Peace, Joy and Love together we will get the fruit of the spirit. This is peak point of modern spirituality as it is focus on living in unlimited happiness without leaving the society.

Spiritual but not religious

The spiritual but not religious are independent seekers, many of whom pray, meditate; do yoga and other spiritual practices outside the confines of a particular tradition.

BUDDHISM

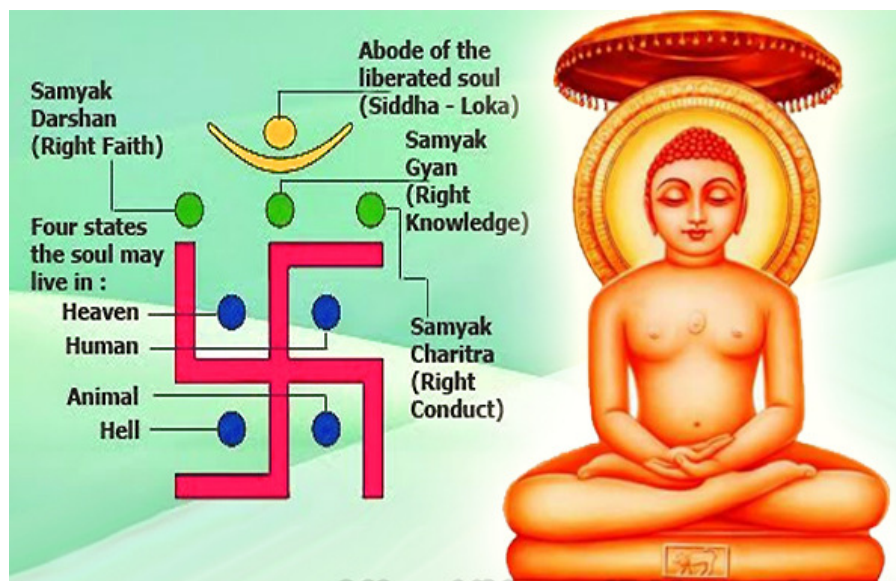
Buddhist practices like meditation are means of changing yourself in order to develop the qualities of awareness, kindness, and wisdom. The experience developed within the Buddhist tradition over thousands of years has created an incomparable resource for all those who wish to follow a path a path which ultimately culminates in Enlightenment or Buddha hood. An enlightened being sees the nature of reality absolutely clearly, just as it is, and lives fully and naturally in accordance with that vision. This is the goal of the Buddhist spiritual life, representing the end of suffering for anyone who attains it. Buddhism is a path of practice and spiritual development leading to Insight into the true nature of reality.



The Buddha developed the belief system at a time when India was in the midst of significant religious and philosophical reform. The Buddha came to understand that desire and attachment caused suffering and humans suffered because they were ignorant of the true nature of existence. People insisted on permanent states in life and resisted change, clung to what they knew, and mourned what they lost.

SPIRITUAL IN JAINISM-

The idea of spirituality in Jainism is based on its idea of soul. Spiritual awakening, higher plane of consciousness, enlightenment, perfection and divinity are the core concerns of spiritualism. Spiritual awakening is possible through spiritual awareness and through the knowledge of one's true self. Jainism teaches that the path to enlightenment is through nonviolence and reducing harm to living things (including plants and animals) as much as possible. Like Hindus and Buddhists, Jains believe in reincarnation. This cycle of birth, death, and rebirth is determined by one's karma.



These are non-violence (ahimsa); non-attachment (aparigraha); not lying (satya); not stealing (asteya); and sexual restraint (brahmacharya), with celibacy the ideal.

Jains try to carry out certain spiritual acts every day. These are:

- prayer

- honouring the tirthankaras
- paying respect to monks
- repenting for sins
- self-control through sitting meditation for 48 minutes
- going without something pleasurable

To Jains, reincarnation is determined by karma. The concept of karma isn't as simple as it seems when we use it in everyday language. To Jains, and people of other faiths who believe in karma, like Hindus and Buddhists, it is much more complicated than something bad happening to someone who did something bad, or vice versa.

Karma is the force that is created by someone's actions. Over the course of someone's life, they accumulate karma based on the way that they treat other living things. They can gain bad karma from being violent or disrespectful to living beings, and good karma from practising ahimsa.

Ahimsa is a strict code of non-violence, so strict that Jains eat a vegetarian diet to avoid causing harm to animals. Some do not eat mushrooms or root vegetables because removing the root from the ground kills the plants. Some Jain monks and nuns take care not to accidentally kill the tiniest of creatures, like ants or mosquitoes. Jains take care never to be violent in their thoughts, words, or actions.

The accumulation of karma through practising ahimsa determines what happens to someone or something when they die. It determines where they will go next in the cycle of rebirth, or whether they will leave the cycle.

Eventually, through practising ahimsa, all living things can achieve moksha. This means a release from the cycle of reincarnation. Moksha is when the immortal soul can live in a state of bliss forever.

Jains honour 24 Jinas, also known as Tirthankaras. These are spiritual leaders who are believed to have reached enlightenment and therefore been liberated from the cycle of rebirth. Unlike some religions, like Christianity or Judaism, Jains do not believe in a god, a creator, or any saints. Instead, they believe that the Jinas spread the teachings of Jainism.

The most important festival for Jains is celebrated in August or September depending on the year. It is called Paryushana or Daslakshana. It lasts between eight and 10 days and is a time for fasting and meditating.

Schools and Spirituality-

The purpose of spiritual education is to fulfil the divine potential of children, and to prepare them for life by giving them the tools they need to keep on learning throughout the many experiences that will come to them.



When we speak of spiritual education, we don't mean a church kind of education. What we mean is to help children understand that they're

going to be a lot happier if they are kind to others, and if they work for high ideals. The child who has a little bag of dates and eats them all himself isn't nearly happy as the child who shares those dates with others. Spiritual development is the development of the non-material aspects of life, focusing on personal insight, values, meanings and purpose. Pupils should have the opportunity to experience the wonder of life. Students should develop a zest for life and the courage and ability to persevere, overcoming any inner resistance and vacillation when approaching obstacles. They must develop the desire to use and extend what they learn in school. A student's perspective on life may be informed by a religious belief, but equally may not. Spiritual development was the result of a communal process and something that was developed within the school. Teachers in public schools considered a spiritual element of education as important to their students and believed that spirituality could exist outside of a religious framework within public schools. Some considered moral and character education to fill this need to educate the whole child, with the use of patriotic rituals and symbols in the place of religious rites. Both sectors saw spirituality as a way to develop community and identity within the school.

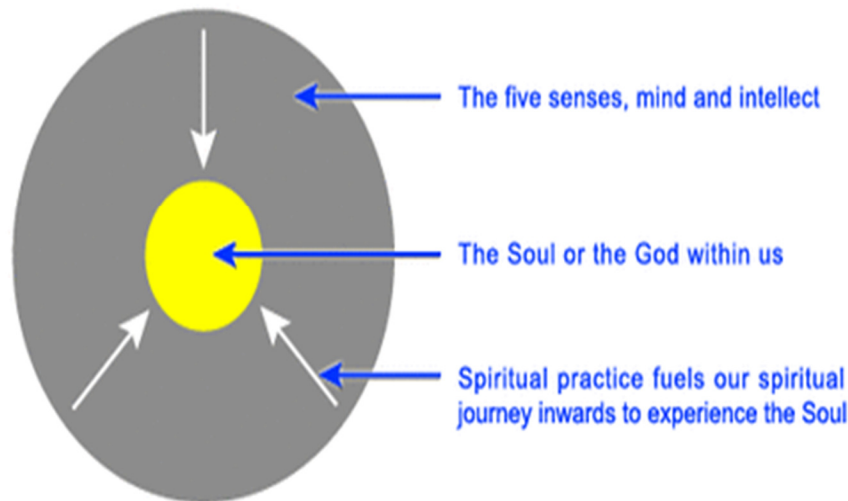
Contemporary Spirituality -

Contemporary spirituality is defined by the contrary voices and movements expressed within it. The fact that there are so many conflicting views, and a number of contested positions, is a sign that the field is dynamic and alive. Contemporary spirituality is an approach to religion and spirituality that speaks directly to the times we live in and to the consciously evolving human being of the twenty-first century. It offers a way in which to bring the role of religion and spirituality into our present global society.

Spiritual Practices

Spiritual practices have always been at the heart and soul of the world's religions, and they are also key elements of today's less organized spirituality movements. They help us discover our deepest values, address our longing to connect with the divine, and propel us on the journey to wholeness all aspects of spirituality.

Definition of spiritual practice



A spiritual practice does not have to be hard. It rewards presence, not effort. Some practices do yield an outcome, but many are done simply for their own sake. And practice does not make perfect. Don't expect to overcome all your weaknesses and fix all your problems. Indeed, difficulties are to be expected and can be used as aids on your journey. Practice is a process, and it changes over time. You may make a commitment to do a specific activity for years or you may get what you need from it in a day.

Relation to science

Spirituality is the science of the 'life giving substance'. Spirituality is about integrity. It helps us to find meaning in life, provides a foundation of our values to guide us in the way we behave with self, others and the world around us. Spirituality is the science of human growth for self transformation & also for world transformation through Peace & Purity.

Health and well-being

Spiritual wellbeing is often a misunderstood concept. It refers not to any particular religious or spiritual practice or ideology but to the human need for meaning, purpose and connection to something greater than us. Spiritual health is achieved when you feel at peace with life. It is when you are able to find hope and comfort in even the hardest of times. It can help to support you as you experience life completely. Spirituality is different for everyone.



Positive beliefs, comfort, and strength gained from religion, meditation, and prayer can contribute to well being. It may even promote healing. Improving your spiritual health may not cure an illness, but it may help you feel better. It also may prevent some health problems and help you cope better with illness, stress, or death. Spiritual health is anything that relates to the health and wellness of a person's spirit. While spirit can be defined in many ways throughout many religions and cultures, the concept stems from something within an individual that cannot be seen in the body and is not a part of the mind.

Intercessory prayer-

Intercessory prayer is prayer for the needs of others. Praying for others is an unselfish expression of love. Why does God want us to pray for others? Because intercessory prayer reflects God's own character of outgoing love and mercy. God wants us to think like He does, and praying for others help us to think beyond ourselves and to grow in compassion for others. Intercessory prayer takes place in this spiritual world where the battles for our own lives, our families, our friends and our nation are won or lost. Intercessory prayer is where you stand close side by side with another man in the presence of God and support him with your prayer. When praying an intercessory prayer, one makes plea and meditation before God on behalf of oneself but most importantly for others.

RELIGION-

The term religion (from Latin: religio meaning "bind, connect") denotes a set of common beliefs and practices pertaining to the supernatural (and its relationship to humanity and the cosmos), which are often codified into prayer, ritual, scriptures, and religious law. These beliefs and practices are typically defined in light of a shared

canonical vocabulary of venerable traditions, writings, history, and mythology. As religious traditions are often deeply embedded into specific cultural contexts, these traditions often contain moral codes that outline the relationships that a believer is expected to cultivate with respect to themselves, other believers, outsiders, and the supernatural world. Finally, a common element of many religious traditions is the division of the world in two comprehensive domains, one sacred, the other profane. In this context, religious thought and practice are aimed at delineating and reifying these two disparate realms through personal effort and/or communal ritual. Religion, human beings' relation to that which they regard as holy, sacred, absolute, spiritual, divine, or worthy of especial reverence. It is also commonly regarded as consisting of the way people deal with ultimate concerns about their lives and their fate after death. In many traditions, this relation and these concerns are expressed in terms of one's relationship with or attitude toward gods or spirits; in more humanistic or naturalistic forms of religion, they are expressed in terms of one's relationship with or attitudes toward the broader human community or the natural world. In many religions, texts are deemed to have scriptural status, and people are esteemed to be invested with spiritual or moral authority.

The word "Religion" has been defined in a wide variety of manners, with most definitions attempting to find a balance somewhere between overly restrictive categorizations and meaningless generalities. In this quest, a variety of approaches have been employed, including the use formalistic, doctrinal definitions, and the emphasis experiential, emotive, intuitive, valuation and ethical factors. Definitions mostly include:

- a notion of the transcendent or numinous (most important for theistic belief systems)

- a cultural or behavioral aspect of ritual, liturgy and organized worship, often involving a priesthood, and societal norms of morality (ethos) and virtue
- a set of myths or sacred truths held in reverence or believed by adherents.

Development of religion-

There are a number of models regarding the ways in which religions come into being and develop. Broadly speaking, these models fall into three categories (as discussed below):

1. Models which see religions as social constructions;
2. Models which see religions as progressing toward higher, objective truth;
3. Models which see a particular religion as absolutely true.

However, these models are not mutually exclusive, as multiple elements may be seen to apply simultaneously, or different models may be seen as applying more fittingly to different religions.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY-

Pursuit of the divine has existed for as long as civilisation has. Cultures have long been fascinated with what lies beyond this life and what it all means. Since ancient times, shamans and occult seers have acted as guides to people experiencing a spiritual awakening. Eventually, over millennia, elaborate archetypal stories we built upon core belief systems that became religions. The spiritual pursuit persisted as many, such as Gautama Buddha himself, weren't satisfied with the answers religion had to offer. They sought the authenticity of the touch of the divine and the firsthand experience of spiritual awakening.

	RELIGION	SPIRITUALITY
1	Religion dwells in temples, mosques & churches	Spirituality cannot be found in a church or temple, it is found deep within oneself.
2	There are many religions	There is only one spirituality
3	Religion is a formal - with specific rules and rituals	Spirituality is a way of loving, accepting and relating to the world and people around you.
4	Religion does not allow you to investigate or question what is being followed	Spirituality encourages reasoning and questioning all the time.
5	Religion promotes fear - of God or clergy	Spirituality teaches you to be brave and search for inner peace
6	Religion promotes followers	Spirituality encourages discovery
7	Religion divides other religions	Spirituality is universal.
8	Religion makes you bow or be punished otherwise	Spirituality allows you to freely follow your heart
9	Religion tells you the truth	Spirituality lets you discover it yourself
10	Religion makes you dependent	Spirituality makes you independent
11	Religion offers solutions	Spiritualism allows you to discover truth

Religion

By definition, religion is a personal set or institutionalized system of religious attitudes, beliefs, and practices; the service and worship of God or the supernatural.

Religion is mostly an institutionalised set of beliefs, attitudes, and practices directed toward worshipping a god or a supernatural being. It is a well-structured belief system passed on for generations in the form of written scriptures and established cultural practices. Religions have hierarchies of leaders who act as formal representatives of the institution. The leaders often carry out the religious practices and advise followers on the same or give their interpretation of the scriptures regarding practices.

Religion also has a political aspect, as people in any country divide into religious lines. Therefore, religion and group beliefs act as a unifying

narrative for large groups of people to direct their lives and affairs. Members of religious faith can also have different dress codes and everyday life preferences. Religious people are also obligated to follow the guidelines set by their religion.

Spirituality-

Spirituality is a personal search for a connection with the divine and an awareness of one's place in the grand scheme of things. It may or may not involve holding a set of beliefs regarding the item, or the thoughts can change over time as one experiences spiritual growth. People can derive spiritual ideas from existing religions or build a sense of wisdom over the years through their personal experiences. People can also hold similar spiritual beliefs with common threads such as a sense of wonder about existence, mystical experiences that transcend mundane life, and a feeling of connection to something higher than themselves.

As we look at the definition of both, we realise there is a stark contrast in numerous aspects of religion and spirituality. Distinguishing from the other is essential in defining an individual's journey. As people have become sceptical and rebellious towards existing structures, spirituality vs religion has become a common line of argument. More people identify themselves as spiritual but not religious these days as they want to find transcendental answers that suit their choices in life over what is imposed by religion.

Spirituality, on the other hand, connotes an experience of connection to something larger than you; living everyday life in a reverent and sacred manner. Or as Christina Puchalski, MD (leader in trying to incorporate spirituality into healthcare), puts it, "Spirituality is the aspect of humanity that refers to the way individuals seek and express meaning and purpose and the way they experience their connectedness to the moment, to self, to others, to nature, and to the significant or sacred."

Spirituality and Religion -

Religious participation involves collective and individual “prayer, meditation,” “worship, moral conduct, right belief, and participation in religious institutions.” There are rules about behavior, the outward expressions of reverence for a particular god or institution. These rules pertain to dress, marriage, healthcare, justice, and more.

Somewhere, at some point, all religions started as a spiritual process. But in their eagerness to organize, they lost the fundamentals. Religion is just spirituality gone bad. Let us understand the distinction between religion and a spiritual process. The moment you say you belong to a religion, you call yourself a believer. The moment you say, “I am on a spiritual path,” you call yourself a seeker. What is the difference between believing and seeking? You can seek only that which you do not know. Or in other words, the fundamentals of seeking are that you have realized that you do not know the essential nature of your own life. You do not know the source of this creation. You do not know who you are, what you are, where you came from and where you will go. You are seeking to know. When you are in a state of “I do not know,” you cannot fight anyone.

Objective vs. Subjective Experience-

Religion: On the whole, a formal religion is often an objective experience. In other words, there is usually a greater focus on the externals:

- Houses of worship (e.g., a church)
- Books of scripture
- Eternal rituals
- Observances

This is the equivalent of object-referral in which your attention is placed upon the objects in your experience.

Spirituality: Spirituality, however, leans more toward self-referral or the internalization of your awareness of your soul. Spirituality is an inward journey that involves a shift in awareness rather than some form of external activity. As such, spirituality is much more about inner understanding than outer worship. This is not to say that worship is not a part of spirituality; it's a matter of where the devotion and worship are directed:

- To an external practice, object, or figurehead
- To your soul, higher self, or divinity within

Belief vs. Spiritual Experience-

Religion: At its core, religion is about faith. That is to say, belief in something based upon unconditional acceptance of the religion's teachings. Unlike the scientific worldview, religions don't require evidence to validate their claims. Through religion, you are taught to have faith in God or the scriptures as being the infallible and ultimate truth of reality. Acceptance and surrender to the divine are taught as the path that leads to ultimate salvation.

Spirituality: Spirituality doesn't dismiss faith; however, it often leans more heavily on direct experience of the soul or divinity. Spiritual practices such as meditation, yoga, silence, and contemplation allow you to make conscious contact with more expanded states of consciousness, thus helping to experientially validate the teachings rather than accepting them on faith alone. You know something because you have tasted the experience yourself and have allowed it to resonate, as opposed to taking the word of another.

Similarities Between Religion & Spirituality-

Religion and spirituality share some common attributes. Here are a few:

Belief in a higher power: Religious people believe in one or multiple gods who are ethereal beings who control the universe and maintain order and justice. Spiritual people may not believe in one higher power but frequently acknowledge the presence of a guiding force that is analogous to a god.

The desire to be in touch with the divine: For the religious, reaching God is life's ultimate purpose, and it could be for a reward in the afterlife or a better place after death. Spiritual people yearn for connection with the divine for the feeling of peace, tranquillity and power it brings with it.

Practices: Both religion and spirituality have routine procedures. For the religious, it is visiting a place of worship, rites and ablutions, while the spiritual engage in meditation or similar activity.

Reverence for the divine: Respect, love and fear of God are central to most religious systems. Spiritual people may celebrate the natural order of the world.

UNIT-II

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Despite stress often being thought of as a subjective experience, levels of stress are readily measurable; using various physiological tests, similar to those used in polygraphs. There are several models of stress management, each with distinctive explanations of mechanisms for controlling stress. Much more research is necessary to provide a better understanding of which mechanisms actually operate and are effective in practice. Small amount of stress, if taken positively, is required to improve the performance. It boosts up and motivates the players/ individuals to perform at their best in the event. Stress can be external or internal. The people can be exposed to various stressful situations at any age right from childhood till old age and it exists on this earth from the inception of life and will remain forever. In 1956, Selye used stress to describe the pressure of the person either negative or positive. Actually, the pressure/ stress due to demands or wishes. He further elaborated as the experience of the individual in handling the demands of life which arises in the different situations and at different levels. It may be occurred due to the physical, physiological problems, personal feelings and thoughts, psychological environmental conditions etc. It is the situation which needs creation, adjustment; learning's to adapt/ develop new coping skills to adjust with the situation. Stress is a feeling which can be encountered by the people at any time. It may be emotional, physical, psychological that results in frustration, anxiety, nervousness, anger. It may be occurred due to event or thought. It can be categorized as acute or chronic stress. Actually, the stress occurs due to filled/unfilled demands or wishes which can affect the person physically, psychologically or can damage the life.

Acute Stress-

Acute stress is the most common form of stress among humans worldwide. Acute stress deals with the pressures of the near future or dealing with the very recent past. While acute stress is often interpreted as being a negative experience, it can actually be beneficial and even necessary for one's wellbeing because of its protective effects against potentially dangerous threats. Slamming on the brakes while driving in order to avoid a car accident could be considered a moment of beneficial acute stress. Acute stress is the stress which occurs for a short time and can be happened due to new or the existing events. For e.g., quarrel with the friends, life partners, family members, colleagues, launch of any event etc. Stress can be positive and negative. A little stress for the performance of an activity/event/ exams can be fruitful and give the positive results. This stress involved preparation, planning, strategy, management etc. to make that event effective and successful. On the other side, if it is handled negatively then it can lead to disaster, diseases and many problems. The healthy and strong mental & physical status can contribute to handle the stress tactfully to little or higher pressure. It prevents them from the internal damage or harms. Disagreement or quarrel with natural activities leads to stress. Degree of stress may be different from individual to individual and there is no ideal level of stress to be required by the people to perform or manage any activity. Stress can result in little or higher pressure on the body and mind. And recognizing the type of pressure is also not an easy job. But it is essential to find out the ways and sources to get rid of the pressure.

The most common type of stress, acute stress, can be helpful in short doses. It is the body's response to a recent or anticipated challenge or unexpected event.

Common symptoms of acute stress include:

- emotional distress
- muscle tension
- headache, back pain, or jaw ache
- stomach upset
- rapid heartbeat
- raised blood pressure

Chronic Stress-

Chronic stress is unlike acute stress. It has a wearing effect on people that can become a very serious health risk if it continues over a long period of time. Chronic stress can lead to memory loss, damage spatial recognition and produce a decreased drive of eating. Additional symptoms of chronic stress include: aches and pains, insomnia or other sleep disturbances, changes in social behaviors, low energy, emotional withdrawal or other changes in emotional responses, and unfocused thinking. Chronic stress has also been associated with other medical conditions such as hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and arthritis.

The severity varies from person to person and also gender difference can be an underlying factor. Women are able to take longer durations of stress than men without showing the same maladaptive changes. Men can deal with shorter stress duration better than women can but once males hit a certain threshold, the chances of them developing mental issues increase drastically.

Stress can be categorized into many types on the basis of the symptoms such as psychological, physical, behavioral etc.

STRESS DEFINITION:

Stress management is a wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person's level of stress, especially chronic stress, usually for the purpose of and for the motive of improving everyday functioning. Stress produces numerous physical and mental symptoms which vary according to each individual's situational factors. These can include a decline in physical

health, such as headaches, chest pain, fatigue, and sleep problems, as well as depression. The process of stress management is named as one of the keys to a happy and successful life in modern society. Life often delivers numerous demands that can be difficult to handle, but stress management provides a number of ways to manage anxiety and maintain overall well-being. Stress may be defined as the feeling or the change in the behavior due to any physical or psychological strain. It is the feeling or change which may lead to physical, physiological, psychological, emotional tension or strain. it is the situation/ event which needs immediate attention or reaction. It is different from individual to individual based on their capacity to handle stress.

Stress is a reaction to the unhealthy situation and it depends on the individual whether he/she fights or run from the problem. Too much of stress can affect the individual physically, physiologically, emotionally and psychologically.

The psychological and physical state deviates from the normal if the resources of the individual are not sufficient to cope up with the demands and pressures of the situation. Stress plays a significant role in developing the physical and mental condition of the individual. It may need lots of efforts and hard work, power, drive or force to fulfill the demand. If the hard work or efforts continued for the longer period of time then it leads to stress or anxiety which generates /releases hormones, which results in lethargic, illness and related diseases or problems. (Stress can be occurred due to chronic illness, mishappening, pain, financial issues divorce or family problems, emotional disturbances etc.)

Causes: To find out the causes of stress, it is important to observe the surroundings/ events carefully, as stress can be occurred from anything. It may be study, work, relationship, happenings, family, workplace, and day to day affairs. The level of degree of the stress may be different. It may be temporary and permanent. For e.g., the stress of exams or organizing an event is temporary, reaching to destination, sudden rise of emergent situation, loss of job, relative etc. however it depends on the individual that how he/she handles the stress. Other causes may be lots of pressure, changes, demands and challenges of life, worries, things beyond control, responsibilities, time management, lots of work pressure etc.

Reasons of causing stress:

- Job dissatisfaction
- Too much of workload
- Lots of responsibilities
- Setting unreachable or unrealistic goals
- Insufficient infrastructure and facilities
- Working under stressful conditions
- Harassment/torture at work place

- Loss of job
- Demise of any family member or loved one
- Family disputes, divorce, consequences etc.
- Financial crises
- Moving from one place to another
- Chronic illness
- Persistent injury
- Psychological imbalance/ problem (depression etc)
- Low self-confidence or low-self esteem
- Longtime illness of family member
- Violence or mishappening with any of the family member or yourself
- Threat or fear of any chronic disease (COVID-19)
- Stressful news
- Theft incident at home or workplace
- Major change of life. (Wedding, change of home, change of job, promotion)
- Efforts to fit in the expectations of the family members (parents, children, wife, boss etc)
- Distressing event (earth quack, cyclone, flood etc)

The body releases certain hormones, such as adrenaline and cortisol in reaction to stress being faced by the individual. Further it reflects in disturbed activities of digestive system, nervous system, physical and physiological functions of the body, weakness and low energy etc.

The temporary stress brings the changes in the body as well as change in behavior or emotions but do not stay for longer duration. Once the threat is gone, it gets back to the normal functioning of life. If the stress is not temporary, it may become dangerous and may disturb the functioning of physical, physiological and nervous system of the individual. It can leave negative impact and lead too many detrimental behavioral changes such as smoking, consumption of alcohol, drugs

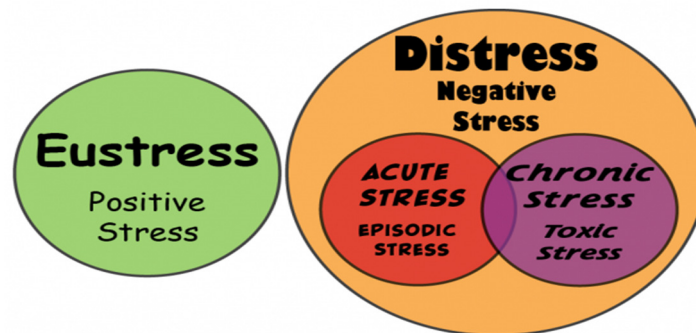
etc. which may be destructive. These unhealthy habits lead to many dreadful diseases as well as damage to the body. Further this stress results in many health issues like depression, frustration, mental illness etc. Stress can influence the body of the individual and lead to health consequences. It can lead to many disease/ health issues such as diabetes, heart problems, obesity, ulcers, improper nervous functions etc.

Chronic stress is the stress which occurs for a longer duration and can be happened due to financial problem, accident, mishappening, problem at work place, unhappy situations, diseases etc. This type of stress takes time to be sorted out. Symptoms of stress may be diarrhea, constipation, indigestion, headache, lack of energy, mental or physical weakness, lethargic, insomnia, sexual dissatisfaction, weight loss or weight gain and followed symptoms such as intake/addiction of drugs, alcohol, tobacco.

TYPES OF STRESS:

Distress: Any stress which is strong and leaves a great impact on the physical as well as mental condition. It is considered as negative stress.

Eustress: This is the type of stress which is good for boosting/uplifting mood and health. It is considered as positive stress.



TYPE OF STRESSORS:

Physical and physiological stress: This stress can be recognized by the symptoms such as high B.P., long hours of seating without work, changes in weight, increase in pulse rate, infection, irregular digestion, nervous disturbance, confusion etc. related to health, illness, injury, infection, indigestion, disorder, insomnia, disturbed sleep, and imbalance nutrition

Psychological stress: Disturbance with cordial relation with friends and family members, fear, phobia, fear of disease, natural calamities etc. This is the condition of the stress where the individual faces the problems/issues of concentration, worriedness, memory, anxiety, fluctuation of mood, irritation, anger, frustration etc.

Behavioral stress: This type of stress brings the changes in the behavior. The individual may indulge her/himself into drugs/ smoking/ alcohol etc. and results in the feeling of carelessness, loneliness and no enjoyment.

SOURCES:

Internal (within): Disease, depression, negativity, pressure of achieving target.

External: (Outside): leaving or changing the place, leaving of friends and family members, death of some relative or beloved persons

Indicators of stress: Change in hormones,

Situational stress: unpredictable and occur at any time and may result in positive or negative impact.

Stress indicator:

- a) It brings change in hormones in the body
- b) Activation of neuro-endocrine system
- c) Excessive sweating
- d) Enhanced heart rate and cardiac output
- e) Dryness of mouth
- f) Change in urine frequency
- g) Indigestion
- h) Anxiety
- i) Fear
- j) Anger
- k) Depression
- l) Sadness
- m) Loneliness
- n) Fluctuation in mood
- o) Decreased sex
- p) Diarrhea
- q) Sleeping problems
- r) Dizziness
- s) Anxious
- t) Sickness
- u) Headache
- v) Lethargic
- w) Tension in muscles
- x) Weakness
- y) trembling
- z) Body ache

Individual with strong cognitive ability can overcome the stress with great ease. This is because the cognitive ability tries to solve out the problem/ issues, critical thinking, analytical thinking, remedies, handling their situation in the positive manner

MANAGEMENT:

Stress is a part of life and occurs in the life of every human being. As mentioned earlier, it may be positive or negative and level of stress is also different from individual to individual. But is sometime depends on the individual that how she/he tackles the stress.

The management of the stress is very important and one should learn to manage the stress. Management of stress includes developing the balance between the stress and emotional reaction and finding out the solution to suppress or reduce the tension.

**Laughing**

exercises: It is the smartest and best way to manage stress or reduce hypertension, reduces the release of neuro-endocrine hormones, boosts immune system,

reduces infection, reduces pains and brings the feeling of wellbeing.

Non communicable disease due to stress: In hindi, there is a quote (Chinta Chitaa Samaan) which says that the stress is equal to death. It is a deadly element which can ruin the life of the individual and lead to death. Stress results in many diseases such as CAD (coronary Artery Disease), diabetes, GI (Gastro Intestinal disease), Cancer, Chronic Pulmonary disease, Higher cholesterol level, raised glucose level, physiological disturbance, arthritis, psychiatric problems, neuro imbalance etc. Due to stress, people get indulged into smoking, alcohol intake, drugs, unhealthy diet, tobacco and physical inactivity. Chronic stress leads to NCD's. Stress leads to increased quantity and frequency

of the smoking, drugs and substance abuse. Alcohol intake and unorganized eating is responsible for major health issues. Too much of stress can lead to inflammatory diseases, Common mental disorders and Somatic disorders. Data says that 68% to 70% deaths are occurred due to non-communicable diseases due to stress.

The NCD'S results in hypertension, high cholesterol, blood pressure, obesity, insulin imbalance which slowly progress towards many deadly diseases and death. The most popular non communicable diseases due to stress are cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic respiratory and pulmonary diseases, asthma, diabetes etc. These diseases are the chronic diseases which stay for the longer duration and progress time to time. It affects the human behavior and leads to mental health problems, anxiety etc.

Coping strategy: Stress is common aspect of today's life. You cannot avoid or control it but it can be managed. Around the globe educationists and researchers try to find out the strategies to cope with stress and reduces/ deletes its harmful effect. Coping is to cope or adjust with the change and handling the negative situations. It is referred to the maintenance of positive image, emotional stability/ steadiness even during the hard situations. It is referred to the plan or the programmer or techniques with which one can solve the personal problems with his/her inner conscious/ cognitive ability. It is the reaction to control or manage stress or depression perceived due to change in life which is negative in nature. Although positive changes can also bring stress in life but they do not create long lasting or chronic stress in life and are managed with patience and proper planning. Too many unexpected or unavoidable changes may bring stress, anxiety, worries, depression etc. It may result in low self-esteem and low self-confidence. The coping strategy completely depends on the situation and the environment. Before designing and planning any coping strategy, it is important to evaluate the situation

thoroughly to make it more effective and successful. The coping skills should be able to neutralize or to make stress ineffective. The focus should be given to all the factors or aspects which can cause stress.

- Positive attitude brings positive vibes. Positive thinking removes negativity stress, depression from the life. It improves functioning and helps to tackle the difficult and unwanted situations. Positive thinking and positive attitude help to take out the solutions of the problems.
- Time management leads to improvement of the performance. It is very important to make the time schedule of your tasks and assignments. Timely completion of the task gives satisfaction and reduces the stress. Improper time management leads to incomplete work and poor performance which increases stress.
- Self-discipline helps to reduce the stress as indiscipline leads to inefficiency. It helps to overcome the negative habits. It improves positive attitude towards life. It helps to improve skills and knowledge and improve intellectual abilities and inner strength to get rid of bad qualities. It leads to self-confidence and self-esteem and reduces stress.
- This is another important point which can increase stress if not set appropriately. Goals or targets should be set according to the facilities, infrastructure and the resources available. And the difficulty in achieving those unachievable targets can lead to lots of stress and depression. The energy should be channelized in the right direction to meet the aims and objectives of the life.
- Relaxation is one of the important aspects to get rid of the stress. There are many techniques such as breathing exercises, different types of pranayama, technique of progressive muscle relaxation, meditation and yoga exercises for relaxing mind and body. Relax mind analysis the situation and handle it appropriately. Regular practice of physical exercise relaxation

technique bring relaxation to the inner conscious and lead to peaceful life ahead.

- Saying no to drugs, alcohol or smoke also helps to control the stress. As the intake of substance abuse leads to many dreadful diseases and health problems thus increases the stress. It is seen that people having stress pushed themselves into bad habits (behavior) such as drugs, alcohol and also increases diseases. So, to fight and win the stress it is essential to ignore the drugs and alcohol to prevent yourself from the diseases and health problems.
- It is always said that too much of expectations reduces joys, so it is necessary, that one should do the work sincerely and honestly and should not expect too much out of it. Too much or beyond the limit expectations results in the development of errors and failures. It may lead to incomplete or unsatisfactory work also which is followed by stress and anxiety. Further, if the expectations are not managed then, they can result in sleeplessness, stress, anxiety and depression. It can give the feelings of laziness, fear and inadequacy also. So, it is important to set the realistic goal or targets or keep the realistic expectations to prevent from depression and hopelessness and negativity.
- To prevent yourself from stress and depression, one should focus on the adequate or proper activities. For the right and proper advice or guidance one can take the help of family members, teachers, mentors, elders and friends etc. Their experience and the knowledge can help you to analyze the situation and achieve the target. It can also help you to choose the right path and activities to achieve the desired target. Assistance and advice help in solving or handling the problems or issues intellectually and in coping the stress.

- To cope up with the stress it is essential to find out the source or root cause of the stress. You can keep yourself distant from the stress or you can endeavor to switch to the substitute of the problem. One can change the path or find out for the best possible way to achieve the success.
- Regular practice of physical exercises improves the health and fitness. Good health and wellbeing bring positivity in life. It improves the functioning of physical and physiological systems of the body. It improves strength and endurance and thus improves working efficiency which results in achievement and reduced stress.
- Balanced diet helps to prevent from the diseases and different disorders of the body. It provides ample energy to the body. It regulates and maintains the functioning of the body. It detoxifies and rejuvenate the body and keeps healthy and stress free.
- Recovery helps to perform activities with new enthusiasm it brings freshness and rejuvenate the individual to work with efficiency. It enhances the performance. However, to attain recovery it is important to have adequate sleep and rest for the quicker and complete recovery.it not only enhances the performances but lift the mood also and removes lethargic.
- To control or manage the stress it is important to know the root cause of the stress. If one can avoid or ignore those activities, then the stress can be managed or controlled up to some limit. With this one can evaluate and handle the difficult situations and manage them carefully. Thus he/she will be able to react to the situation in a balanced way.
- The appraisal of the problem is another aspect, which is very important as it tells about the route cause, source of the problem and things involved into it. Knowing about these facts one can handle or tackle the problems intellectually and can maintain

the distance from the problems. It can also help them to find out the remedy or solution to the stress which can turn into a good measure of coping strategy.

- Change in behavior can be a big support in coping the stress. Learning the new skills and leaving the bad behavior or the habits which can cause the stress. Analyzing the situation and looking into new measures to remove stress.
- Maintaining emotional balance is one of the very important coping strategies to control stress or cope up with the stress. Maintaining balance is very important in life. Some elements like Control on emotions help to maintain the stress, distraction from the stress, meditation accepting and handling the situation, patience, positive thinking, self-discipline can be very advantageous to cope up with the stress and help in achieving specific goals.
- There are number of techniques which can be very effective in coping up with the stress. The relaxation and meditation techniques not only relax the mind but rejuvenate the body and mind to work with more efficiency. These techniques enhance the level of oxygen in the body and improves the functioning which removes stress.
- Prediction is another aspect which can be helpful in coping up with the stress in a healthy way. Prediction can help to look deep into the situation to overcome or plan in advance to reduce it. This is the preparation in advance to tackle or reduce the stress.
- Healthy relations with friends, family, neighborhood is also helpful to reduce the stress. Sharing problems with friends, colleagues and family is one of the important measures to reduce the stress.
- Positive mindsets or positive thinking removes negativity. It brings confidence, self-esteem and boosts energy. It gives

motivation and enthusiasm to perform activities and enhances performance. Change of mindsets removes negativity and helps to handle the stress in a positive manner.

STRESS MANAGEMENT:

Stress management refers to the wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person's levels of stress, especially, chronic stress, usually for the purpose of improving everyday functioning.

Following are the measures to reduce stress:

- **Identify the sources of stress in your life:** Individual should know
- his/her strength and weakness. Different individual has different stressors.
- **Knowledge of Sports Psychology:** One should clearly understand about the stressors and its source. For example: if an individual is not able to handle multi task at the same time, he/she should be aware of it and should take care that one task should be taken at one time.
- **Learn healthier ways to cope with stress:** Intake of healthy diet and regular exercise has positive impact on the body. Stress should be coping up by involving in creative task or good habits rather than drinking alcohol or smoking to cope with stress.
- **Get moving:** Long time sitting or working in the closed room generates stress. It is advisable to move or take break between long hours of sitting or working.
- **Connect to others:** Be social. Researches proves that extrovert people exerts less stress in compare to introvert people. Always

try to connect yourself with others. Be proactive in helping others and share the responsibilities.

- **Practice the 4 A's:** It stands for Avoid, Alter, Adapt and Accept. It means avoid the stressors and clear your stand on the issues. Alter the situation by coming out from your nexus and ready to compromise, if the things are more complicated to handle. Adjust the standard to be achievable and reframe the existing problem to reach the solution. Accept the things or situation which cannot be changed and remains positive with life.
- **Make time for fun and relaxation:** Spare the time for recreation in your life. Indulge in fun activities to refresh and relax.
- **Maintain balance with a healthy lifestyle:** Health is the asset of life. Balance with your habits and healthy life style.

Stress Management through Relaxation Techniques: -

Relaxation refers to an activity or a procedure to relax the mind and body by decreasing the level of stress. It is required to bring the person out of the stress to allow him/her to live a life of wellbeing. These techniques play a significant role in the management or relaxation of the mind and body. It can also protect from the mental, emotional and psychological problems/ issues. These techniques have number of benefits in de-stressing and managing good health parameters.

- It helps to manage heart rate.
- Managing blood pressure or lowering blood pressure.
- Improvement of digestion system.
- Adequate sugar level.
- Helps in adequate sleep.
- Reduces pain and tension in muscles.

- Prevents from anger, anxiety and depression.
- Helps to analyze the problems and resolving it smoothly
- Improves self confidence and self-esteem.
- Lifts up the mood and improves focus.
- Enhance the performance.
- Maintains blood glucose level.
- Remove fatigue and improves energy.
- Reduces pain and helps in quicker recovery.

Types of relaxation techniques: there are number of techniques which are advised by doctors, physicians, physiotherapists, which are meant for relaxation of body and mind. One can choose or select the techniques according to their comfort, convenience, and the facilities, infrastructure and sources available. These techniques are meant to rejuvenate your energy and to focus calmly on the causes of stress and to find out the remedies of it. It is important to select the appropriate relaxation technique to get the desired results. We are discussing here few effective relaxation techniques which can be very helpful to get rid of stress.

AUTOGENIC TRAINING:

A relaxation technique developed by German Psychiatrist Johannes Heinrich Schultz and published in 1932. It may be practiced daily for 15 minutes at least thrice a day. Autogenic refers to the automatic generation means comes from within of the individual. In this technique visual imagery and body awareness is utilized to turn down or lessen the stress. In this relaxation technique one relaxes his/her mind by using relaxing words and suggestion or command to him/herself. One can imagine the solution or peaceful atmosphere in the mind. The individual relaxes the mind and body through long breathing, controlling senses/ emotions and other relaxing exercises to

relax muscle tension and relax the parts of the body by stretching etc. it manages the anxiety and stress disorder and improve cognitive ability.



This technique has standard exercises that makes the body warm, heavy and then relaxed. In this technique, the individual should sit comfortable and concentrate without any goal. Then make the visual imagination to feel the body relax, which serves ultimate peace and energy in the body. It works through a sequence of self-statements about stress, anxiety and tension of different parts of the body and affect the systems very positively. It promotes the feeling of calmness and relaxation and improves the performance. It is to promote natural relaxation with the therapy.

The Procedure:

1. Sit comfortably on the chair or lie down on the floor in a lonely or undisturbed place with eye closed.
2. Relax your body and keep your arms on the hand rest of the chair or palm on the thighs or on the floor as per the comfort.
3. Take deep breath to make your body calm and relaxed.

4. Focus attention on your arm/leg or any specific body part. Speak to yourself that my arm/leg is heavy. Repeat the statement 5-6 times.
5. Speak to yourself that my arm/leg is warm. Repeat the statement 5-6 times.
6. Speak to yourself that my arm/leg is completely calm and relaxed. Repeat the statement 5-6 times.
7. Repeat this procedure with other body parts.
8. Enjoy the feel of calmness and relaxation.
9. Once you complete the cycle with all body parts, breathe deeply and open your eyes.

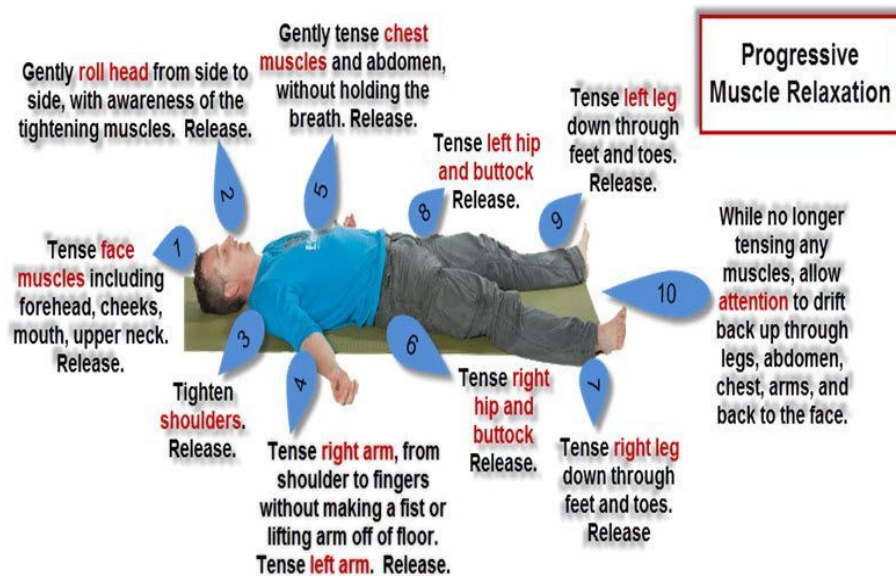
Effect of Autogenic Training:

- Reduces the symptoms of anxiety
- Make the body calm and relaxed
- Treat SAD (Social Anxiety Disorder) effectively
- Make relax in social situation
- Enhance the performance in public gathering
- Good self-help relaxation exercise
- It can treat depression, insomnia and frustration and other stress related problems.

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION:

In this technique the muscles are relaxed. First of all, tension is given to the different group of muscles and then they are relaxed. This relaxation technique can be started from head to toes. One by one the muscles of all the parts of the body are tensed and relaxed. This procedure is performed very slowly. The muscles may be tensed for five to ten seconds and then are relaxed for thirty seconds. Thereafter

give a break of 20-25 seconds before to start with other group of muscles.



This technique increases the focus and concentration and relaxes the body and mind. Tensed muscles give soothing effect when they are released or relaxed after the tension. The technique is very helpful to reduce the stress of the body as well as mind. One should feel the difference with the muscle before tense and after get relaxed. The different muscle groups should be taken in order from hand to face to chest to stomach to lower proximity. Once the complete cycle occurs, then make it reverse to get back to starting point. It's easier to make a count of number silently for the hold and relax time frame.

Procedure:

- 1) Sit in the comfortable position bare footed with comfortable apparels.
- 2) Take few deep breaths.

- 3) Then you can start with your right foot and slowly tense the muscles of your right foot for 5-10 seconds.
- 4) Now relax your foot and feel the relaxation and relief after the tension.
- 5) The same procedure is followed with the other groups of muscles of the body.
- 6) Tension and relaxation should be performed.
- 7) One should not try to tension the muscles which have essential type of assignments.
- 8) Inhale breath when the muscles are tensed and exhale when they are relaxed.

VISUALIZATION:

Visualization is the imagination of anything, place, situation or scene which is calm, soothing, peaceful and stress free and also helpful to let go all the tension, anxiety and worries. In fact, it is a virtual journey which is formed in mind to relief yourself. It may be garden, beach, school, college, religious place etc. In this therapy the individual think or forms images and tries to feel it with his/her senses or the related things. The practitioner tries to bring all positive thoughts into mind and focus on all the positive things and happenings. The stress-free feelings help to rejuvenate your energy and to sort out or face the problems with cool mind. In this technique, the activity sets are designed and developed to reduce stress or alleviate stress induced psychosomatic disorders through the process of visualization. The efforts are made to cool the mind, body, heart, emotions, nervous system, blood pressure, heart rate. It improves the functioning of digestive system and boost immune system.

**Procedure:**

- 1) It can be practicing your own or under the guidance of any expert.
- 2) The practitioner practices this therapy with light music or some soothing sound.
- 3) To practice one should find a suitable and peaceful place.
- 4) Sit in a comfortable pose.
- 5) Concentrate on breathing with focused mind.
- 6) Practitioner is asked to close the eyes before imagining and asked to involve all the five senses. For e.g., see, hear, smell, feel, taste and each and every sense is for visualization.
- 7) Gradually the practitioner gets involved so much in the imagination, that the stress and tensions are drifted away.

DEEP BREATHING:

It is very simple and popular technique of relaxation. Although it is very simple but it is powerful technique is very helpful in lowering down the stress. Long breathing enhances the intake of oxygen in the body and improves of all the organs of the body. An ample amount of oxygen supplied to the brain, which is improves the cognitive efficiency and relaxes the brain. And it is also improving and manages the health parameters such as blood pressure, heart rate, breathing pattern which are increased due to stressful situation. Deep breathing relaxes the mind, decreases stress, tension, anxiety and improves the working efficiency (functioning capability). There are different types deep breathing pattern, one can select according to their own comfort or convenience. .

**Procedure:**

- 1) The practitioner should sit or lie down in the comfortable position.
- 2) Keep one hand on the belly and second on the chest.

- 3) Take a deep breathe through your nose and let the air fill the belly and let the belly push the hand.
- 4) Repeat the exercise 5-10 times by taking proper intervals.
- 5) Practitioner is asked to hold the breathing for few seconds without causing any discomfort.
- 6) Deep breathing can be performed twice a day.
- 7) Apparels should be comfortable.
- 8) Now take out the breath from nose till the lungs are vacant completely.
- 9) The focus should be made on breath completely.
- 10) The intake breath brings in the calmness, peace and breath out takes the tension and stress out.

MEDITATION:

Meditation is a very significant technique to reduce stress and provide relaxing and peaceful mind. Meditation is a technique which is practiced since long time by our Munis and saints to get peace and achieve control on their senses. Now a day's, meditation is practiced to get peace and achieve control on their senses. Now a meditation is very simple and popular technique/ procedure to get relaxation and get rid of stress, as it is suitable to everyone. It is a sort of treatment or medicine which is applied to prevent or cure from stress, tension, anxiety etc.

Meditation is referred to the concentration or attention to the target or main aim or point and to avoid distraction or thought which are the causes of stress and tension. It plays an important role in promoting overall health and wellness including physical, mental, social and psychological wellness. It improves the use of oxygen and enhances its intake. It helps to maintain BP, and heart rate. It regularizes and improves the breathing pattern. It relaxes mentally and physically and develop resistance against diseases, if practice continuously. It

improves immunity, mental functions and brings clarity. Brings calmness and peace in body and mind. Meditation promotes balance in life. It helps to analyze and solve the problem/ situations calmly and peacefully. It improves cognitive ability, concentration, focus, attention etc. and boosts energy and motivation.

It helps to remove negativity of life and helps to look into the life and helps to look into the life from different angles. It gives a deep sense to look towards life. The individual can schedule in the daily routine to get quick relieve from the stress and build resistance against it. Meditation brings freshness, discipline, positiveness and positive attitude towards life and improves cognitive ability to solve the challenges of life. Meditation triggers the relaxation of the body against stress and prevents from the damages. it also develops good habits and prevents from the addiction of bad habits such as alcohol, smoking, drugs etc. It awakens the understanding towards values for e.g., brotherhood, respect, duties, responsibilities etc.



Procedure:

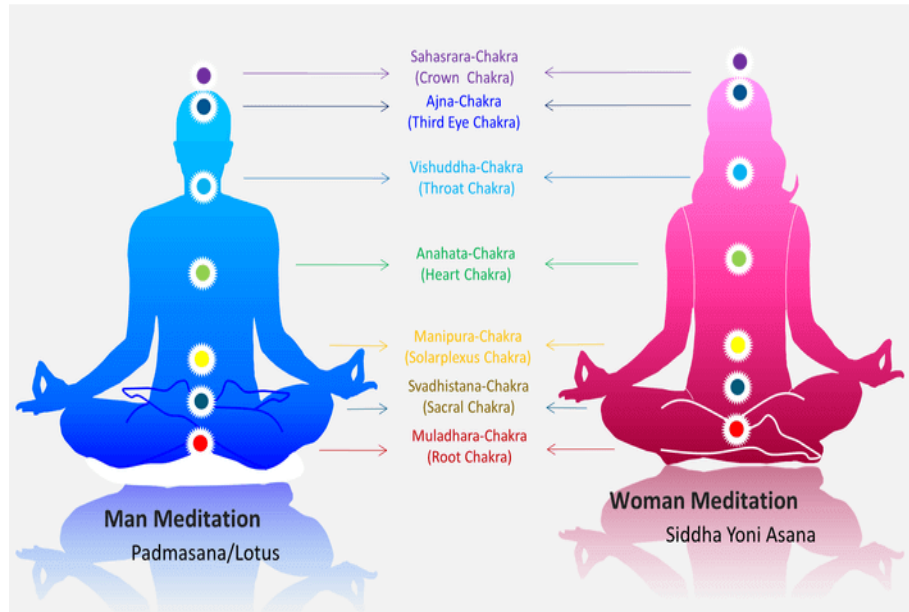
- 1) For meditation one can focus on any particular point for e.g., chanting OMM, Mantra or any other breathing techniques.
- 2) Meditation can be performed for 5 to 20 minutes or more as per the convenience of the practitioner.
- 3) In the beginning the practitioner should begin slowly and after few times span it can be extended to longer duration for better results.
- 4) Too much of meditation may damage physically as well as physiologically.
- 5) No equipment is required.
- 6) One should make it the regular habit to get its complete benefits.

Spiritual Meditation is an experience that takes you to the depths of who you are. You, as your real self, stripped of all the perceptions you had about yourself until that point in your life. In the process, you experience joy and peace. A feeling of love and light warms up your being. Meditation is a spiritual practice, regardless of your religious beliefs. The followers of each of the major religions have shaped and defined meditation throughout the centuries.

As the name suggests, spiritual meditation is that which connects you to your spirit. It takes you beyond any limited identities and labels, to the depths of who you truly are. You, as your real Self- joy, love, and peace. With the practice of spiritual meditation, you may experience a shower of grace and bliss, a deep sense of connectedness and oneness.

The need to practice spiritual meditation comes from an innate longing to see and think beyond the illusory world as it appears. Spiritual meditation can help you realize the eternal truth and meaning of life. It

anchors you in the present moment where you want to be and find solace.



Benefits of Spiritual Meditation:

Meditating should be part of your daily ritual just like brushing your teeth. You brush your teeth daily, or even multiple time per day, because just brushing your teeth once wouldn't really do anything for you. The same mindset should apply to meditation. You need to do it regularly in order to get the results.

Basic Meditation Techniques-

There are two main components of meditation that every beginner needs to focus on—breathing and relaxation. All you need to do is to focus on these basic elements of meditation, find a comfortable, quiet place to practice and dedicate just 10-15 minutes of your time. Then, this is how you go through your first meditation practice.

- Find your quiet meditation place.

You need to find a place where you won't be disturbed and where you can sit in silence without interruptions. As many busy people know, this is often more difficult than it seems. Once you find your place, you need to get in a comfortable position where you won't be fidgeting or moving a lot to get comfortable. You don't need to sit cross-legged on the floor, like many people think, but you can if you like. You need to clear your mind. How do you clear your mind?

You can sit on a chair, you can lay down, you just need to be in a stable position and put your palms in a place where they are facing the sky.

- Become present in the moment.

Meditation is all about being mindful of where you are in the world and becoming present in the moment and in what is going on around you. You need to become totally aware of where you are and of your surroundings to be truly present in the moment. This can take some practice your first few times, but here's how you can do it.

- Keep your eyes closed and take a deep breath in.

Pay attention to what you hear around you. What do you hear? What do you smell? What are you touching as you are in your meditative pose?

Think about how it feels to sit? Do you feel tension in your body? Where is this tension?

Doing simple things like this will really put you present in the moment so that you can take advantage of this time you have to yourself.

Breathing is the single most important part of meditation, and it is essential that you learn to focus on your breath if you want to make the most of your practice. Take in long, deep breaths. Follow your breath

with your mind. Imagine it flowing through your body, out through your lungs and through your nostrils. The more focused you can stay on your breath, the better. Imagine your breaths as being deep, cleansing and restorative breaths that help you breathe in the good around you and breathe out the negative in your life.

As you continue to get used to your breath, you can try concentrating on a mantra or positive thought, word or affirmation. You can also try humming “Om” as you breathe out to keep with your practice.

RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUAL PRACTICE FOR STRESS REDUCTION-

Spiritual and religious people find various ways to express these qualities by praying, attending religious services, interacting with people who share the same beliefs, meditating, viewing or making art or music, visiting nature, etc. Because many people view the term "spirituality" as the more all-encompassing term, we will use it in this discussion as well. Spirituality can decrease stress, by allowing a person to:

Create a sense of quiet, stillness, and peace. We spend so much time rushing from activity to activity and trying to get things done. Similarly, we spend a great deal of time either listening to (or vigorously trying to distract ourselves from) a myriad of thoughts that are rushing around in our minds. Practicing spirituality can give us a quiet respite from all of this rushing around. Time spent meditating, praying, or just appreciating what is around and within us in that given moment can allow space to detach from and find perspective on stressors, enhance our sense of awe at the amazing world that is around us, as well as give us time to gain some or all of the other positive benefits described next.

Give up control. Believing in something greater than ourselves allows us to realize that we aren't responsible for everything that happens in our lives. Bad things and good things will happen no matter what, through no fault (or through no specific effort) of our own. Spirituality can allow us to release (or at least decrease) the need to always blame ourselves for bad times and/or continuously scramble to achieve good outcomes.



Increase meaning. When those inevitable positive and negative events happen, spiritual practice can help us look for a way to think about those events in a meaningful way. Asking "What can I learn?" or "How can I grow stronger?" instead of asking "Why me?" when something bad happens can serve to decrease negative stress feelings fuel constructive behavior. Similarly, feeling grateful when good things happen can help to spur us to "spread the wealth" and practice altruistic acts toward others.

Enhance a sense of connectedness. Feeling a part of something greater than ourselves can make us feel less isolated and alone. In addition, many people who belong to religious and/or spiritual groups receive social support benefits (interpersonal interactions; group activities; mentoring; help with money, food, transportation, respite, etc. in times of need). Most stressors seem smaller and more easy to deal with if we know that we belong to and can connect with a group (or a higher power, or the universe) who can offer acceptance, solace, strength and possibly even solutions.

Maintain a sense of purpose. Most of us have spent some time wondering what life is "all about." People who start to think that meetings, unpleasant chores, and the "rat race" is all that there is to life frequently start to feel depressed and stressed. The enhanced sense of connectedness and increased sense of meaning derived from spiritual practices allow us to look beyond ourselves, which increases our sense of responsibility for our wider community and universe.

Gain perspective. Spiritual practice can help us to shrink obstacles that seem insurmountable into something approaching a manageable size. In addition, spirituality helps us to clarify our values, and focus on related goals that are important, rather than becoming consumed by material things or circumstances that are truly unimportant.

Spirituality has many benefits for stress relief and overall mental health. It can help you:

Feel a sense of purpose. Cultivating your spirituality may help uncover what's most meaningful in your life. By clarifying what's most important, you can focus less on the unimportant things and eliminate stress.

Connect to the world. The more you feel you have a purpose in the world, the less solitary you feel even when you're alone. This can lead to a valuable inner peace during difficult times.

Release control. When you feel part of a greater whole, you realize that you aren't responsible for everything that happens in life. You can share the burden of tough times as well as the joys of life's blessings with those around you.

Expand your support network. Whether you find spirituality in a church, mosque or synagogue, in your family or in nature walks with a friend, this sharing of spiritual expression can help build relationships.

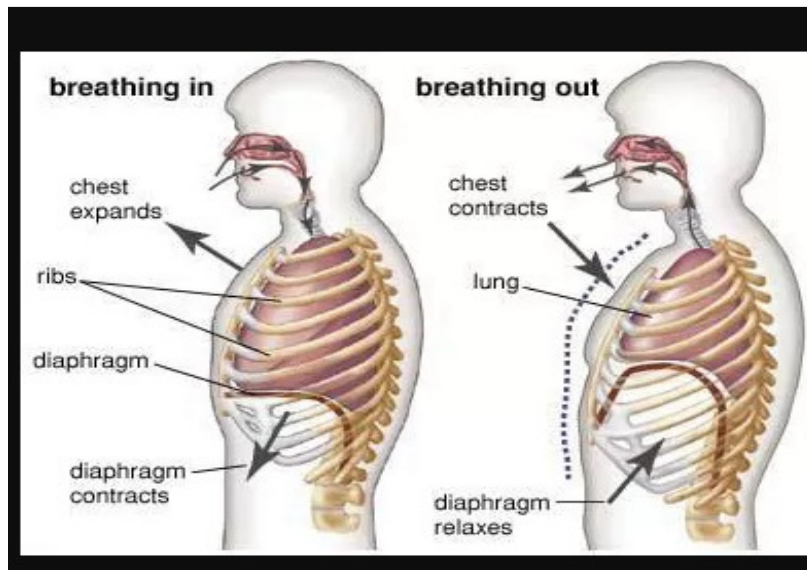
Lead a healthier life. People who consider themselves spiritual appear to be better able to cope with stress and heal from illness or addiction faster.

Combining stress management and spiritual principles can be a healthy outlet for self-growth and learning to handle anything that comes your way. Here are some ways to incorporate a spiritual stress management practice into your life: Yoga, meditation, prayer and even keeping a journal (have a journal that is focused on getting in touch with your spiritual side-and finding answers for everyday problems). Discovering your spirituality.

PRANAYAMA –

Pranayama is the yogic practice of focusing on breath. In Sanskrit, prana means "vital life force", and yama means to gain control. In yoga, breath is associated with the prana, thus, pranayama is a means to elevate the prana shakti, or life energies. Pranayama is described in Hindu texts like the Bhagavad Gita and the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. Later in Hatha yoga texts, it meant the complete suspension of breathing. The yoga scholar Andrea Jain states that pranayama was

"marginal to the most widely cited sources" before the 20th century, and that the breathing practices were "dramatically" unlike the modern ones; she writes that while pranayama in modern yoga as exercise consists of synchronising the breath with movements (between asanas), in texts like the Bhagavad Gita and the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, pranayama meant "complete cessation of breathing", for which she cites Bronkhorst 2007



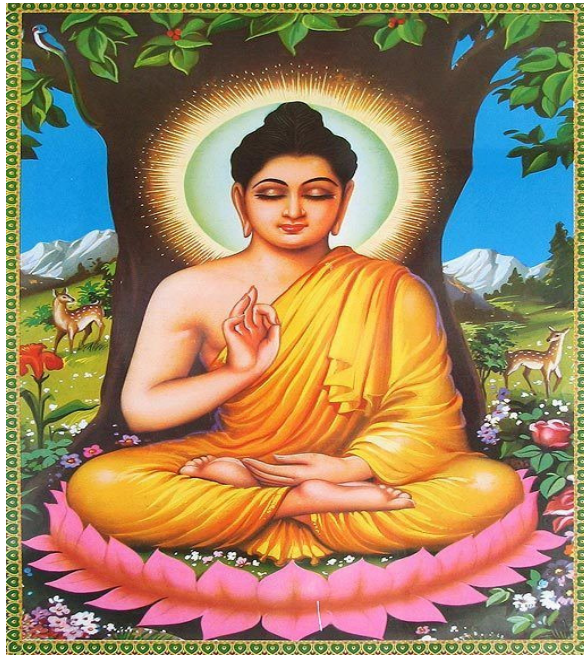
Pranayama, the practice of controlled breathing, can be found as a part of many types of yogas. This practice is believed to help encourage relaxation and improve breathing. Although limited in nature, research studies on a small group of subjects indicate pranayama to have a positive impact on lung function and lung parameter as an adjunctive treatment.

UNIT-III

MEDITATION

INTRODUCTION

Meditation can be defined as a set of techniques that are intended to encourage a heightened state of awareness and focused attention. Meditation is also a consciousness-changing technique that has been shown to have a wide number of benefits on psychological well-being. When we meditate, we inject far-reaching and long-lasting benefits into our lives: We lower our stress levels, we get to know our pain, we connect better, we improve our focus, and we're kinder to ourselves. Meditation is a simple practice available to all, which can



reduce stress, increase calmness and clarity and promote happiness. Today, meditating daily is not a luxury but a necessity. To be unconditionally happy and to have peace of mind, we need to tap into the power of meditation. The purpose of meditation is to make one calm, stress-free, free from pain, healthy and happy. Meditation helps in maintaining

good physical health, mental health & emotional health.

Meditation has been practiced for thousands of years. Meditation originally was meant to help deepen understanding of the sacred and mystical forces of life. These days, meditation is commonly used for relaxation and stress reduction. Meditation is considered a type of mind-body complementary medicine. Meditation can produce a deep state of relaxation and a tranquil mind. During meditation, you focus your attention and eliminate the stream of jumbled thoughts that may be crowding your mind and causing stress. This process may result in enhanced physical and emotional well-being. Meditation may offer a solution to the growing need to reduce stress in the midst of busy schedules and demanding lives. Meditation is a mental exercise that involves relaxation, focus, and awareness. Meditation is to the mind what physical exercise is to the body. The practice is usually done individually, in a still seated position, and with eyes closed. Meditation is a means of transforming the mind. Buddhist meditation practices are techniques that encourage and develop concentration, clarity, emotional positivity, and a calm seeing of the true nature of things. By engaging with a particular meditation practice you learn the patterns and habits of your mind, and the practice offers a means to cultivate new, more positive ways of being. With regular work and patience these nourishing, focused states of mind can deepen into profoundly peaceful and energised states of mind. Such experiences can have a transformative effect and can lead to a new understanding of life. Buddhist meditation teaches us that taking charge of our minds is the most crucial human undertaking. But it also teaches us that taking charge of the mind is not about controlling it! It's about giving us the means to connect with mind's innate qualities spaciousness, goodness, creativity so that mind's natural light can outshine the shadows of confusion and disturbing emotions. A free mind finds its own peace. Just like developing any other skill, meditation requires regularity of practice. There are common misconceptions that meditation is something difficult, which requires years of practice to achieve any

kind of result. This is simply untrue. People often report feeling the benefits of meditation immediately after their first session. You can begin today and experience it yourself with just a few steps. While some forms of meditation have roots in Hinduism and Buddhism, meditation is not an inherently spiritual or religious practice. Instead, people who meditate aim to tune into themselves to experience inner quiet and cultivate a state of peaceful contemplation.

Types of Meditation-

Mindfulness meditation

Mindfulness meditation originates from Buddhist teachings and is the most popular and researched form of meditation in the West.



In mindfulness meditation, you pay attention to your thoughts as they pass through your mind. You don't judge the thoughts or become involved with them. You simply observe and take note of any patterns. This practice combines concentration with awareness. You may find it helpful to focus on an object or your breath while you observe any bodily sensations, thoughts, or feelings.

Transcendental Meditation

Transcendental meditation is a simple technique in which a personally assigned mantra, such as a word, sound, or small phrase, is repeated in a specific way. It's practiced 20 minutes twice each day while sitting comfortably with the eyes closed. The idea is that this technique will allow you to settle inward to a profound state of relaxation and rest, with the goal of achieving inner peace without concentration or effort.

Spiritual meditation

Spiritual meditation may also include elements of silent, spoken, or chanted prayer. When practiced within a religious context, meditation supports a deeper connection with the Divine. In non-theistic traditions



such as Buddhism and Taoism, meditation is more focused on self-awareness and self-actualization. In that sense, non-theistic spiritual meditation supports practitioners in becoming the best human beings that they can be. Whether secular or non-secular, the insights that are brought to light through

spiritual meditation can help us develop qualities of benevolence and connection.

Breath awareness meditation

Breath awareness is a type of mindful meditation that encourages mindful breathing. Practitioners breathe slowly and deeply, counting their breaths or otherwise focusing on their breaths. The goal is to focus only on breathing and to ignore other thoughts that enter the mind. As a form of mindfulness meditation, breath awareness offers many of the same benefits as mindfulness.

Those include reduced anxiety, improved concentration, and greater emotional flexibility.

Walking meditation

Instead of using the breath as the object of awareness, walking meditation encourages you to focus on each footstep in order to be fully present. This involves becoming aware of the movement of each foot; noticing the action of lifting, lowering, and having each foot touch the ground, one step after another. Like body scan meditation, walking meditation allows you to cultivate a sense of mind-body awareness by focusing on your body's physical sensations as it moves.



Mantra meditation

In mantra meditation you focus your attention on a mantra: a word, phrase, or syllable. This is a good approach for those days when the thoughts and feelings seem completely overwhelming, as it gives your brain something else to focus on. It's also thought to increase the vibrations associated with the mantra, helping you enter a more positive and deep state of being.

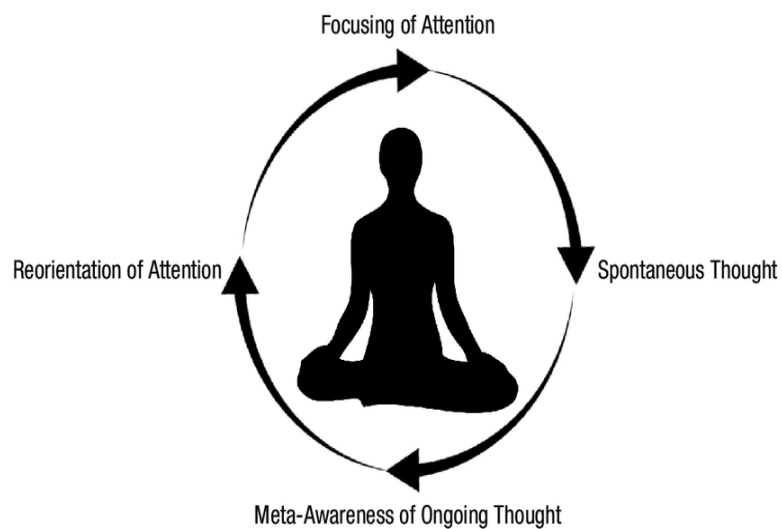
**Focused meditation**

Focused meditation involves concentration using any of the five senses. For example, you can focus on something internal, like your breath, or you can bring in external influences to help focus your attention. This practice may be simple in theory, but it can be difficult for beginners to hold their focus for longer than a few minutes at first.



Focused Attention Meditation

Cycle of Focused Attention Meditation



Zen meditation

This ancient Buddhist tradition involves sitting upright and following the breath, particularly the way it moves in and out of the belly, and letting the mind “just be.” Its aim is to foster a sense of presence and alertness.



Zen meditation

Guided Meditation

Guided meditation, which is sometimes also called guided imagery or visualization, is a method of meditation in which you form mental pictures or situations that you find relaxing. This process is typically led by a guide or teacher, hence “guided.” It’s often suggested to use as many senses as possible, such as smell, sounds, and textures, to evoke calmness in your relaxing space.



Visualization Meditation

In this meditation technique, an image that creates a particular feeling



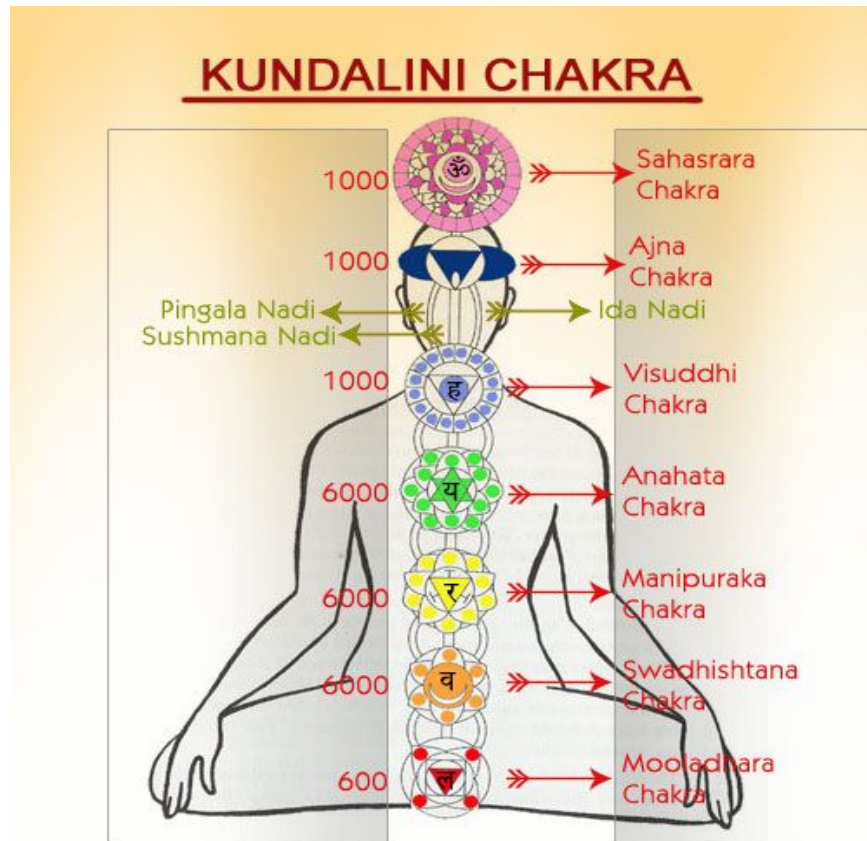
or quality is brought to mind. In a simple way, we can close our eyes and imagine a beautiful mountain lake, an open sky, a familiar landscape, or any other visualization that speaks to us. In one well-known mindfulness exercise, we imagine our thoughts and emotions as being leaves on a stream that the current gently

sweeps downstream. This is said to give mediators distance from unwelcome mental activity and bring a sense of peace.

Kundalini yoga

The term “Kundalini” comes from the Sanskrit word “kundal,” which means “circular.” It also refers to a coiled snake. And according to practitioners, Kundalini energy is like that coiled snake: It sits at the base of your spine, sleeping and unaroused.

Kundalini yoga is a physically active form of meditation that blends movements with deep breathing and mantras. People usually learn from a teacher or do a class. However, someone can learn the poses and mantras at home. Similarly to other forms of yoga, kundalini yoga can improve physical strength and reduce pain. It may also improve mental health by reducing anxiety and depression.



Loving kindness meditation

Loving kindness is a form of meditation geared towards cultivating compassion for yourself and others. During loving kindness meditation, you can direct phrases of goodwill and a positive intention to yourself, loved ones, difficult people in your life, and even complete strangers.

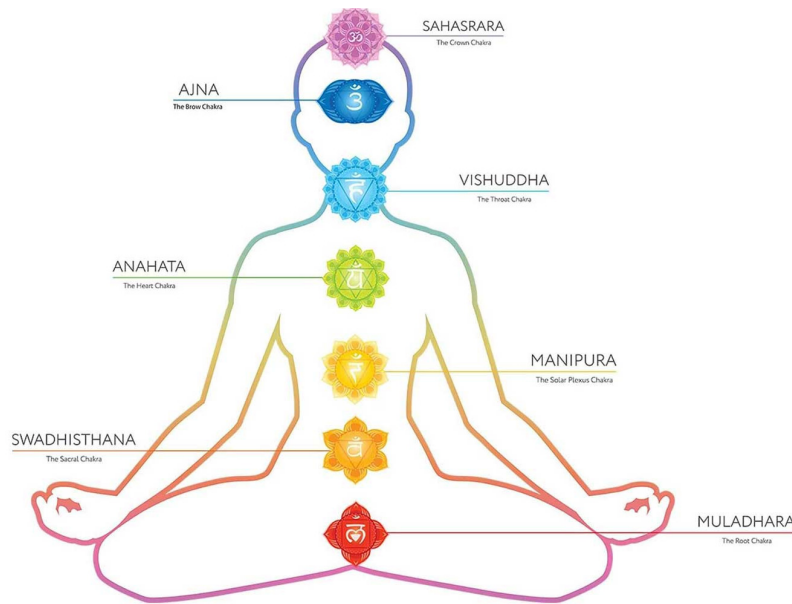
Present-moment meditation

Present moment (or mindfulness) meditation trains us to move from thinking to sensing. Rather than dwelling on the past or dreading the future, this meditation encourages you to become aware of your

immediate surroundings or experience, crucially without any judgment. It urges us not to get attached to our thoughts but rather just allow them to be.

Chakra meditation

Chakra meditation is aimed at opening and aligning the body's seven chakras, or energy centres.



Practitioners believe that blocked and unbalanced chakras are associated with physical and mental disorders.

How to Practice

Meditation is simpler (and harder) than most people think. Read these steps, make sure you're somewhere where you can relax into this process, set a timer, and give it a shot:

1) Take a seat

Find place to sit that feels calm and quiet to you.

2) Set a time limit

If you're just beginning, it can help to choose a short time, such as five or 10 minutes.

3) Notice your body

You can sit in a chair with your feet on the floor, you can sit loosely cross-legged, you can kneel—all are fine. Just make sure you are stable and in a position you can stay in for a while.

4) Feel your breath

Follow the sensation of your breath as it goes in and as it goes out.

5) Notice when your mind has wandered

Inevitably, your attention will leave the breath and wander to other places. When you get around to noticing that your mind has wandered—in a few seconds, a minute, five minutes—simply return your attention to the breath.

6) Be kind to your wandering mind

Don't judge yourself or obsess over the content of the thoughts you find yourself lost in. Just come back.

7) Close with kindness

When you're ready, gently lift your gaze (if your eyes are closed, open them). Take a moment and notice any sounds in the environment. Notice how your body feels right now. Notice your thoughts and emotions.

Shifting the balance to give your intentional brain more power takes some work, though. Here are some ways to get started.

- Put meditation reminders around you. If you intend to do some yoga or to meditate, put your yoga mat or your meditation cushion in the middle of your floor so you can't miss it as you walk by.
- Refresh your reminders regularly. Say you decide to use sticky notes to remind yourself of a new intention. That might work for about a week, but then your autopilot brain and old habits take over again. Try writing new notes to yourself; add variety or make them funny. That way they'll stick with you longer.
- Create new patterns. You could try a series of "If this, then that" messages to create easy reminders to shift into the intentional brain. For instance, you might come up with, "If office door, then deep breath," as a way to shift into mindfulness as you are about to start your workday. Or, "If phone rings, take a breath before answering." Each intentional action to shift into mindfulness will strengthen your intentional brain.

Tips for Meditating

Start early

Try to meditate first thing in the morning. That way you can be sure that it actually gets done and not bumped off the to-do list as the day gets more hectic. Plus, morning meditation can be a nice way to start the day you're refreshed, awake, and on track for a mindful day.

Go into your meditation practice without expectations

Meditation is no instant quick-fix to solving all of life's problems. As with any other form of exercise, meditation takes effort, and it takes time to reap the benefits.

Try not to go into each meditation with expectations of how you will feel after, or how much better of a person you will become. Instead, approach each time to meditate as an opportunity to get to know your own mind better.

Choose a quiet place

Just like a convenient hour, choose a quiet and peaceful surrounding where you are not likely to be disturbed. Such a place can make meditation for a beginner more enjoyable and relaxing.

Start with some breath work

Controlled breath work is a secret weapon for stilling the mind. In fact, numerous meditation practices are based solely around breathing, with the idea that mental and emotional benefits will follow. Just slowing down our breath has proven effects Trusted Source, like calming the nervous system and reducing feelings of anxiety. Meanwhile, paying attention to your breath provides a constant focal point during meditation, a welcome relief from meddlesome thoughts.

Get comfortable with discomfort

People who are new to meditation and even people who have been doing it for years often experience negative emotions like anxiety, restlessness, and irritation while practicing. Rather than trying to resist these emotions, give them your full attention and allow them to come and go. Over time the mind learns to recognize these emotions but gets used to not getting caught up in negative patterns of thought a skill that can be enormously beneficial not only during meditation but also in daily life.

Don't sit cross-legged (if you don't think it's comfortable)

Forget the stereotypical images of people sitting cross-legged to meditate; for most people, that position can be uncomfortable and

distracting. What's most important is to find the meditation position that's most comfortable for you (and if that just so happens to be sitting cross-legged, then of course that's perfectly fine).

Take a few deep breaths

This is another important tip for easy meditation. Deep breaths and even Nadi Shodhan pranayama before the meditation is always a good idea. It helps to steady the rhythm of the breath and leads the mind into a peaceful meditative state.

Benefits of Meditation-**Meditation provides more energy & more efficiency**

Meditation clears one's mind and increases one's energy levels. Meditation can stimulate the vagus nerve, which promotes positive emotions and relaxation. Meditation reduces exhaustion among entrepreneurs as it reduces workplace stressors, bringing you calmer and energy. Efficiency naturally increases as you feel more energized and have more clarity of mind.

Improve self-esteem and self-awareness

Mindfulness meditation encourages you to slow down, allows for deeper self-reflection, and can help you discover positive attributes about yourself. Mindfulness helps increase self-awareness by increasing the ability to examine one's thoughts and feelings without judgment.

Meditation enhances empathy

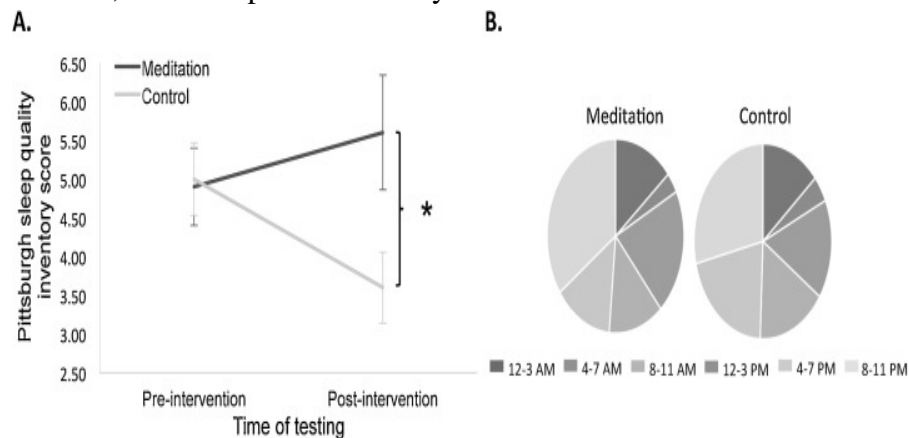
Loving-kindness or compassion meditation fires neural connections to brain sites that regulate positive emotions like empathy and kindness. The deep state of flow that meditation induces builds social connectedness and makes us more affectionate and amicable as a person.

Meditation improves cognition

An excellent way for professionals to increase the likelihood of success is to keep meditation practice as a part of their daily routine. Both transcendent and mindful meditation practices improve the brain's problem-solving and decision-making strategies, which can bring a desirable shift in our professional life.

Improves focus, attention, and memory

Meditation improves concentration and helps one to be in the present moment. If you observe, the mind vacillates between the past and the future. We are either angry about the past or anxious about the future. Meditation helps bring the mind to the present. As that happens, focus and attention span improves. Meditation also improves gray matter in the brain, which improves memory.



Meditation reduces stress

Feeling the weight of the world on your shoulders? Meditation is incredibly effective at reducing stress and anxiety. One study found that mindfulness and Zen type meditations significantly reduce stress when practiced over a period of three months. Meditation literally reduces the density of brain tissue associated with anxiety and worrying. If you want your stress levels to plummet, meditation may be the answer.

May reduce age-related memory loss

Improvements in attention and clarity of thinking may help keep your mind young. Kirtan Kriya is a method of meditation that combines a mantra or chant with repetitive motion of the fingers to focus your thoughts. Studies in people with age-related memory loss have shown it improves performance on neuropsychological tests.

More immunity

Impact of meditation on lowering the risk of cancer suggested that mindful relaxation and meditation practices boost the lymphocyte count in the body, and help in developing a natural shield for fighting toxic cells that create the fatal disease.

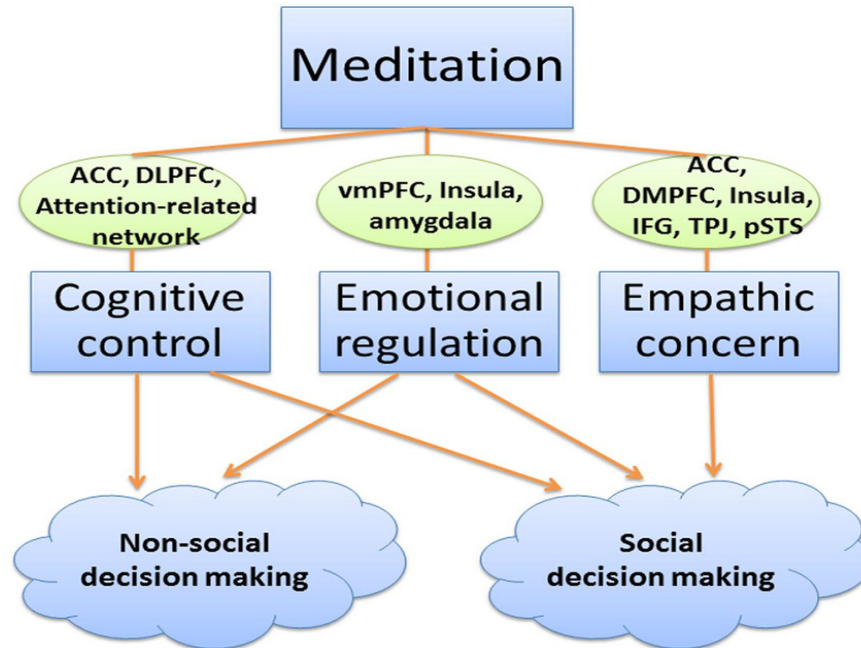
Meditation improve your ability to make decisions

There's a reason high powered executives turn to meditation to help them do their jobs better. Studies have found that both mindfulness meditation and Transcendental Meditation help you make better decisions by improving the functioning of your brain's decision-making centres. If you want to start cultivating your inner executive, give meditation a try.

Elements of meditation

- M – Mindfulness: awakening to the possibility of each moment
- E – Enlightenment: seeking knowledge, teaching knowledge
- D – Daily intention: one thought, one breath, one action at a time
- I – Inner balance: centring the deepest part of your spirit
- T – Tranquillity: looking within to find the calm you need
- A – Acceptance: accepting all thoughts without judgment
- T – Trueness: authenticity in all aspects of our lives

- I – Inner peace: peace in oneself, peace in the world
- O – Oneness: realizing you are greater than yourself
- N – Namaste: recognizing the divine spark within every being



- ❖ Earth — connecting to this element is meant to provide stability and a sense of grounding during your elemental journey meditation.
- ❖ Water — the water element is used to induce a sense of flexibility and deep relaxation throughout your meditation.
- ❖ Fire — meant to bring intensity to your practice, the fire element is bold and transformative.
- ❖ Air — the air element is designed to bring a focus to the breathing aspect of your elemental meditation. Taking time to feel the moveable and light nature of the air is a very relaxing experience.
- ❖ Space or akasha, is the subtlest of the elements. It is expansive, empty, and has no resistance. It is the source of all matter and

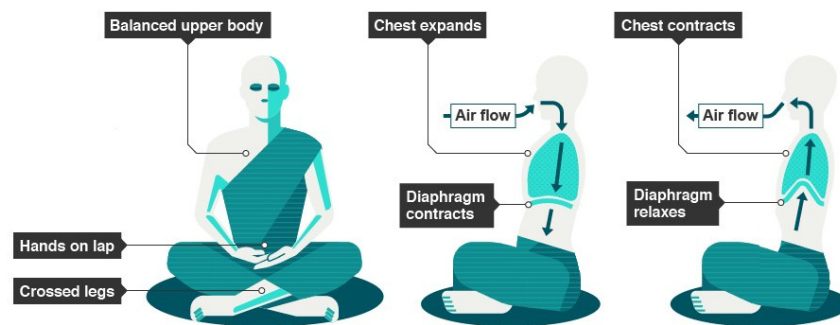
houses the space within which it exists. It allows for growth and change to take place. It is the space between your cells, your breath, and your thoughts.

Focused attention

Focusing your attention is generally one of the most important elements of meditation. Focusing your attention is what helps free your mind from the many distractions that cause stress and worry. You can focus your attention on such things as a specific object, an image, a mantra, or even your breathing.

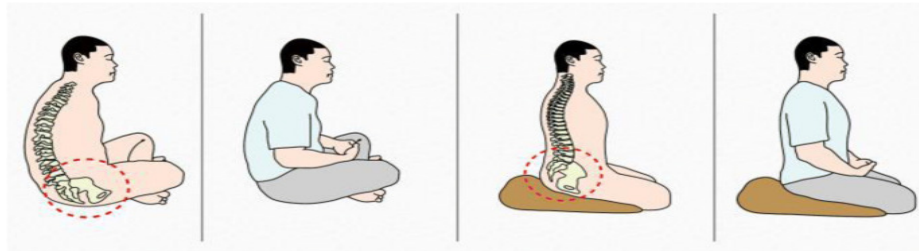
Relaxed breathing

This technique involves deep, even-paced breathing using the diaphragm muscle to expand your lungs. The purpose is to slow your breathing, take in more oxygen, and reduce the use of shoulder, neck and upper chest muscles while breathing so that you breathe more efficiently.



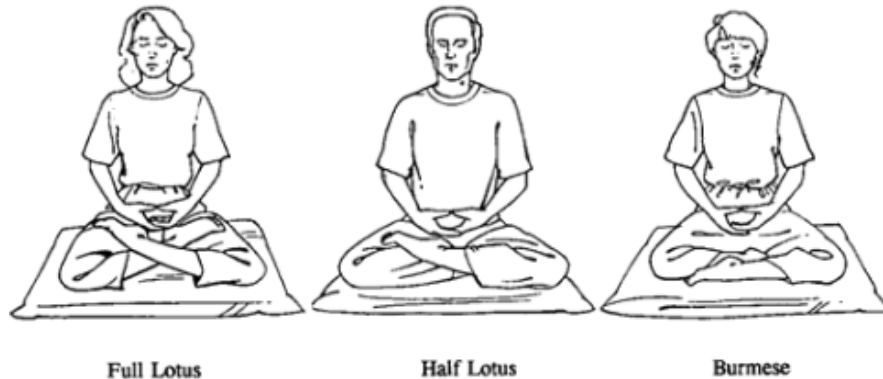
Postures of Meditation

As with most things in life, there's no one-size-fits-all when it comes to the best meditation position. From a purist's perspective, a mindfulness practice can be done in one of four postures: sitting, standing, lying down, and walking.



Full Lotus

Full Lotus has both feet on the knees. To do this, sit comfortably on the ground or on a cushion. Open your hips. Cross your legs. Position your left foot on top of your right ankle, and your right foot on top of your left ankle. Lotus Pose is perhaps the most recognized yoga pose today, even by people who don't practice yoga. It is considered by many to be the "classic" yoga pose. Lotus is often used for meditation, and many yoga classes begin or end with this pose. However, Lotus Pose is an advanced pose that is not suitable for those who are new to yoga.



Half Lotus

Half Lotus is a yoga pose you can use for meditation while working up to Lotus. It is a good option for sitting cross-legged since Lotus requires really open hips in order to reduce strain on your knees. Getting there can be a long process, but there are several places to stop

along the way as your body opens and responds to a consistent practice. Half Lotus Pose is a seated posture that opens the hips and stretches the knees and ankles. It is a variation of the traditional seated meditation posture.

Half Lotus stretches the muscles around the pelvis, legs, and ankles. It helps you maintain flexibility in your gluteal muscles and the deep rotator muscles of your hips. It can help stretch the piriformis, which is useful if you have symptoms of sciatica.

Quarter Lotus

Quarter lotus pose is a variation of lotus pose where the yogi places the feet on the calves of the opposite leg instead of on the thigh. To enter quarter lotus pose, the yogi begins seated and crosses the legs by bending the knees and placing the feet on the calves of the opposite leg. Lotus pose and its variations are often used for meditation, contemplation and mantra chanting.

The lotus variations involve sitting on a cushion and stacking one leg on top of the other. In quarter-lotus one foot is placed on the opposite leg's calf, while in half-lotus, the foot is placed on the opposite leg's thigh. The lotus variations are almost as stable as lotus itself.

Burmese

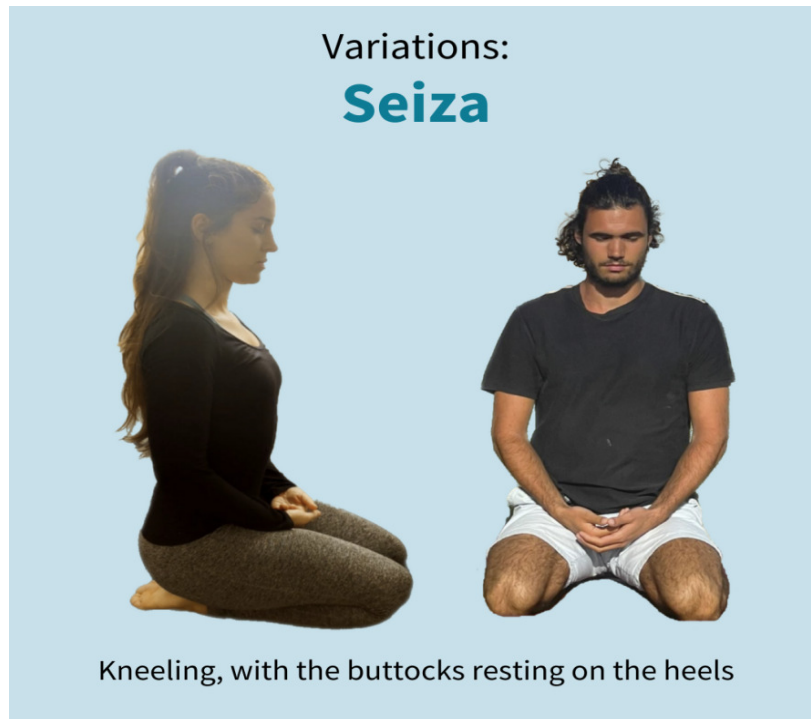
The Burmese position is similar to the cross-legged position, except instead of crossing the ankles, they're placed one in front of the other. The Burmese position is more stable than the cross-legged position, but still less stable than the lotus positions. As your hip flexibility increases, give the lotus positions a try.

The legs are bent and the tops/sides of both feet rest on the floor. The knees should ideally also rest on the floor. Depending on your

flexibility, it may take a bit of practice for the muscles to stretch and the knees to begin to drop. A cushion under the knee(s) can help.

Seiza

Seiza is one of the most commonly used sitting postures in various enrichment lessons of Japanese origin. It is reported that Seiza with large knee flexion produces harmful effects on the cartilage of knee joints and hemodynamics of the lower legs. Some meditators prefer kneeling instead of sitting. This posture, the seiza pose, originated with Buddhist practitioners in Japan. You place a towel, cushion or soft material between your thighs and calves. Next, assume a kneeling position. Check in with your physical posture and make sure that your back is straight and your muscles are relaxed as you begin meditating.



You can kneel on a mat or cushion to support your legs, and many people like to kneel with a meditation bench or cushion under the

buttocks to help support and align the back. Comfort is key, so make sure you're comfortable before settling into a meditation posture. Another important representation that Seiza upholds in Japanese culture is that it serves as a symbol of apology. Someone who wishes to ask for an apology may place his or her hands in front, with the head lowered down. This form of apology is referred to as "dogeza". This serves as a position of submission, having one accept his or her mistakes. This form of submission is also applied while in the presence of people as important as the Shogun, where one submits himself or herself before a great leader.

Chair

Using a chair (or any kind of meditation furniture) is completely okay. This is especially recommended if you're just starting out or are physically uncomfortable when seated on a mat. Some meditators prefer sitting on a chair because it's easier and doesn't strain the knees.



When physically possible, it's best not to lean against the back of the chair since you're more likely to remain alert and aware when your

body is erect and your back is straight. Plant your feet on the ground a foot or so apart. Your knees should not be higher than your hips.

Different reasons of meditate-

Relieve headaches

Meditation may be an excellent line of defence against those horrible head-pounding episodes. Recent research finds that the practice leads to major relief of tension headaches (though it's worth noting that the treatment program in this study involved both meditation and medication, like muscle relaxants).

Makes You Grounded and Calmer

During meditation, you stop becoming attached to the physical world and you start becoming a third party observer to your reality. You become an observer to the kind of thoughts and feelings that run through you. You become an observer to how people act around you. You become an observer to the things in your environment. You stop becoming ruled by your ego and you become more aligned with your higher self.

Meditation sharpens your memory

Apart from enhancing your happiness and improving your overall well-being, meditation also helps your memory stay sharp and your concentration remain steady. With mindfulness meditation, you train in remaining aware of the present moment in a non-judgmental manner. Consequently, distractions are less and less likely to sweep you away.

Be more youthful

The fountain of youth is as real as calorie-free cookies (insert sad-faced emoji here), but meditating may actually help make you younger. Because, science. Middle-aged participants who practiced meditation had younger biological ages than those who didn't, according to one

study Trusted Source. Plus, another study suggests that meditation may diminish age-related brain deterioration.

Meditate in silence

Silent meditation is any meditative practice in which the meditator observes perfect silence from start to finish. This could be anything from a period of 10 minutes, up to a period of 70 days .



While meditation retreats are wonderful tools and a lot of fun if you're really connected to this ancient practice, they are not absolutely necessary for attaining mindfulness. These tools lie within, and they are the right of every living, breathing individual to exercise as daily practice. The 10 day silent meditation retreats known as Vipassana originated in India, thanks to Buddha's discovery of the practice.

Slowly, the practice spread across different lands, with Vipassana centers being set up all over the world, simply so that more people could gain access to this very transformative opportunity.

Meditation according to Vedanta-

Vedanta Meditation is a practice with Hindu and Vedic origins. The aim is to transcend identification with the body and mind, revealing our true nature. It is typically practiced through self-inquiry and contemplation. Vedanta has a theistic side, recognizing a cosmic creator (Ishvara) who rules over the universe through the law of karma. God is the supreme teacher, the highest guru from whom all true teachings arise by the power of the divine word. Vedantic theism takes many forms such as the worship of Shiva, Vishnu, and the Goddess. In fact, it can accommodate almost any form of theism that accepts karma and rebirth.

Meditation is of two types: subjective and objective. Objective meditation is concentration of the mind on an object. The object may be the form of a deity, light, sky, etc. or some qualities like love, compassion, strength or one's own self objectified. Consciousness is focussed on the object by an effort of will. Objective meditation is called upasana.

Subjective meditation is called nididhyasana or atma-vicara. Here there is no focussing of consciousness or effort of will. It is rather an attempt to seek the source of consciousness, to trace one's "I" back to its roots. It is a process in which the ego, instead of rushing towards objects as it constantly does, withdraws into its own original source—the Atman.

The majority of spiritual aspirants find nididhyasana, subjective meditation, difficult to practice. They succeed in tracing their "I" back

only up to a certain point. To penetrate further backward is possible only for a mind which is properly sharpened through training and strengthened by the observance of continence. Upasana or objective meditation gives the mind the necessary training. After practicing upasana for some time it becomes easier to practice nididhyasana. In fact, Madhusudana Sarasvati in his Advaita Siddhi classifies aspirants for jnana into two groups: kritopasti (those who have attained proficiency in upasana) and akritopasti (those who go directly to inquiry without practicing upasana).

UNIT-IV

COSMIC ENERGY & HAPPINESS

Cosmic energy is one of the English translations of the Hindu term shakti. It refers to external spiritual energy and can also refer to prana, or the life energy that is the source of kundalini. Cosmic energy is thought to be a vital source that animates all forms of life and maintains the balance of the entire cosmos.



Cosmic energy is also known as the energy of Supreme Consciousness and Intelligence. It is present everywhere at all times. People need this energy in order to maintain balance in their lives, and they can purposely receive it by practicing spirituality. It can also be received

through breathing techniques, meditation, yoga, tai chi, or other similar exercises. The practice of yoga can be very helpful in allowing an individual to become more aware of cosmic energy by becoming more self-aware. Hindus believed that cosmic energy lies dormant in people's perineum, near the muladhara (root) chakra. This energy can be awakened through yoga, meditation, pranayama or Tantra. The purpose of such a practice is to bring the energy from the root chakra to the top of the head and become fully self-aware. This is the basis of Kundalini yoga.

Cosmic energy is the life force that is existent everywhere. It is present in the cosmos, between the galaxies, the molecules and in the space. It is essential to maintain the order in life and expand our consciousness. Cosmic energy is received by being at peace with one's own self and living in the present moment. Blissfulness is the basic characteristic of cosmic energy. It is a state of mind that combines peace, love and joy.

Cosmic Spirituality

Authentic spirituality is never fragmented. An integrated spiritual experience is not merely anthropocentric. A holistic spirituality is cosmic. Creation has emanated from God's hand. Everything in the universe is good, provided our vision is pure. Cosmic consciousness, then, isn't just real—it's totally necessary. It rescues physics and science in general from a dead end—the total inability to create mind out of matter—and gives it a fresh avenue of investigation. The Higgs boson has gotten us a bit closer to a unified field theory—only a bit—but we are still far away from a full theory of quantum gravity. In many versions of superstring theories, the so-called M-theories, it is deduced that a vast number of parallel universes exist, all forming what is called the multiverse. But the multiverse cannot be an explanation of why this particular universe of ours is what it is. Having a vast number of

universes emerging from empty space still does not explain why consciousness is what it is in our universe.



Such a conception is made less bizarre once you realize that consciousness operates the same way. Babies are born with the potential to walk, speak, read, and do mathematics. It's possible to locate which areas of the brain will eventually produce these abilities, but until then, they exist as pure potentials. If you are wedded to materialism, there must be a molecule (DNA) that functions as the source of speaking, walking, reading, and doing mathematics, but such an assumption falls apart very quickly, since:

- 1) It's impossible to credit that DNA knows math, which would in essence give it a mind.

2) Can we really believe that Shakespeare, and all other producers of words, get their inspiration from amino acids, enzymes, and proteins, which is what DNA actually produces?

It is more elegant and far easier to accept as a working hypothesis that sentience exists as a potential at the source of creation, and the strongest evidence has already been put on the table: Everything to be observed in the universe implies consciousness. Some theorists try to rescue materialism by saying that information is encoded into all matter, but “information” is a mental concept, and without the concept, there’s no information in anything, since information by definition must ultimately contain meaning (even if it is a sequence of 0’s and 1’s as in computer language), and only minds grasp meaning. Does a tree falling in the forest make no sound if no one is around to hear it? Obviously not. The crash vibrates air molecules, but sound needs hearing in order for these vibrations to be transformed into perception.

As per Hindu philosophy, this energy is known as Kashmir Shaivism or Spiritual energy or Prana. The cosmic energy is thought to be the source of kundalini. Certain New Age authors refer to this energy as quantum zero vacuum point energy and as orgone energy.

Characteristics of Cosmic Energy-

Cosmic rays (also called cosmic radiation) mainly comprise high energy nucleons (protons, neutrons and atomic nuclei). About 90% are hydrogen nuclei (a single proton with an atomic number of 1). They have been stripped of their electrons and so are ionised. The all-pervasive cosmic energy is the source of everything in the Universe.

Cosmic energy is super powerful and can manifest anything and everything. It is super intelligent with the power of infinite super computers. It is formless and can take any form. It is permanent and indestructible. It is pure unconditional love. It is pure vitality and

health. It is pure joy and fun. It is pure bliss. It is abundance. It is pure consciousness and is aware of everything that is happening within the Universe. It is infinite and ever expanding.

It is not possible to define this energy. Above are only a few pointers to make some sense of the nature of this energy. It is indescribable and can only be experienced.

Some call this energy Divinity or Divine Energy. Some others call it God. Some call it a Super Power. Some refer it to as Super Intelligence.

All of us are a part of this Divine Energy and are made up of it.

Humans are to Cosmic Energy what cells are to a human body. Each cell is an independent entity. However, it actively engages with other cells of the body to make up the entire body. The cell may not be aware that it is part of a bigger system i.e a physical body. Likewise, we may not be aware that we are part of this Supreme Energy.

Cosmic Energy is a metaphysical life-driving force that has been named as 'shakti' or 'prana' in ancient Indian texts like Vedas. This free-flowing energy is said to be present everywhere from the celestial bodies to every living being's existence. Our body, spirit, and mind find their way to survive and function due to this ever-present form of energy. This energy has immense blissfulness and it is a source of liveliness. That is why cosmic energy meditation is being practiced from the ancient days.

- **Concentrative Meditation or doing meditative yoga poses:** Choose a calm place away from the noise and busy environment. Sit in Lotus yoga pose and relax. Try to make your mind thought free as long as possible. Increase the meditation time as per your convenience.

- **Pranayama:** Practise various pranayama techniques as per your skill level at a fixed time every day. Be regular for more benefits.
- **6:** This is a serious lifestyle change that can transform your life, goals and thinking process. From my personal experience, I can say, this mindset reduces stress magically.

5 Physical Benefits of Cosmic Energy Meditation-

Having read the exposé on emotional biochemistry, you're ready to better understand the actual benefits your body will experience after undergoing one of my cosmic healing meditation sessions:

1. lowered blood pressure
2. Increased oxygen supply to muscles
3. Increased antioxidant production – which further destroys free radicals
4. Diminished depressive moods
5. Memory strengthening.

All these benefits are possible as cosmic energy meditation helps your spirit be aligned with the Cosmos, the Galaxy and the Universe. You have to constantly remind yourself that we're all replicas of the Universe – the same fractal structures building towards harmony.

Now – more than ever – you need to rediscover your original beautiful wholeness and do away with the background noise distracting you from perceiving other layers of reality.

Because, in the end, this expanded perception will be the only true way to mend your soul and shield it from adverse interferences.

HAPPINESS IN SPIRITUALITY-

Happiness is a mental or emotional state of wellbeing defined by positive or pleasant emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy. According to Buddha – “just as a candle cannot burn without fire, men cannot live without a spiritual life.”

Despite there being countless religions and spiritual beliefs alive and vibrant in today's world, science shows that spirituality is a universal tendency, and has a powerfully positive effect on happiness, health, and relationships. It encourages people to have better relationships with themselves, others, and the unknown. Spirituality can help you deal with stress by giving you a sense of peace, purpose, and forgiveness. It often becomes more important in times of emotional stress or illness.

Spirituality and happiness both are very important concept of a human life. In spirituality person relate himself or herself to a more broader than himself/ herself and also make able to find a meaning or purpose of life this process also make him/her happy and satisfied in life. The present study is aimed to find the correlation between these two important concepts of human life spirituality and happiness. The SHS questionnaire of Lubomirsky and Leeper to measure happiness and DSES scale developed by Underwood are used in this study. Cluster sample of 100 (25 to 30 years) were select ed from Udaipur city. Pearson Product Moment Correlation method was used to compute correlation coefficient between the scores of SHS and DSES. Results of this study showed that there is a positive high correlation between spirituality and happiness.

According to Buddha – “just as a candle cannot burn without fire, men cannot live without a spiritual life.” through this quote it is clear that spirituality is a important concept of human life. Martin Seligman asserts that happiness is not solely derived from external, momentary

pleasures and provides the acronym PERMA, humans seem happiest when they have

P – Positive Emotion

E – Engagement

R – Positive Relationships

M – Meaning

A – Accomplishments/Achievements

Positive emotion is much more than mere ‘happiness.’

Positive emotions include hope, interest, joy, love, compassion, pride, amusement, and gratitude.

Positive emotions are a prime indicator of flourishing, and they can be cultivated or learned to improve wellbeing (Fredrickson, 2001).

When individuals can explore, savor, and integrate positive emotions into daily life (and visualizations of future life), it improves habitual thinking and acting. Positive emotions can undo the harmful effects of negative emotions and promote resilience (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004). Increasing positive emotions helps individuals build physical, intellectual, psychological, and social resources that lead to this resilience and overall wellbeing.

E – Engagement

According to Seligman (2012), engagement is “being one with the music.” It is in line with Csikszentmihalyi’s (1989) concept of “flow.” Flow includes the loss of self-consciousness and complete absorption in an activity. In other words, it is living in the present moment and focusing entirely on the task at hand.

Flow, or this concept of engagement, occurs when the perfect combination of challenge and skill/strength is found (Csikszentmihalyi & LeFevre, 1989). People are more likely to experience flow when they use their top character strengths. Research on engagement has found that individuals who try to use their strengths in new ways each day for a week were happier and less depressed after six months (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). The concept of engagement is something much more powerful than simply “being happy,” but happiness is one of the many byproducts of engagement.

R – Positive Relationships

Relationships in the PERMA model refer to feeling supported, loved, and valued by others. Relationships are included in the model based on the idea that humans are inherently social creatures (Seligman, 2012). There is evidence of this everywhere, but social connections become particularly important as we age. The social environment has been found to play a critical role in preventing cognitive decline, and strong social networks contribute to better physical health among older adults (Siedlecki et al., 2014).

Many people have a goal of improving relationships with those they are closest to. Research has demonstrated that sharing good news or celebrating success fosters strong bonds and better relationships (Siedlecki et al., 2014). Additionally, responding enthusiastically to others, particularly in close or intimate relationships, increases intimacy, wellbeing, and satisfaction.

M – Meaning

Another intrinsic human quality is the search for meaning and the need to have a sense of value and worth. Seligman (2012) discussed meaning as belonging and/or serving something greater than ourselves. Having a

purpose in life helps individuals focus on what is really important in the face of significant challenge or adversity. Having meaning or purpose in life is different for everyone. Meaning may be pursued through a profession, a social or political cause, a creative endeavor, or a religious/spiritual belief. It may be found in a career or through extracurricular, volunteer, or community activities.

A sense of meaning is guided by personal values, and people who report having purpose in life live longer and have greater life satisfaction and fewer health problems (Kashdan et al., 2009).

A – Accomplishments/Achievements

Accomplishment in PERMA is also known as achievement, mastery, or competence. Accomplishment includes the concepts of perseverance and having a passion to attain goals. But flourishing and wellbeing come when accomplishment is tied to striving toward things with an internal motivation or working toward something just for the sake of the pursuit and improvement (Quinn, 2018).

The Benefits of Well-Being

Research demonstrates that well-being is not only valuable because it feels good, but also because it has beneficial real-world consequences. Compared to people with low well-being, individuals with higher levels of well-being:

- Perform better at work
- Have more satisfying relationships
- Are more cooperative
- Have stronger immune systems
- Have better physical health

- Live longer
- Have reduced cardiovascular mortality
- Have fewer sleep problems
- Have lower levels of burnout
- Have greater self-control
- Have better self-regulation and coping abilities
- Are more prosocial

THE PATH OF INNER HAPPINESS-

The most important thing in life is the spiritual centering. The spiritual centering consists of the personal philosophy of life. A spiritual centering should include the five principles of love, peace, truth, strength and joy. If we live with wisdom according to these five principles, we grow into happiness, into enlightenment, into a life in the light (in God, in fulfillment).

A religious neurosis arises when you are practicing spiritually wrong. You should feel exactly what you need, what is good for you and what brings you forward spiritually. Many Christians practice their religion without inner feeling only formally. It is also inconvenient if you are too dogmatic. Religious fanatics live out their religion from the ego and hurt themselves and the world.

If you undertax yourself on the spiritual path, you will not grow spiritually. If you overtax yourself, you produce inner tensions and block your enlightenment. You should find out exactly what fits you best on the spiritual path. And you must be persistent until the end.

Shortly before you get enlightened comes a stage where you have to let go of the goal of enlightenment. Otherwise you tense up yourself to strong by the sense of purpose. Many New Agers and many evangelical Christians believe that you just have to live your life and enlightenment (the grace of God) comes by itself. That's a big mistake. The Lord loves spiritually hard-working people. Otherwise, he gives not his grace.

When you are spiritually happy, you are able to see the world through realistic eyes and still feel happy from within. This is because the foundation of your happiness isn't circumstantial. This kind of happiness goes with you wherever you go and is unchanged by the world around you.

1. Live in inner peace (calmness, stillness) and act for the happiness of all beings. For some people it is important to live in the outer peace, to achieve the inner peace. Basically, the inner peace is the result of a calm mind. A calm mind we get when we focus in wisdom (Spirituality, God, Yoga) and work continually on our negative qualities, addictions, fears and aggressions.
2. Everyone should find his personal balance of rest and action. Those who live in the right inner balance, save their energy, their physical and mental health.
3. Our mind grows into the light, if we strengthen the positivity and the love in us. We should constantly practice positive thinking, positive speaking and positive doing. When we facilitate the desire for a happy world, then we grow further towards enlightenment. The secret to this wish is the connection from the inner to the outer world. We are not spiritually separated from other beings. Their happiness affects us. When we visualize other beings as happy, then we also feel happy. Those who encourage the goal to a happy world creates positivity within. When we send light to all beings, then one day light will come

through to our souls. When we do something good for the world, the world will reward us with a positive psyche.

4. We should make the inner happiness, not the outer happiness to the center of our lives. If we follow the two principles of love for God (inner peace, spiritual practice) and love for all beings, we will transform our minds. Our inner tension will dissolve and happiness will appear.

5. With inner happiness, we can see the positive in the world, in our fellow men and in ourselves. We live in the light and in the love. The longer we live and the longer we practise the way of love, the more we grow into the light.

Basically, the path of inner happiness consists of health practices and of mental work. Health exercises are sports (walking, jogging, biking - if necessary on the exercise bike), yoga and meditation. Add to this a healthy diet. Mental work means to avoid negative thoughts and to encourage positive thoughts. Negative thoughts lead to internal tensions, the destruction of the health and to bad social relationships. They are often associated with feelings such as fear, anger and addiction.

Positive thoughts create positive feelings and a constructive external behavior. Positive thoughts we get by self-reflection, positive intentions and reading in positive books. Important is a constant attention to the inner thoughts, feelings and positive life principles (love, peace, truth, strength, happiness). Recommendable are the philosophy of happiness (Epicurus), Buddhism, Christianity and Yoga. The positive psychology found many good ways to live a happy life. It is important that we are always in touch with ourselves, our inner truth and love. A spiritual teaching gives us an orientation. For proper application in our concrete situation we are responsible for ourselves. What is good for us? What

brings us forward on the path of happiness? What is useful to build up a happy world?

The easiest way of spiritual centering is the daily reading in a spiritual book. We can also read something positive in the internet. We must not read much. A small text, a meditation a day is enough to keep us on the path to lasting happiness. For many people a daily oracle card is helpful to get a positive outlook on life. For this we need each day just a minute. That time has everyone. The gain is long term immeasurable.

Happiness, in psychology, a state of emotional well-being that a person experiences either in a narrow sense, when good things happen in a specific moment, or more broadly, as a positive evaluation of one's life and accomplishments overall—that is, subjective well-being. Happiness can be distinguished both from negative emotions (such as sadness, fear, and anger) and also from other positive emotions (such as affection, excitement, and interest). This emotion often co-occurs with a specific facial expression: the smile.

SIGNS OF SPIRITUAL HAPPINESS-

There are a variety of signs you can search for within yourself if you aren't sure if what you're experiencing could be spiritual happiness.

1. Enjoy Being Yourself

Flip the saying “treat others as you wish to be treated” on its head. Does it make sense to you? Instead of treating others the way you would like to be treated yourself, try treating yourself the way you treat others. Chances are, you don't judge other people nearly as harshly as you do yourself.

People who have spiritual happiness are totally comfortable within themselves. They aren't looking to force themselves to improve in ways that aren't natural to them. Instead of counting their flaws, spiritually happy people count their blessings.

For example, having legs to walk on, lungs to breathe with, eyes to see with, and hands to create with. If these things are prioritized over trivial things such as your appearance, intelligence, or talents, then you edge much closer to deep happiness like spiritual happiness.

2. Know Yourself

Spiritual happiness means accepting yourself for who you are inside. This will require getting to know yourself completely. Sometimes, we avoid digging this deep within ourselves to avoid the discomfort, but avoidance will never lead to total happiness. Knowing yourself means never relying on anyone else for validation or compliments.

3. Find Happiness in Hardship

Being spiritually happy doesn't require you to be ignorant of the tragedies in the world, nor does it mean you never face hardship in your private life. Spiritual happiness means you are able to be mentally stable and optimistic during difficult times.

The ability to see that hard moments can still bring you blessings is a strength we could all benefit from. The spiritual kind of happiness is almost impossible to shake. This is because of the gift that is seeing the light during dark times. You can't take away the happiness that doesn't rely only on good times.

4. Always Grateful

We're naturally inclined to compare our lives to others. We spend so much time looking at who has "the best", "the most", or "the easiest"

that we rarely take time to be grateful for our own lives. Having spiritual happiness goes hand in hand with being grateful. This extends beyond material possessions too.

Spiritually happy people are grateful for more than the home they live in and the items they have collected. They are grateful for nature, for opportunities to learn and the smallest moments of joy, for example. If you are always grateful for the world around you and not just what you “have”, then it can never be taken away from you. That kind of gratitude brings a strong sense of spiritual happiness that cannot be disrupted.

5. Always Optimistic

Spiritually happy people are always optimistic about the future, even if they have no reason to be. They don't require evidence to base their optimism on. Spiritual happiness means believing that good things will happen, simply because there's no benefit to believing otherwise.

Believing that good things can and will come your way is enough to make any person happy, and if you take it on board deep enough, this will become a deep type of happiness.

Spirituality helps getting permanent happiness because when we truly connect with our higher self, our true nature, which is bliss, we start feeling ever new joy. All joys, happiness which we normally get from physical world through sense perceptions are temporary don't last long. It's a question of just time, the happiness does not last permanent and we are back to same position, start looking for happiness from something else, materialistic thing only.

Some key signs of happiness include:

- Feeling like you are living the life you wanted
- Feeling that the conditions of your life are good

- Feeling that you have accomplished (or will accomplish) what you want in life
- Feeling satisfied with your life
- Feeling positive more than negative

Types of Happiness:-

There are many different ways of thinking about happiness. For example, the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle made a distinction between two different kinds of happiness: hedonia and eudaimonia.

- **Hedonia:** Hedonic happiness is derived from pleasure. It is most often associated with doing what feels good, self-care, fulfilling desires, experiencing enjoyment, and feeling a sense of satisfaction.
- **Eudaimonia:** This type of happiness is derived from seeking virtue and meaning. Important components of eudaimonic well-being including feeling that your life has meaning, value, and purpose. It is associated more with fulfilling responsibilities, investing in long-term goals, concern for the welfare of other people, and living up to personal ideals.

Happiness is a purely internal and intangible feeling but its vibes radiate outwardly and collectively enable everyone's welfare. In our daily life, anything we are good at becomes a source of happiness. It is scientifically proven that happiness can be hacked through positive connections and experiences that create a chemical reaction in human brains through hormones.

According to Psychology Today, meditation is the strongest mental practice that has the power to reset your happiness set point, thus turning you into a more joyful person and literally rewiring major areas in your brain.

FEEL COSMIC ENERGY-

Slowly open your eyes with a smile. With a deep and slow breath, feel the light energy of the Sun. Breathe out all negative thoughts and problems like Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada and let it all go out through the solar plexus (Manipur chakra). Repeat the process coordinating with your breath. It is important to remember that Sun is our wellness. We shine when the Sun is out. This is cosmic energy. This energy is our purifier, our healer, our true wellness. Sun is responsible for vitamin D synthesis which helps in our overall wellness. It helps us to secrete endorphins, a natural anti-depressant.

Sun is our true soul energy. The process by which we bring it in our human system is called Soorya Yoga. It helps us to bring light to our ecosystem, a true enlightenment. Soorya Yoga is the fragrance and essence of life.

The infra red of the Sun stimulates our blood circulation and increases oxygen flow to the tissues which augment tissue repair and helps warm up the system. The most important thing about Soorya Yoga is that it stimulates the pineal gland, the third eye, to release melatonin which controls the sleep- wake cycle. Soorya Yoga is a Sun gazing technique that removes all negative thoughts and illnesses.

The steps for Soorya Yoga:-

1. Rub your forehead and place a special silver coin on the third eye position between your eyes. Place your hands on the Sun symbol position, touching the body below the navel. Stand/ sit, facing the Sun, east in the morning and west in the evening. Close your eyes, think and thank the Sun with gratitude on behalf of your parents, gods and masters. Ask for forgiveness and send love to all. Say to the Sun that you are my guru and my nearest and dearest friend.

2. Slowly open your eyes with a smile. With a deep and slow breath, feel the light energy of the Sun. Breathe out all negative thoughts and problems like Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada and let it all go out through the solar plexus (Manipur chakra). Repeat the process coordinating with your breath.
3. The next step is meditation. Silent sitting with closed eyes, minimum 10 minutes.
4. Then visualise all this for about seven minutes. Now direct that love energy to the heart. Fill your heart with curative energies. Now pump this energy to different organs. Feel your organs with loads of positive energy. Soak yourself in this cosmic energy and experience the light in you. You are the light now and shower this energy on all your near and dear ones.
5. Release the hand position and with eyes closed, bend down and touch Mother Earth with your palms and forehead. Let the silver coin touch the Mother Earth. Take a deep breath, surrender to Mother Earth, thanking her with love. Come back to sitting namaskar position, rub hands together to create heat in between the palms and cup your eyes with your palms.

VIBRATIONAL ENERGY-

Vibrations are a kind of rhythm. Rhythms happen on a grand scale, like seasonal changes and tidal patterns. They also happen within your body. Vibrational energy experts claim that certain emotions and thought patterns, such as joy, peace, and acceptance, create high frequency vibrations, while other feelings and mindsets (such as anger, despair, and fear) vibrate at a lower rate.

Vibrational energy flow within and between polyatomic molecules drives chemistry and governs their reactivity. In the past decade

intramolecular vibrational energy redistribution (IVR) in isolated molecules has been investigated with good success. Much less, however, is known about IVR in solution where the intramolecular energy redistribution process is influenced by the surrounding solvent. Unfortunately, generalizable mechanisms and principles, such as known for isolated molecules, have not been clearly identified yet. Moreover, it has not even been identified how and to what extent the solvent influences the intramolecular process that we call IVR for isolated molecules. The reason for this lack of knowledge is that IVR for a particular molecule could not yet be measured in the gas phase and in solution with the same technique. As a consequence, it was nearly impossible to correlate timescales of isolated and solvated molecules and to obtain a quantitative understanding of IVR and its underlying mechanisms in solution. Also the impact of chemical substitution on IVR remained largely unclear in solution. It is not by chance that benzene and toluene in the gas phase have become the benchmark systems for experimental and theoretical IVR studies during the past two decades.

“High vibrational energy is energy that is good and strong,” says Marlene Vargas, co-founder of metaphysical shop House of Intuition. “This energy is pure, and it can come from whatever you want to call it—source energy, universe energy, God energy.” On the flip side, a low vibration energy is dark and dense and feels heavy, Vargas says. It’s often associated with negative emotions such as suffering, fear, and anger.

VIBRATIONAL ENERGY, STRAIGHT FROM ENERGY PROS-

1. Smudge your space

Smudging your home is a quick and easy way to banish lingering negativity and bring in some good vibes. Alex Naranjo, co-founder of metaphysical shop House of Intuition, recommends burning sage, palo

santo, yerba santa, juniper, mugwort, or cedar. “Go through the space with all of the doors, windows, drawers, and cabinets open so that the stagnant energy can leave the space,” he says.

2. Get real with yourself

Being radically honest about who you are and what you want is one way you can elevate your vibrational energy and move forward in life, Dunblazier says. She recommends taking a closer look wherever you can identify any negative emotion since those areas are the ones that require some deeper self-honesty.

3. Find clarity

In order to manifest something into your life, you have to first have a clear vision of what it actually is and looks like. “Clarity paves the way for you to open your mind and heart and begin to imagine the reality of having what you say you want,” Dunblazier says. Once you have that clarity, lean into the feeling of already having it in order to uncover any subconscious blocks that might be holding you back from actually gaining it.

4. Practice a morning ritual

Taking a few minutes to align your energy first thing in the morning sets the tone for your entire day, Hart says. To that point, it's wise to implement an empowering morning ritual, whether that includes pulling a tarot card or doing a yoga flow. Do whatever makes you feel good. After the ritual of your choice, set an intention for what you want to experience on that day and then get into the energy of that intention.

5. Journal your vision

For an instant vibrational boost, Hart recommends a practice called scripting, which entails journaling about what you want to call into

your life as if you already have it. Describe it in detail, like movie script, and include how the sensation of having it feels. This will help you raise your vibration to align with that of which you want.

6. Let your creative juices flow

If you love to paint, dance, or delve into DIY crafts, consider this your energetically sanctioned permission slip to do more of it. “We don’t take the time to just be creative like when we were little kids,” says licensed professional counselor Katie Beecher, who encourages people to let go of fear and expectations and connect with themselves by doing something creative and making it a habit.

7. Treat yourself with love

“The messages and thoughts that we give ourselves directly impacts how we feel,” Beecher says. “Treat yourself like you would treat somebody that you love.” That means ditching the negative self-talk and nourishing yourself with kind, compassionate thoughts and words—even if you have to fake it at first.

8. Cut back on toxins

Eliminating toxins that your body takes in will also help uplift your vibrational energy. “The more toxic our body is, the more we have to work hard to cleanse it,” Beecher says. So try eating nourishing, healthful food when possible, and use products free of damaging ingredients.

9. Connect to a higher power

Connecting to a higher power of your choosing is a powerful way to boost your vibration. “A lot of anxiety comes from feeling like you have to do everything yourself,” Beecher says. “One of the most important parts about connecting to some sort of higher power is

feeling like you're protected and not alone. It helps you get into a different realm, and it helps you to ground."

10. Recognize when emotions aren't yours

We can all pick up on the energy of the people around us, and if they're vibrating at a low frequency, it's very easy to confuse their feelings for our own if you're not introspective. "We are in control of our energy," Beecher says. "It's important to recognize what your feelings are and where they're coming from. You have the power to say, 'No that's not mine.'"

11. Pause throughout the day

When you have a mile-long to-do list and a schedule full meetings and full slate of responsibilities to take care of on any given day, it's way too easy to operate on autopilot. To avoid this, Hart recommends taking a few moments to pause and just breathe throughout the day to quickly reset your vibration. Whether you take a walk around the block or do a mini-meditation in the bathroom, every breath and quiet moment will help shift the way you feel.

12. Practice self care

Whether you like to take CBD bubble baths or meditate daily, doing something for yourself is key for maximizing your vibrational energy. "Self care brings balance into our lives," Vargas says. "Raising your vibration can also be done through going for a walk to get grounded, reiki healing energy, doing something that makes you feel good, being of service to others, practicing yoga, or doing devotional work on your altar." Basically, anything that brings you joy will do wonders for raising your vibe.

UNIT-V

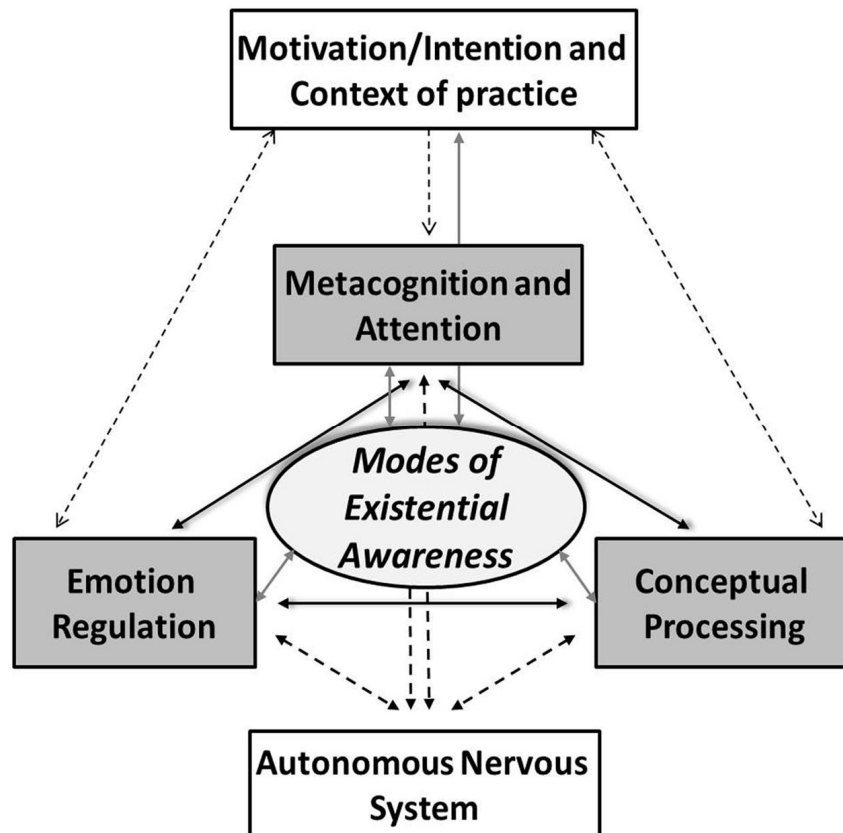
SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS

Spiritual teaching is a kind of teaching that seeks to attain higher levels of awareness and meaningfulness of life, which, regardless of the content of education, is the same path of development of ultimate goals that lead spiritual awakening. Even if yoga only enhanced physical fitness, the time spent in practice would be fully worthwhile. Luckily, yoga offers much more than just a way to exercise the body. The deeper meaning and gift of yoga is the path it offers into the timeless world of spirit. Yoga gives the gift of a calm mind, even in the midst of chaos, by teaching you to let go and bring awareness to every moment. In this expanded state of consciousness, you experience freedom from suffering. You remember your essential spiritual nature, and life becomes more joyful, meaningful, and carefree.

The biggest benefits come from the deeper understanding of yoga's essence: the union of body, mind, and spirit. Mind-body integration means establishing a healthy dialogue between your thoughts and your cells. While the body appears to be material, it's really a field of energy and intelligence that's inextricably connected to the mind. Your beliefs, thoughts, and emotions influence every cell in the body and therefore play a major role in your wellbeing. Spiritualism is a theological and speculative subject which deals with matters concerning the spirit or the Self: its nature, existence, mediums, ghosts, afterlife, spiritual powers, healing, angels, gods and goddesses, heaven and hell, occult worlds and so on.

Spirituality is different from spiritualism. It is the practice of cultivating the spiritual attitude based upon the belief in God and individual Self or Soul and the possibility of liberation or self-realization through the

practice of yoga and other methods. Spiritual people who are endowed with this attitude work for their self-transformation and inner purification. By transcending their ordinary nature and perceptual consciousness they aim to enter higher states of consciousness or the realm of the Self. In their expansive state of consciousness they want to experience oneness with the highest and the purest state of the individual Self, or the Supreme Self. Spirituality is the culminating stage in the religious practice of a person who develops a distaste for worldly life and the sensual pleasures of mind and body and yearns to return to his essential nature and achieve oneness with God.



Differences between spiritualism and spirituality-

The practice of spiritualism means many things to many people. It covers a broad range of practices of which some are intensely evil and some are radiantly divine. Like any other branch of knowledge, spiritualism can be used both for good and evil purposes. Many people are drawn into it because of the immense powers and miraculous experiences it promises to bestow upon its practitioners. Spiritualism is a western concept in which soul is considered to possess some individuality, powers and memory of the past life and attachments. It is more suited for those who do not believe in rebirth or liberation.

Spirituality on the other hand is a purely austere effort, meant exclusively for liberation or self-realization. It is well suited for those who believe in karma, rebirth and the possibility of liberation. In spirituality there is no intent to harm only the yearning to escape from the cycle of births and deaths by realizing one's true nature. Spiritualism is for those who want to dabble with the spirit world for personal or professional reasons or to explore the alternative states of existence and methods of knowing and healing. Spirituality is practiced for different reasons. It is meant for those who want to transcend the physical, mental and material things achieve self-realization or peace and equanimity. It not for enhancing one's power or prestige, practice magic or attract the opposite sex. Those who practice spirituality eschew all worldly pleasures and practice self-restraint to transcend their baser nature and cultivate divine qualities. They become pure to the extent they are indistinguishable with God's very nature.

BUDDHIST TECHNIQUES-

These techniques aim to develop equanimity and sati (mindfulness); samadhi (concentration) c.q. samatha (tranquility) and vipassanā (insight); and are also said to lead to abhijñā (supramundane powers). All forms of Buddhism – and, by extension Buddhist meditation techniques – have arisen from the Buddha's insights about the nature of

existence, the causes of suffering, the causes of happiness, and guidelines for living a wholesome and constructive life. Buddhist meditation practices have now spread beyond the borders of the countries where they developed organically and are more widely available than ever before.

Early Buddhism, as it existed before the development of various schools, is called pre-sectarian Buddhism. Its meditation-techniques are described in the Pali Canon and the Chinese Agamas.

Buddhism offers a smorgasbord of different meditation techniques we can practice to achieve everything we could possibly wish for: from developing peace, eliminating our anger, cultivating compassion, to meditations that will bring us to ultimate, everlasting happiness and wisdom (also known as achieving Enlightenment in Buddhism).

Developing One-Pointed Concentration-

1) Samatha Meditation or Calm Abiding Meditation – This practice usually involves watching our breath as our object of meditation. This meditation is specifically designed to calm and focus our mind so we can develop our powers of concentration. We can also add a technique of counting our breaths to help increase our concentration and reduce the general distractibility of our mind.

The basis of shamatha, or mindfulness meditation, is as follows:

- Sit in a comfortable meditation posture: find a pose that doesn't hurt your back or knees. Watch our Take Your Seat video on the Mindworks App or see our post to learn about the best Buddhist meditation postures. Keep your back straight and try to find a happy medium between too rigid and too relaxed.
- Observe your breath: You don't have to manipulate your breath, use abdominal breathing or have long, deep in-breaths and out-

breaths. Just breathe normally and pay attention to your breathing process, one breath at a time. Keep your awareness focused but be gentle; you should have an attitude of discovering and making friends with yourself.

- Acknowledge the thoughts that pop into your mind without engaging them. Simply observe them and let go. Come back to the breath. We call this “touch and go.” Let the thought arise, touch on it gently, and then let it go.

It is also possible to use an external object for this type of meditation. You might choose to meditate on a Buddha statue and place all your visual and mental attention on one aspect of it. Usually it's best to select a specific part of the statue to meditate on, rather than trying to focus on the whole thing. You could alternatively use a photo of the Buddha or your teacher to also inspire faith and devotion. Or you can just meditate on a small part of any object in front of you. I often focus on a small plastic blue flower, placing all my concentration on the center of it.

2) Walking Meditation – Not all of us are great at sitting for long periods of time. Fortunately, we can break up our sessions with walking meditation. At full day retreats, it is common to interchange sitting and walking meditations so that one hour of sitting meditation is followed by 30 minutes of walking meditation. Generally, walking meditation is designed to complement our sitting meditations so that we maintain our concentration between our seated sessions. This meditation pays close attention to the movement of our feet as we walk slowly, back and forth, in a small, defined area.

3) Contemplative Meditation

The Buddhist teachings share some fundamental beliefs. Practitioners are encouraged to reflect on them in a focused, contemplative manner. This contemplation may be integrated into a practice session. One of

the best-known contemplations is called “The Four Thoughts that Transform the Mind.” Their purpose is to give us a good reason to sit down and practice rather than, for example, spend the next two hours on social media or in a shopping mall. These four thoughts, in brief, are:

- I can choose to devote my energy to developing wisdom, compassion and the power to benefit others. Many people in other situations, as well as other forms of life such as animals, don’t have this possibility. I recognize the preciousness of this opportunity and vow not to waste it.
- But who knows how long this precious life will last? Everything changes. My entire existence depends on an out-breath being followed by an in-breath. No time to waste!
- Everything that exists has a cause, and every action has consequences. This speaks to the truth of interdependence – and means that our actions have more of an impact than we might imagine.

At one point or another, we will be separated from all of the material things we’re attached to.

According to K.L. Dhammajoti, the Sarvāstivāda meditation practitioner begins with samatha meditations, divided into the fivefold mental stillings, each being recommended as useful for particular personality types:

- contemplation on the impure (asubhabhavana), for the greedy type person.
- meditation on loving kindness (maitri), for the hateful type
- contemplation on conditioned co-arising, for the deluded type
- contemplation on the division of the dhatus, for the conceited type

- mindfulness of breathing (anapanasmrti), for the distracted type.

Therapeutic uses of meditation

Meditation based on Buddhist meditation principles has been practiced by people for a long time for the purposes of effecting mundane and worldly benefit. Mindfulness and other Buddhist meditation techniques have been advocated in the West by psychologists and expert Buddhist meditation teachers such as Dipa Ma, Anagarika Munindra, Thích Nhất Hạnh, Pema Chödrön, Clive Sherlock, Mother Sayamagyi, S. N. Goenka, Jon Kabat-Zinn, Jack Kornfield, Joseph Goldstein, Tara Brach, Alan Clements, and Sharon Salzberg, who have been widely attributed with playing a significant role in integrating the healing aspects of Buddhist meditation practices with the concept of psychological awareness, healing, and well-being. Although mindfulness meditation has received the most research attention, loving kindness and equanimity (upekkha) meditation are beginning to be used in a wide array of research in the fields of psychology and neuroscience.

The accounts of meditative states in the Buddhist texts are in some regards free of dogma, so much so that the Buddhist scheme has been adopted by Western psychologists attempting to describe the phenomenon of meditation in general. However, it is exceedingly common to encounter the Buddha describing meditative states involving the attainment of such magical powers (Sanskrit *ṛddhi*, Pali *iddhi*) as the ability to multiply one's body into many and into one again, appear and vanish at will, pass through solid objects as if space, rise and sink in the ground as if in water, walking on water as if land, fly through the skies, touching anything at any distance (even the moon or sun), and travel to other worlds (like the world of Brahma) with or without the body, among other things, and for this reason the whole of the Buddhist tradition may not be adaptable to a secular context, unless

these magical powers are seen as metaphorical representations of powerful internal states that conceptual descriptions could not do justice to.

Preparing For Meditation-

The Posture-

Find an uncluttered, well-ventilated (non-drafty), quiet place where you can sit undisturbed on a regular schedule. You may use a cover to protect yourself from the cold. In the beginning, let comfort be your guide. Make sure you set up a schedule you can live with, and then keep to it faithfully. Adjust your sittings so that there is no excess of discomfort or pain, which includes finding a posture you can hold for a period of time that you will gradually extend. Learn to relax completely; do not try to control anything, and do not expect anything.

The Legs-

If, and only if, you can manage it, sit on the full-lotus, which is the traditional position considered most stable. For those who might want to try the full-lotus position, do as follows. First, sit on the floor or a low cushion and fold your right leg in front of you, pulling it in close to your groin. Next, fold your left leg over it, with your left foot resting, sole upward, on your right thigh and close to your groin. Finally, lift your right foot, sole up, onto your left thigh, bringing it in close to your groin. You may be able to maintain this position for a short time at first, but, as you grow accustomed to it, you may find it contributing greatly to a sense of quiet, tranquillity and stability. Should pain develop, stay with it for awhile. Observe it, rather than lamenting your lot or wishing you were elsewhere, squirming, trying to escape or braving it out while gritting your teeth. Staying with your pain, you will soon clearly see how to succeed in your effort by the way you sit, the way you breathe and/or by the way you view the situation.

It may be beneficial for you to explore your response when sending loving-kindness to yourself. It may feel embarrassing, silly or unbecoming; you may even find yourself inexplicably crying. As practiced in the Theravada tradition, in combination with vipasyana, the meditation on loving-kindness is simple and profound, yet very effective, in reaching the sources of our deep suffering. It is Dharma at its purest, inasmuch as it addresses compassion as well as being intimate with pain. Do you experience pain as if it were an object outside of you, an intruder? This approach can generate meaningful insights into the workings of your mind and should be explored.

Chest, Abdomen, Buttocks-

Raise your chest a little, moving it forward, and sit so that the hollow part of your chest, the part that is at about the level of the base of your sternum (the den of your heart), permits your diaphragm to function unimpeded. Newcomers to meditation often experience obstruction and discomfort in the chest, and that is usually caused by the den of the heart not being low enough. Should that occur, focus your awareness on your abdomen and refrain from any effort; you should feel relief in a short time. Your buttocks should be protruding a little, and your back should be comfortably, easily erect. Sit relaxed and self-composed, settling into your lower abdomen. This practice has been found to be especially calming.

Natural Breathing-

The abdomen relaxes and expands as you inhale and contracts as you exhale. This is, indeed, natural; for when you exhale, the diaphragm moves upward into the chest, while the abdomen simultaneously contracts. The contraction not only assists in evacuating the lungs, but also stimulates blood circulating through the organs contained in the abdominal cavity by compressing the viscera.

Right Breathing-

The abdomen is contracted as you inhale, and it relaxes as you exhale. This sort of breathing has been used in China since ancient times as a kind of physical and mental hygiene. Try both methods to discover whatever advantages each seems to hold for you, the practitioner, lest you get caught up in having to have things happen in only a certain way.

Regulating the Mind-

Meditation can improve your health, but its primary purpose is to enable you to be free of thought; because when this has occurred, wisdom shines brightly. With that aim in mind, then, we see that both counting the breath and tracing the breath are methods of regulating the breath and thereby the mind.

JAINISM TECHNIQUES

The best technique in Jainism is to feel our breathing through inhale and exhale. It can be felt at our tip of the nose and deep inside the nose. This is the best way to meditation. There is a mantra in Jainism, called Namokar mantra. One can remember lines of Namokar during breathing. One complete Namokar involves three times breathing (one time inhale and exhale is counted as one)

The entire sadhana of Lord Mahavir is connected with the practice of meditation and relaxation (kayotsarg). As soon as he was initiated he took up the practice of kayotsarg and meditation. Although he undertook many long fasts during his sadhana and was consequently known as a devout practitioner of austerities, but his practice of austerity is not devoid of meditation. Here a great illusion has arisen. The illusion is that the devout asceticism of Lord Mahavir's life has

been seized upon whereas his practice of meditation has been completely ignored. Unlike many other sadhaks who concentrated on meditation alone or on fasting alone, Lord Mahavir chose a different path. He did not accept a one-sided view in any field-from this point of view, his doctrine of non absolutism, i.e. many-sided perception is invaluable.

Lord Mahavir felt that meditation was very important although fasting was no less. For meditation it was essential for the body to be in a perfect condition. Such perfection was possible only through fasting or controlled eating. Fasting prepares the necessary background for meditation. The sadhak who cannot keep a fast or observe control over his diet, is not fit for the practice of meditation. To be able to practice meditation it is necessary for a sadhak to purify his mental and physical background.



The discussion of twelve kinds of purification in the Jain tradition is very important in the context of meditation. Fasting, control over diet, undertaking of various pledges, and complete abstention from rich heavy foods—all these four elements are extremely important from the point of view of body-purification. If a sadhak is not alive to their importance, he cannot make much progress in his meditation. Then, the body is trained through the practice of asanas. Until the asanas are perfected, one cannot practice long sittings. After the asanas have been perfected, it is necessary to control the licentiousness of the mind and the senses. After achieving control over the senses and the passions, a method of purification of the mental flaws has been laid down. At this level, it is necessary to effect the dissolution of the 'I' and total surrender. Until the sense of the 'I' is dissolved, a sadhak cannot give himself completely even to his sadhana. In order to develop his knowledge-consciousness, the dedicated sadhak takes to studies. Then only is the groundwork laid for the practice of meditation. The sadhak who takes to meditation without first passing through the requisite stages, cannot continue for long. The consummation of meditation is renunciation, complete detachment. Thus, the sadhak adopting a systematic method of meditation naturally advances towards his goal.

The Role of Religious Sects

There are several religious sects prevailing in today's world like Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism etc. These '-isms' actually means 'the way of life' and living. So, when we say about the religion Jainism — we actually mean Jain way of life and living to connect to eternal pure consciousness. When we talk about Hindu Religion — we mean Hindu ways of life and living to connect to Infinite pure consciousness. Since the experience of this Pure Consciousness is blissfulness (i.e. eternal and infinite happiness) every human being is naturally inclined towards the path of religion.

five fundamental principles of jainism that actually means the five step-by-step to live this human life in such a way that we experience the state of peace and bliss within.

1. Non-violence (Ahimsa)

The first fundamental way of living is non-violence as Lord Mahavira said, “Ahimsa Paramo Dharma”. The all-inclusive aspect of non-violence depicts three essential ethics in day to day living, namely

- **Non-hurting** — This is the grossest form of non-violence explaining no physical hurt towards any form of life, knowingly or unknowingly. Being a human is the most valuable life as it has the power to save others from hurt. So, Ahimsa, in its grossest forms indicates not causing physical hurt, damage or injury to anyone.
- **Non-harming** — This is the subtler form of Ahimsa expressing no intention of harming others, knowingly or unknowingly. A human, in the state of ahimsa (violence) tends to think negative for the others who are different from their one way of living and thinking. So, non-violence at subtler level means not harnessing the feelings of harm and vandalism towards any life form.
- **Non-hating** — The subtlest form of non-violence is not to stay in the state of hatred towards any person-place-thing. We continually nurture the state of mind that is full of hatred and enmity towards the people, things and situations around, even knowing that we can't change much about them. This hostile feeling of hatred actually causes unrest and disharmony amongst our own self. So, the subtlest form of non-violence is not to hate any form of life and live in accord to whatever life brings to us. This doesn't mean withdrawing ourselves from any self effort but it emphasise on dropping hatred from any effort.

2. Truthfulness (Satya)

This aspect of Jainism is one of the most wrongly interpreted. We keep on telling the younger generations to speak truth as the fundamental

aspect of Jainism. But, to speak truth is something we all learn in our moral class in grade 2 or 3! Lord Mahavira cannot list something of that grade as one of the 5 ‘Mahavrat’. There has to be something more to it. And so, at SRM we believe in this fundamental principle as to “choose right.” We have to discipline this human mind in such a way that whatever situation comes in life we must choose right action and right reaction. Thus, the fundamental principle of truthfulness states:

- To choose right, between right and wrong
- To choose eternal, between temporary and permanent

When one lives life through the learnings from Sadguru the essence of truthfulness starts pouring in the mind that enables the being to choose right and eternal in whatever stage of life they are.

3. Non-stealing (Achaurya)

The outcome of low intellect is the shallow interpretation of such powerfully intense words of enlightened beings. Achaurya Mahavrat is generally considered as not to steal others’ goods. But again, these are the ethical values that we learn at young ages. The enlightened stature of Lord Mahavira cannot deliver such a shallow message. There has to be something more to it.

The deepest message of enlightened masters can be decoded only when one’s consciousness is aligned to that state. Without that, we can only imagine some superficial meanings and can never understand the profound message behind these simple yet powerful words.

So, Achaurya literally means not to steal, consider or take away others’ things or possessions. But when it comes to deeper aspect, spiritually, it means not to consider body-mind-intellect as our own. Self is pure consciousness and body-mind-intellect are just the instruments of human life that enable us to know the True Self. For example, water in the pitcher — we know water can be contained in this pitcher but the pitcher is not water. Pitcher is here just to contain water, and it is the water that quenches the thirst and not the pitcher. Similarly, pure self is

contained in body-mind-intellect but there not 'Me'. In our state of ignorance we continuously claim body-mind-intellect as 'Me' and 'mine', i.e. the highest state of 'Chaurya' (stealing). Returning from such false notions and believing Self as only 'Me' and 'Mine', we abide to the fundamental principle of Achaurya.

4. Celibacy (Brahmacharya)

This is essentially the result of life lived with aforesaid 3 principles of non-violence, truthfulness and non-stealing. The actual word is 'Brahma-charya' which literally means to stay in Brahma (Soul). When a person chooses right over wrong and permanent Self over temporary body-mind-intellect then the result of this choice is simply returning to the Self (eternal consciousness). When we know that body-mind-intellect is not 'Me', then we naturally look towards what is 'Me'? This primeval shift of consciousness towards Self is known as Brahmacharya.

The result of withdrawing perception of body-mind-intellect as Self can be the state of celibacy. One can naturally abstain oneself from physical indulgence with other. The cravings of deriving pleasure from others' touch-body-sense drops off easily when one experiences distress from their own body.

5. Non-Possessiveness (Aparigraha)

The one who awakes in Self and lives life with experiential knowledge of body-mind-intellect as not being his own lives the external life in the state of Aparigraha which is essentially the non-attachment to possessions. This non-attachment can be visibly felt to all levels of life and one is said to be living the path shown by Lord Mahavira. This non-possessiveness can be experienced as:

- **Non-possessiveness of things** — The more we know the eternal Self, lesser is the attachment towards the temporary things. So, with withdrawal and extension, availability and non-

availability of things when one is not in the state of mental or physical agitation, it is called non-possessiveness of things.

- **Non-possessiveness of people** — On the stage of life, people come, play their role and go away. The one who knows the reality of this play of life goes beyond the drama and knows his True Self. A person living as 'Jain' is not obsessed by possession of people. They live happily in crowd or in seclusion, since their peace and happiness is no more derived from material world outside but from the eternal world of Soul within.
- **Non-possessiveness of thoughts** — People with this state of awareness (as explained above) are people of all-inclusive mindset. They do not possess insistence of their thoughts. They understand the aspect of relativity and respect everyone's thought in relative realms. Nobody's thought can be absolute because thoughts by nature cannot be absolute. The only absolute is True Self that is experienced beyond the state of thoughts.

Yoga and meditation in jainism:

Yoga and Meditation have been the fundamental practice of spirituality in Jainism. It has been a core spiritual practice for all Tirthankaras. All twenty-four Tirthankaras were human beings, they all practiced different physical yoga postures and deep meditation for several years to attain a state of perfect enlightenment and self-realization.

Mahavir swami, at age of 30 renounced the worldly life and spent twelve and half years in yoga and deep meditation. During this period, he progressed spiritually and conquered desires, feelings, attachments and destroyed four Ghati (deluding) karma and attained enlightenment or Keval-Jnan, while in Goduhikasana (milking posture).

Yoga and Meditation helps us realize the true nature of our soul. Jain religion is based Bhava (internal reflection) and our spiritual progress is towards reducing of our vices or Kashaya. Meditation can help us grow spiritually while finding inner peace, inner calmness, purpose of life and equanimity.

Archeological evidence and the study of ancient scripture suggest that Yoga and Meditation were practiced in ancient India as early as 3000 BC. There are several Aacharyas who have contributed towards development of Yoga and Meditation in Jainism.

Approximately 2600 hundred years ago, a sage Patanjali also known as, **“The Father of Yoga”** had written a book called **“Yoga Sutra”**. In his book, he described a method of Yoga in eight progressive or systematic steps, popularly known as Ashtānga Yoga. Even though sage Patanjali may not belong to Jain tradition, Jain Ächärya Shri Haribhadrasuri (8th century) respectfully acknowledged his **Ashtānga Yoga as a spiritual path to attain liberation**, wrote four books on Yoga and contributed to the development of Jain yoga through his books.

Meditation or Dhyana:

- ☐ Meditation is journey or technique which takes us to meditative state of mind or equanimity state of mind. It is the process of concentration of the mind on a single topic, preventing it from wandering.
- ☐ Meditation is not a religion, but it is at the heart of all religion: Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Judaism, Christianity, Taoism, all philosophies and faith.
- ☐ Yoga and Meditation, both leads to purification of the mind that creates an awareness of the qualities of the soul and assists it in the destruction of karmas.

Benefits of Yoga and Meditation:

Spiritual Benefits

- Purposeful and meaningful life
- Inner peace, inner calm, equanimity
- Enlightenment and self-realization
- Joyful and Blissful within
- Higher consciousness
- Liberation

Mental Benefits

- Increased memory
- Better decision-making & problem-solving
- Better, faster information processing
- Better creative thinking
- Helps with anxiety and depression symptoms
- Increased relaxation & awareness
- More mental power during the day
- Better communication

Emotional Benefits

- Enhanced self-esteem & self-acceptance
- Less fear, loneliness, depression & anxiety
- Better outlook on life and Increased optimism
- Increased feelings of connection
- Helps prevent emotional eating & smoking
- Improves mood & emotional intelligence

Physical Benefits

- Elevated energy levels
- Improve sleeping habits, deeper sleep
- Improves immune system and metabolism
- Improved breathing & heart rate
- Reduces blood pressure
- Helps lose weight and reduces inflammation
- Relieves asthma
- Slows aging

Indian traditions define that there are four primary paths to yoga which lead the worldly soul to liberation. They are:

1 - Bhakti Yoga (Path of Devotion)

The path of devotion aims at the enjoyment of supreme love and bliss. It focuses on realization of truth (true reality, true potential) through **means of devotion and surrender**. Prayers, rituals, and ceremonial processes are its basic approach. Chanting, singing, and repeating Tirthankars' names are also important practices. In the initial stage of spiritual progress, a temple or a similar place is needed to practice Bhakti yoga. Ultimately, **Bhakti yoga develops humility**

within and dissolves ego. This is an excellent form of yoga for emotionally oriented people.

2 - Jnān Yoga (Path of Knowledge):

The path of knowledge aims at the realization of the unique and supreme self. Intellectually oriented people prefer this path because it uses **study, thinking, direct inquiry, and contemplation as its practices.** This path is typified by spiritual discrimination between what is real (true reality) and what is unreal or illusion (Mithyātva or Māyā) in the universe.

The path uses intellect as a means to negate bondage to the material world through inquiry and analysis. The mind itself is used to examine its own nature. This is typified by inquiring through meditation: **"Why am I here?" "What is real and unreal?" and "Who am I?" This leads to the ultimate realization of truth.** In the initial stage, one requires the guidance of a true teacher or scriptures to practice Jnāna yoga. Both Jainism and Buddhism primarily use this path.

3 - Karma Yoga (Path of Action):

Karma yoga is the yoga of **action and selfless service for the benefit of humanity and all living beings** at large. This includes social work, ecology, environmental protection, education, animal protection, and the more. It can be practiced anywhere at any time. **The person does not expect any benefits or results from their work.** This dissolves one's ego. This is an excellent form of yoga for action-oriented people.

4 - Ashtāṅga Yoga (Path of Self Control and Meditation)

Sage Patanjali outlines the eight steps, known as Ashtāṅga Yoga, **needed to attain self-realization & describes methodologies for spiritual growth,** according to a core set of principles for conscious living. Sage Patanjali defined that the aim of yoga is to control thought processes or “Chitt Vritti” to attain higher state of equanimity.

Ashtāṅga yoga aims at the liberation and perfection not only of the body, but also of the mental being. It is the science of physical and mental control.

Four Types of Dhyana in Jainism:

Dhyāna or Meditation is the process of concentration of the mind on a single topic without wandering. If the concentration arises from intense passion or negative emotions like attachment, aversion, hatred or animosity, then it is wrongful, non-virtuous and non-worthy for us.

On the other hand, if the concentration arises from positive emotions, search for the truth and from detachment towards worldly affairs, then it is right, virtuous and worthy for us. This kind of meditation helps in spiritual growth and liberation.

Āchārya Umāsvāti classified these into four kinds of meditation:

Wrongful or Non-Virtuous Meditation

1. Ārta Dhyāna: Painful or Sorrowful Meditation

Dislike related (Aniṣṭa-Samyoga), Attachment related (Iṣṭa-Viyoga), Suffering related (Vedanā), Desire related (Nidāna)

2. Raudra Dhyāna: Wrathful or Enraged Meditation

Violence enchantment (Hinsā -ānand), Untruth enchantment (Mrushā- ānand), Stealing enchantment (Chaurya -ānand), Protection and preservation of property (Parigraha ānand)

Sorrowful and enraged meditations are inauspicious and make the soul wander in the trans migratory state with resultant suffering of innumerable births and deaths. Sorrowful and wrathful meditations hinder spiritual uplift. They obscure the attributes of soul.

Right or Virtuous Meditation

3. Dharma Dhyāna: Righteous Meditation

Doctrine oriented (Ājnā vichaya), Suffering oriented (Apāya_vichaya), Karmic fruition oriented (Vipāk_vichaya), Universe oriented (Samsthāna_vichaya)

4. Shukla Dhyāna: Spiritual or Pure Meditation

Shukla Dhyāna is possible only by those who have attained a very high level of spiritual state.

Righteous meditation is of an auspicious type and Jainism holds that liberation can only be achieved through meditation or Shukla Dhyana. It is important to know both the sides, so we can have the awareness and guide ourselves to the righteous meditation.

The twelve bhavnas (reflections) in Jainism are a mental exercise in introspection and are intended to create a greater awareness of the need for detachment and constant devotion to religion. The twelve kinds of reflections are:

Anitya	Reflection that everything in this world
Bhāvanā (Impermanence)	is transient. Good or Bad, nothing is forever.
Asharan Bhāvanā (Helplessness)	Reflection that there is nothing or no person in this world under whom I can take shelter or protection except for my soul, path of religion and my virtues.
Samsār Bhāvanā (Endless cycles of birth and death)	Reflection on the endless cycles of births and deaths which bring in endless suffering and misery. One should feel tired of the trans-migratory existence and seek for remedies of escape from fetters of Karmas.

Ekatva Bhāvanā
(Solitude of the soul)

Reflection that I am my Savior. Thinking that - I am born alone and shall have to die alone; none can save me from transmigration, except myself, my religious convictions, my virtues, and my pious life. This frees us from attachments and brings equanimity of mind.

Anyatva Bhāvanā
(Your body and soul are separate entity)

Reflection that the soul is distinct from the body. This body is perishable, and all acquired relations/things because of the body are not mine. I am soul, which is not perishable and only soul is capable of attaining liberation.

Ashuchi Bhāvanā
(Impure state of the body)

Reflection on the uncleanness and impurities of the body. This reflection helps discard our attachments to our body, and engage in self-discipline, renunciation, and spiritual endeavors.

Āsrava Bhāvanā
(Influx of Karma)

Reflection on the influx of Karmas which leads to distress and misery in life. Any cause such as wrong belief (Mithyātva) or passions (Kashāya) that create the inflow of Karmas should be discarded

Samvar Bhāvanā
(Stopping the Influx of Karma)

Reflection on the need for stoppage or influx of Karmas. One must carry out all the activities with the intention to reduce or stop new bondage of Karma.

Nirjarā Bhāvanā
(Eradication of Karma)

Reflection on the methods of shedding away the Karmas. Raising our spirituality through various means to shed our Karmas.

Loka-svabhāva Bhāvanā
(Ever changing universe)

Reflection on the nature of the universe, soul, and matter, and about the nature of the other substances.

Bodhidurlabh Bhāvanā

(A rare chance to be enlightened)

Reflection that religious instruction is difficult to obtain. It is difficult to attain right faith, right knowledge and right conduct, as many would be indulging in the enjoyment of worldly pleasures which attract us most and make us forget altogether the need to secure enlightenment for the soul which is of vital importance for its liberation.

Dharma Bhavna

(True religion is an excellent shelter)

Reflection on what has been taught by the our tirthankaras. Such contemplation induces devotion to the principles of ahimsa, truth, honesty, celibacy, humility, and equanimity which form the integral parts of the teachings of Jainism. With such contemplation again and again, the mind will be turned inward, fully restrained and no attachment.

A constant reminder of these twelve Bhāvanās expands our understanding of the life's situations/events and help us in transitioning from non-virtuous to virtuous meditation.

HINDU MEDITATION

In Hinduism (originally Sanatana Dharma), meditation has a place of significance. The basic objective of meditation is to attain oneness of the practitioner's spirit (atman with) omnipresent and non-dual almighty (Paramatma or Brahman). This state of one's self is called Moksha in Hinduism and Nirvana in Buddhism. But at the same time Hindu monks and later Buddhist monks also are said to have achieved miraculous power by practicing meditation. The Hindu scriptures prescribe certain postures to attain the state where the mind is in meditation. These postures are called yoga. Clear references of yoga and meditation are found in ancient Indian scriptures like Vedas, Upanishads, and Mahabharata that includes Gita. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad defines meditation as "having become calm and

concentrated, one perceives the self (atman) within oneself” (Flood, 1996). In the Hindu method of meditation there are a set of rules to be followed in the process of yoga to successfully practice meditation. These are ethical discipline (Yamas), rules (niyamas), physical postures (asanas), breath control (pranayam), one-pointed concentration of mind (dharana), meditation (dhyana), and finally salvation (samadhi). Very few can reach the stage of dhyana without proper knowledge and training from Guru, and fewer are said to have reached the final stage. Gautama Buddha (originally Hindu prince), and Sri Ramakrishna, are said to have been successful in attaining the final stage of salvation (samadhi).

Differences in Ideology-

In Hinduism, the ideology behind meditation is more spiritual than religion. The purposes of meditation in Hinduism are varied, like physical, mental, and spiritual enhancement, and also control of mind. In the extreme sense Meditation is the way of getting in union with the creator or *Paramatma*. Buddhists on the other hand do not believe in God, but considers meditation as an integral part of their religion. The main purpose of meditation in Buddhism is self realization or *Nirvana*.

Difference in Techniques-

The techniques of meditation as described in Hindu texts are very difficult and it takes years to master on even some of the lower level meditation techniques in the hierarchy of techniques and significance. There are references in ancient Indian and Chinese texts of Hindu monks achieving mysterious powers like flying, breaking objects by looking at them and likes. Buddhist meditation techniques, on the other hand, are much simpler, though ancient Buddhist monks are said to have had used meditation to improve fighting techniques.

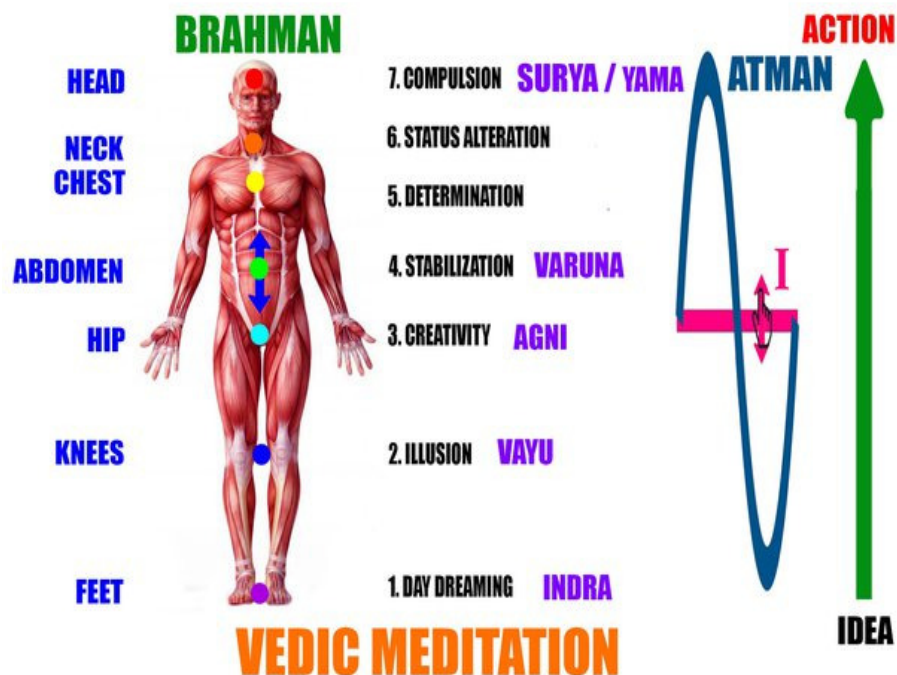
Difference in Scope-

The range of purposes and techniques of meditation in Hinduism is much wider as compared to that in Buddhism. All the three aspects of

humanity namely physical, mental, and spiritual are addressed by the concept of meditation. Whereas in Buddhism meditation is a part of their religious practices.

VEDIC MEDITATION-

Vedic meditation is an ancient mantra meditation, which is derived from ancient Hindu Sanskrit phrases that have been around for thousands of years. This form of meditation is a valuable therapeutic resource based on Ayurvedic medicine and Hindu principles that is used in daily sadhana practice by yogis around the world.



As with all age-old teachings, the tradition of Vedic meditation would come and go in the throes of time. With that comes distortion of knowledge and misunderstanding throughout history. Vedic Meditation is a technique that traces its roots to the Vedas, ancient Indian texts that

are the foundation for yoga and Ayurveda. Unlike Buddhist mindfulness-based techniques, Vedic Meditation (VM) doesn't involve contemplation or trying to think compassionate thoughts

We sit, close our eyes and gently begin to think our mantra. This takes the energy of our awareness away from our thoughts and lets our minds and bodies relax. As we relax, we release stress stored in the body and find ourselves thinking. When we realise our mind is wandering, we simply return to our mantra. It's a very simple process. You can do it anywhere you're happy to sit and close your eyes – on the bus, a park bench, a meeting room at work. The benefits come from regular practice so it helps if you're prepared to do it wherever you happen to be.

"My mind is too busy to meditate"

Often people think their minds are too busy to meditate – especially if they've tried a technique that says "clear your mind". Clearing your mind is pretty much impossible. You don't need to clear your mind to meditate, you just place your awareness on a meditation anchor – in this case, your mantra – whenever you remember to during your practice.

MUDRAS USED IN SPIRITUALITY

Mudras are specific meditation hand positions or gestures that help draw your focus inward and channel energy to certain parts of the body. A mudra can involve various placements of your fingers, thumbs, and palms to stimulate different parts of the body. Some mudras can involve the entire body, but most focus specifically on the hands.

There are technically 5 basic categories of mudras:

1. Yogic
2. Spiritual
3. Curative
4. Religious

5. Customary

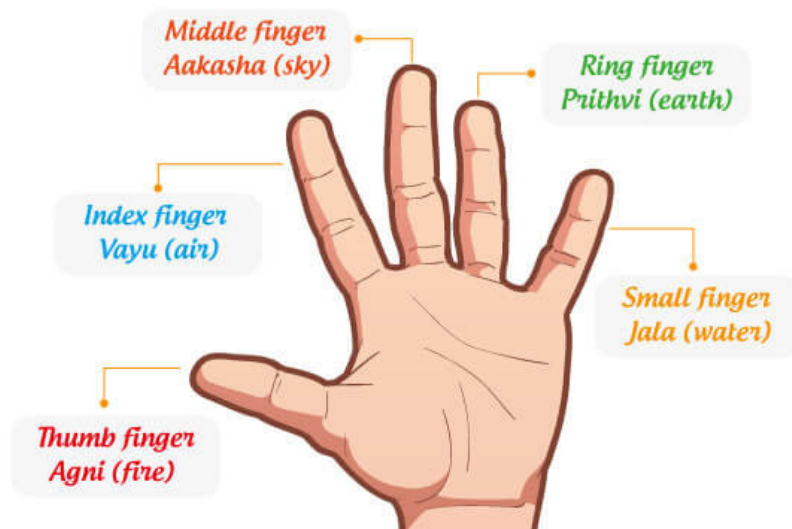
There over 100 mudras that have been specifically used in meditation practice over the centuries. All of them share the common purpose of affecting the flow of life force energy, or *prana*, throughout the body.

According to Ayurvedic philosophy, the human body is constructed of 5 elements:

1. Agni (fire)
2. Vayu (air)
3. Aakash (space)
4. Pruthvi (earth)
5. Jal (water)

These 5 elements also coincide with our hands:

Fingers corresponding to different elements



Mudra therapy is based on an ancient science that aims to connect energy-flows between the mind, body, and spirit. It may seem subtle,

but the hand and finger movements of mudras have the capacity to help physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. Mudras help restore balance in the body.

MOST COMMON MUDRAS



1. Gesture of Knowledge: Gyan Mudra

Probably the most well-known of all mudras, the Gyan mudra is most often found in meditation classes. It is also called the Jnana Mudra or the gesture of wisdom. This mudra helps harness the power of concentration, memory, and wisdom. It is also useful for dealing with a creative block.

It is said that holding this mudra during a meditation can help bring new insights for problems in your life. The Gyan gesture can also help reduce stress and improve focused attention on a balancing yoga pose.

How to Do It: Bring the tip of your index finger to touch the tip of your thumb while holding your other three fingers straight.

Associated Elements: Air & Space

Mudra of Fearlessness: Abhaya Mudra

This position is often seen on Burmese and Thai statues of the Buddha and looks much like a relaxed upheld hand. It looks like a greeting “hello” or a signal of “stop”. This modern interpretation is actually aligned with the mudra’s ancient meaning to provide protection and safety from evil.

Abhaya mudra is known to dispel fear and negative forces while bringing a feeling of peace and reassurance to the practitioner. It makes you feel calm, balanced, and secure to overcome fear.

How to Do It: Bring your right hand up to shoulder height and face your palm outward in front of you. Keep your thumb touching the edge of your hand and allow your fingers to subtly relax as you “stop” fear and “wave hello” to a courage.

Gesture of Perception/Intellect: Buddhi Mudra

In Sanskrit, *buddhi* means “intellect” or “perception”, signifying this “seal” of improved mental clarity. This mudra aims to balance the water element in your body and promote fluid thoughts and higher spiritual faculties during meditation.

How to Do It: Bring the pinky finger to touch the tip of your thumb. Leave your index, middle, and ring fingers extended. Use a light pressure to finish the “seal”.

Associated Elements: Water

Detoxification Hand Position: Apana Mudra

The Apana Mudra is all about detoxification. *Apana* means “downward moving force”, thus this mudra is linked to flushing out toxins through

the excretive and digestive systems. It is thought to strengthen the heart, balance the doshas, and improve flow of sweat, urine, and stool.

How to Do It: Using both your right and left hand, fold your middle and ring finger down while keeping the index fingers pointing upwards. Then, fold the tip of your thumb to touch the tips of your middle and ring finger.

Associated Elements: Space & Earth

Mudra of Generosity: Varada Mudra

When you are seeking a granting of wishes or trying to be more generous with your time or money, the Varada mudra evokes charity and compassion. This gesture helps spread kindness and good vibes. It looks like an open resting hand at the sacral chakra.

How to Do It: Rest your left hand on your left knee with your palm facing upwards and fingers straight. You can use your right hand to create another mudra or just leave it facing up in your lap.

Associated Elements: All

The Teaching Mudra: Vitarka Mudra

The Vitarka mudra helps transmit the core purpose of important teachings, specifically those of the Buddha or a spiritual guru. The circle between the index finger and thumb signifies the wheel of teaching. This mudra can help you be more receptive to learning and personal growth.

How to Do It: First, touch the tip of your right index finger to your thumb and create a circle. Next, raise the right hand to your heart chakra and face your hand outwards. Keep the left hand resting with the palm facing up and fingers pointed downwards.

Associated Elements: Fire & Air

Namaskara or Anjali Mudra

Commonly known as “namaste hands” or “namaskar”, the Anjali mudra is universally recognized as a symbol of yoga. It translates to “salutation” and is used as a common greeting and also promotes a mutual respect for others.

This mudra can help connect you more to the heart’s language to feel more compassion and love for your fellow humans. Namaskara is most often accompanied by the words “namaste” and a light head bow.

How to Do It: Bring your palms together at heart center with the edges of the pinky fingers and thumbs touching each other.

Associated Elements: All

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- *Baba, Meher (1995). Discourses. Myrtle Beach, SC: Sheriar Foundation. ISBN 978-1-880619-09-4.*
- *Baxter, Roger (1823). Meditations For Every Day In The Year . New York: Benziger Brothers.*
- *Cooper, David. A. The Art of Meditation: A Complete Guide. ISBN 81-7992-164-6*
- *Easwaran, Eknath. Meditation (see article). ISBN 0-915132-66-4 new edition: Passage Meditation. ISBN 978-1-58638-026-7. The Mantram Handbook ISBN 978-1-58638-028-1*
- *Glickman, Marshall (2002) Beyond the Breath: Extraordinary Mindfulness Through Whole-Body Vipassana. ISBN 1-58290-043-4*
- *Goenka, S. N. Meditation Now: Inner Peace through Inner Wisdom, ISBN 1-928706-23-1, 978-1-928706-23-6*
- *Hanson, Rick; Mendius, Richard (2009). Buddha's Brain: The Practical Neuroscience of Happiness, Love, and Wisdom. New Harbinger Publications. ISBN 978-1-57224-695-9.*
- *Hart, William. Art of Living, Vipassana Meditation, ISBN 0-06-063724-2, ISBN 978-0-06-063724-8*
- *Krishnamurti, Jiddu. This Light in Oneself: True Meditation, 1999, Shambhala Publications. ISBN 1-57062-442-9*
- *Heller, Rick. Secular Meditation: 32 Practices for Cultivating Inner Peace, Compassion, and Joy – A Guide from the Humanist Community at Harvard, 2015, New World Library. ISBN 978-1-60868-369-7*
- *Downey, Michael. Understanding Christian Spirituality. New York: Paulist Press, 1997.*

- Charlene Spretnak, *The Spiritual Dynamic in Modern Art : Art History Reconsidered, 1800 to the Present*, 1986.
- Eck, Diana L. *A New Religious America*. San Francisco: Harper, 2001.
- Metzinger, Thomas (2013). *Spirituality and Intellectual Honesty: An Essay (PDF)*. Self-Published. ISBN 978-3-00-041539-5.
- "Spirituality and Intellectual Honesty with Thomas Metzinger". Krishnamurti Educational Center. July 19, 2017. Archived from the original on 2021-12-11 –
- Schmidt, Leigh Eric. *Restless Souls : The Making of American Spirituality*. San Francisco: Harper, 2005. ISBN 0-06-054566-6
- Carrette, Jeremy R.; King, Richard (2005), *Selling Spirituality: The Silent Takeover of Religion*, Taylor & Francis Group