



Hi Everyone

This month's newsletter is an older one I wrote before about my experience of meditation and the great benefits it brings into my life. With today's lifestyle and pace the importance of meditation is greater than ever.

Benefits of Meditation

When I first discovered meditation over 10 years ago I was going through many growing pains and healing. I found it out of suffering and a need to make the emotional pain go away at that time. My intuition told me to try it out and that I will need to learn how to meditate to better myself as a person and to gain control over my mind.

I first tried it through a class that was teaching people how to meditate at this new age book store **(at a mall out of all places)**. It was a **guided meditation** using **visualization** given to you by the teacher/guide. My experience was so powerful that it came as a surprise and I had a huge emotional release. What I realized and saw during the meditation was the pain that I held inside for so many years since childhood. I also saw an image of the only grandmother I knew during my childhood that passed away when my family and myself immigrated to Canada. She was comforting me in my mind, it was very powerful and I still get Goosebumps when I remember the experience.

Since that day I wanted to learn as much as I could, by reading books, listening to audio tapes and CD's. Going to workshops and learning different styles of meditations from different cultures. I was like a sponge trying to absorb as much as I can and keep with what resonated with me. I even went to meditation silent retreats of 10 day durations (www.dhamma.org).

At first people around me didn't understand....

"Why do you need to do this?"

"Why be silent for all those days?"

"They might brainwash you"

"You might go crazy".

At that time many people including some of my friends and family were unfamiliar with meditation and didn't fully understand the benefits. I felt misunderstood but I stuck to what I needed to do and to my truth, and went through and experienced periods of bliss, peacefulness and personal freedom.

Some of the benefits are:

- ◆ More energy,
- ◆ Improved quality of sleep,
- ◆ Decreased anxiety,
- ◆ Lessened chronological aging,
- ◆ Improved concentration,
- ◆ improved visual acuity,
- ◆ Increased alertness and heightened immunity. results in
- ◆ Improvement of hypertension,
- ◆ Sleep disorders,
- ◆ Headaches,
- ◆ Heart disturbances,
- ◆ Chronic pain
- ◆ Pain due to cancer,
- ◆ Infertility and irritable bowel syndrome.

Following meditation, mental and physical refreshment result – and benefits are cumulative with regular practice.”

How to Meditate

Meditation is both simple and complex. It's like defining the color orange: When you see it you know it. Similarly, the experience of meditation is best, well...experienced. In an article in New View magazine, Shippensburg University's Dr. C. George Boeree describes the basics of **Buddhist meditation**. In summary, the beginner's technique is as follows:

1. Sit or kneel comfortably.
2. The hands are loose and open with the palms up, one atop the other and thumbs lightly touching.
3. Head is upright. Eyes may be closed or open. If open they should focus on your hands or a spot nearby.
4. Beginning Meditators should count upwards to ten on each exhale. Breathe in a relaxed and natural way. Then begin again at one and repeat. Continue to breathe naturally.
5. Continue for 15 minutes.

In my personal experience, I don't find that the specific length of time is as important as repetition and persistence. To paraphrase, 10 minutes daily beats 15 minutes once a week. This brings me to another point: We all have different personalities and as such, different meditation approaches suit some more than others. Thankfully there are many varieties of meditation.