

What is Meditation? A Guide to the Perplexed

Today's webinar is designed to introduce people unfamiliar to meditation to what it does, what one needs to think about when attempting to find a resonant and appropriate meditation program, and how meditation is different than psychotherapy and hypnosis.

If you have friends or family who might like to find out more about meditation, invite them to today's webinar. We will share some information about meditation, and answer questions that people may have about how meditation can be helpful to them.

Effects of Meditation at Different Bands

By George A. Boyd © 2002

People commonly ask, what are some of the positive effects of meditation? Some of these beneficial actions of meditation are shown in the table below.

Neurological	Increased productions of alpha waves, coordination of left and right cerebral hemispheres
Physical/ Biochemical	Lowering of lactate levels, lowered indicators of stress (e.g., decrease of cortisol), with increase of endorphins, norepinephrine, and GABA
Etheric	Cessation of discharge through motor organs, activation of nexus and integration centers (chakras), setting up regeneration and healing rhythms
Emotional	Calming emotions, processing and releasing emotions
Mental	Activating other orders of mentation beyond reason (deductive and analogic reasoning), including inductive, dialectic, and mandalic orders of thinking
Volitional	Activating higher octaves of the will beyond Reactive, Habit, and Skillful will
Attentional	Moving attention from the ground state to deeper strata of the mind

Spiritual	Awakening and activation of the spiritual heart, increase in compassion and altruistic behavior
Noetic	Awakening and activation of the Transpersonal Self

For meditation to have beneficial effects, meditators must (1) know what they are doing, (2) know why they are doing it, (3) perform the meditation correctly, and (4) do the meditational practice at the correct octave being, e.g., the cutting edge of spirituality.

Further, it is valuable for meditators to use an appropriate meditation to accomplish their intended goal—using affirmations, for example, will not unfold the spiritual evolutionary potentials of the Soul.

We also recommend that meditators learn more than one type of meditation so they can do more than one thing. Even as a carpenter uses more tools than just a hammer, so meditators should have more than one technique to work on themselves.

Integral meditation systems incorporate more than one technique of meditation because to fulfill the complete spiritual work, one technique is insufficient and incomplete. Those interested in learning more about our Integral meditation approach can read about it on our website, <http://www.mudrashram.com>, or read about it in our books.



Finding a Meditation Program that Is Right for You

Q: What is the best meditation for me?

A: The answer to this question is based on how you answer another, more important query: “What are you trying to achieve through meditation?”

This can be visualized as a range of possible objectives.

Objective	Example
1. <i>A single targeted personal objective</i>	Overcome stress at work
2. <i>Multiple personal objectives under the same theme</i>	Overcome stress at work, while driving in traffic, and in your relationship
3. <i>Single personal objectives under different themes</i>	Overcome stress, which makes your back pain worse; learn ways to cope with the back pain, so you can lower your reliance on pain killers
4. <i>Check list of personal objectives</i>	Overcome stress, cope with back pain, make your sex life more fulfilling, and bring more serenity and beauty into your experience
5. <i>Mixed personal and spiritual objectives</i>	Overcome stress, bring more serenity and beauty into your experience, and learn to commune with your Higher Power (God)
6. <i>Multiple personal issues that get in the way of spiritual objectives</i>	Overcome laziness to allow you to meditate regularly; overcome anger to make you more loving, compassionate, and understanding; and overcome time-wasting habits that take you away from meditation
7. <i>Single spiritual objective</i>	Learning to awaken inner vision
8. <i>Multiple spiritual objectives</i>	Learning to awaken inner vision; how to commune with God effectively through prayer and meditation; and how to understand the meaning in scriptures

Objective	Example
9. A comprehensive, multi-faceted program the addresses multiple active and potential personal and spiritual objectives	Stress reduction and centering methods; awakening the Kundalini; opening the spiritual heart and progressing on the path of Light and Sound; using a transformational mantra to unfold your spiritual potentials; traveling in full consciousness through the spiritual realms; receiving intuitive guidance from the Soul; channeling inner healing energy to energize, renew, and work on personal issues; and discovering right action and aligning with Purpose



A meditation teacher needs to design a different program, depending on which set of objectives an individual is requesting. In example, for types one through eight, we offer an individualized meditation consultation. For those who want a comprehensive program, we offer the Mudrashram® Master Course in Meditation, which is an in-person course; we also offer the Accelerated Meditation Program, which is a by-mail version of the Master Course for those who cannot study with us in person.

Different meditations produce different results, so a person who wants to learn meditation needs to know what they want to achieve, and what meditation is best for that objective. These different meditation techniques

1. Lead the attention to different strata of the mind.
2. Bring out different abilities within you, depending on what level of the mind you access.
3. Can have positive or negative effects, depending on how they are used—yes, meditation, if misused, can have harmful effects.

4. Can affect you at the personal level in your daily life (Practical Meditation); grant you access to the abilities and knowledge of your Subconscious mind (Liminal Meditation); get you in touch with your core values, authentic choices, and your personal empowerment (Centering Meditation); and allow you to contact and work with your spiritual essences (Transcendence Meditation).
5. Operate differently and produce different results, depending how they are framed—e.g., what is the meditation objective—and the suggestions given to produce the altered state of awareness in which that objective can be realized. For example, the same mantra might be used to help you relax and relive stress, to center (e.g., to contact the Self), to gain enlightenment (e.g., to contact the Soul), or to transcend into a higher octave of being and unite with cosmic consciousness.
6. Produce varying results based on the personal factors that influence your meditation—your health, your vitality, your emotional mood, your mental alertness, and your ability to concentrate your attention can each impact the quality of your meditation. Other factors, such as whether you slept well, what you have eaten, and your biorhythms can also have an effect on it.
7. Are conditioned by your motivations and desires, which can lead you away from spirituality and hinder your attempts to interiorize; or your desires can powerfully support your quest for self-transcendence and communion with the Divine.

Your Personal and Spiritual Toolbox

A meditation teacher can teach you how to use a single meditation tool. He can show you how to use that tool in different ways in different situations. He can teach you more than one tool. Or he can give you the whole toolbox, and show you how to use each of the tools.

You make the decision as to what tools you need, based on why you need them. So in our approach, meditation is always customized to what you need.

Different objectives require different meditation tools. We excerpt from the article, "Meditation Objectives," to show you the range of meditation techniques and how they are utilized.

Purpose	Types of Meditation
(1) Sensory enhancement and greater self awareness	Vipassana, mindfulness, Zen
(2) Relaxation and stress reduction	Relaxing into the Self, Watching the Breath and other Pranayama techniques, Hatha Yoga
(3) Character reformation	Introspection, monitoring thoughts, words and deeds, prayer, Dharma Yoga
(4) Personal insight and self understanding	Reflection and disidentification, Jnana Yoga techniques (chords one through four), contemplation of each vehicle of consciousness of the Conscious, Subconscious and Metaconscious minds and their centers
(5) Personal empowerment	Contemplation of the will, study of martial arts, self-discipline through pursuit of a life passion (e.g., athletic, artistic, scientific, business success), centering techniques that allow you to gain union with the Self
(6) Psychic sensitivity	Contemplation of the attentional principle (Purusa Dhyana), Raja Yoga, contemplation of the centers of the astral body and the vehicle of consciousness on the Psychic Realm
(7) Achievement of personal dreams	Self-hypnosis, affirmation, prayer, self-discipline and study
(8) Gaining wisdom and spiritual discernment	Jnana Yoga techniques (chords five through seven), contemplation of each vehicle of consciousness of the Superconscious mind and its centers, contemplating the ensouling entity (Atma Dhyana)

Purpose	Types of Meditation
(9) Awakening the abilities or powers (siddhis) of the Superconscious mind	Contemplation of each vehicle of consciousness of the Superconscious mind and its centers, Kundalini Yoga, Agni Yoga
(10) Awakening the spiritual heart and traveling back to its Source	Contemplation of the spirit (Surat Dhyān), Nada Yoga
(11) Unfolding the spiritual evolutionary potentials of the ensouling entity and its vehicles of consciousness	Mantra Yoga (using a transformational mantra), Guru Kripa Yoga or Light Immersion, and in specific bands of the Great Continuum of Consciousness, Kriya Yoga (Cosmic and Supracosmic), and Nada Yoga (Transcendental)
(12) Gaining union of the attention with the Divine (Ishta Devata Laya Yoga)	Chanting, ecstatic breathing, Kundalini Yoga
(13) Gaining union of the spirit with the Divine	Nada Yoga, contemplation of the guide upon the Nadamic path (Guru Dhyān meditation)
(14) Gaining union of the ensouling entity with the Divine	Mantra Yoga (using a transformational mantra), Guru Kripa Yoga or Light Immersion, and in specific bands of the Great Continuum of Consciousness, Kriya Yoga (Cosmic and Supracosmic) and Nada Yoga (Transcendental)

“Purposes (1) through (7) are meditation objectives of the personal zone. We highlight these meditations in the Introduction to Meditation Class.”

“Purposes (8) through (14) are meditations of the transpersonal zone. We teach these meditations in the Accelerated Meditation Program, the Mudrashram® Master Course in Meditation, the Satsang Program Home Study Course, and the Mudrashram® Advanced Course in Meditation.”

So how may we assist you? If you wish to learn meditation, we can show you the entire spectrum of methods—from the most basic, rudimentary techniques for a complete beginner, to the most advanced practices, known only to the Great Adepts—and everything in between.



Comparisons of Therapeutic Modalities

Excerpted from *Meditation for Therapy: Theory and Application* © 2011

In comparing the therapeutic modalities of psychotherapy, hypnosis and meditation, we find some similarities and differences between them as they are examined on several dimensions. These are shown in the table below and on the next page.

Comparison Factor	Psychotherapy	Hypnosis	Meditation
Purpose	Change belief, behavior, self concept to enhance functioning	Change belief, behavior, gain control over subconscious and Superconscious faculties	Transcend belief, gain union with Transpersonal essence and mastery over Supreme Nature

Comparison Factor	Psychotherapy	Hypnosis	Meditation
Dominant Fields of Mind	Conscious Lower and Middle Unconscious Metaconscious Superconscious	Subconscious Superconscious	Subconscious Metaconscious Superconscious Higher Unconscious
Guide	Psychotherapist	Hypnotherapist	Meditation Master or Guru
Vehicle	Physical/Etheric	Astral Body	Psychic/Spiritual/ Noetic
Foundation	Science	Magic	Light of Initiation, The Path
Active Principle	Reason and intelligence surmounts ignorance and fear	Suggestion activates the powers of the inner vehicles	The Divine Light of the Master guides, empowers, purifies, and initiates
Major Zone of Operation	Conscious mind, ego, personal unconscious, faculties of Metaconscious mind	Astral body, personal unconscious, collective unconscious	Attention, attentional principle, and spirit—once activated—transcend the personality and do inner work in the Subconscious, Metaconscious, and Superconscious bands of the mind
Keynote	Integration	Control	Mastery

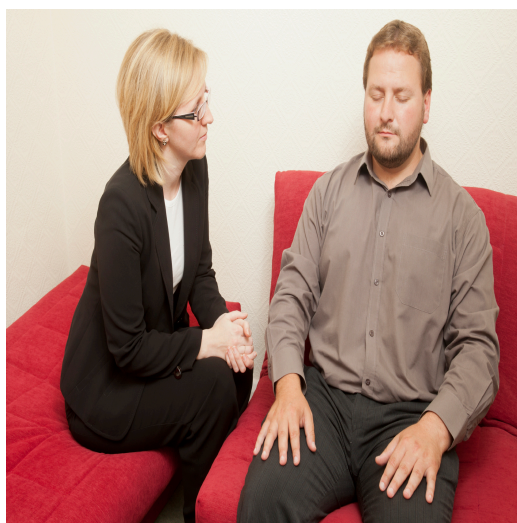
In each case the psychotherapist, the hypnotherapist and the meditation master are guides to the client (or meditation student). But where they guide the individual varies depending on the client's presenting problem, the guide's education and philosophy that informs his or her approach, and their intuition of what intervention needs to be taken to resolve the client's presenting problem.

Similarly, psychotherapy, hypnosis and meditation provide solutions for the problems of living, resolving the inner core of suffering, and improving functioning and relating, only they approach the problem differently.

The psychotherapist educates and empowers the individual to relate and function more skillfully. The hypnotherapist gives suggestions while the client is in a trance state and lets the creative powers of the client's mind resolve the problem. The meditation master teaches the individual how to transcend the personality and work from the Higher Planes.

All three seek to uncover the causes of suffering and uproot it. All seek to empower the individual. Psychotherapy empowers the Self. Hypnosis activates the intention of the attentional principle and the innate creative abilities of the Subconscious and Superconscious mind. Meditation awakens the three higher centers of the attentional principle, spirit, and Soul.

To maximize the ability to facilitate a client's growth, self-discovery and actualization, we believe knowledge of all three major modalities is valuable. We continue this discussion of the three major modalities in our workshop, *Meditation for Therapists*, which some of you may find evocative and useful in learning about how meditation can augment psychotherapeutic interventions with clients who have difficulty sensing their inner life.





If you have done meditation before, what levels of your body and mind did the meditation affect?

Did you experience different results doing different meditations? What different results did these meditations produce?

Have you ever had a negative experience with meditation? What happened? Did you continue the meditation after that experience? Did the negative experience continue?

What meditation objectives have you pursued? Did doing meditation help you achieve your objective?

If you have done different meditations for this objective, did you find some did not produce the results you want?

Have you ever worked on a personal problem using psychotherapy, hypnosis, *and* meditation? Which modality worked best for you? Why do you feel this modality worked best?

If you have not meditated before, but have interest in learning meditation, what results do you want to gain from meditation?

If you are currently doing meditation, what areas of your practice do you want to improve?

Did you meditation earlier in your life, but abandoned it because you became busy with work and family? How would meditation help you in your life today?

Thank you for attending our webinar today!

