



# *Presents*

## **Soothe Your Insides:**

A Fun, Scientific, Insightful, And Experiential Journey Through  
Meditation, Mindfulness, And Metta (Loving Kindness)

*With*

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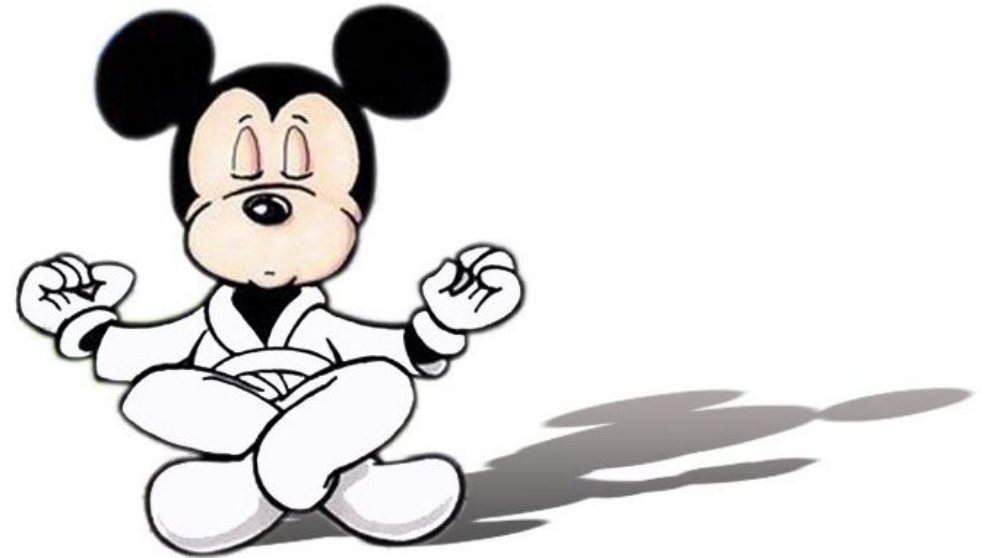
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# Yoga Sutra 1.1

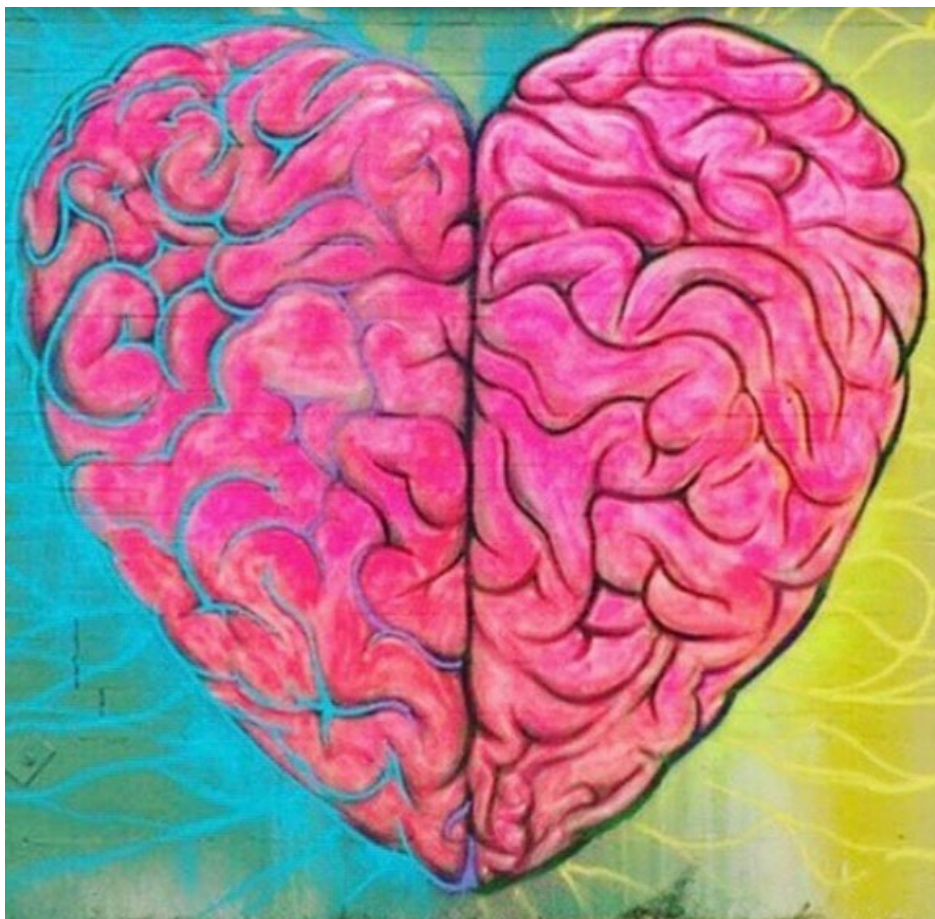
- Atha Yoganushasanam: NOW Is The Time To Practice Yoga
- AKA The Disneyworld Sutra
- AKA The Commitment Sutra



# Yoga Sutra 1.2

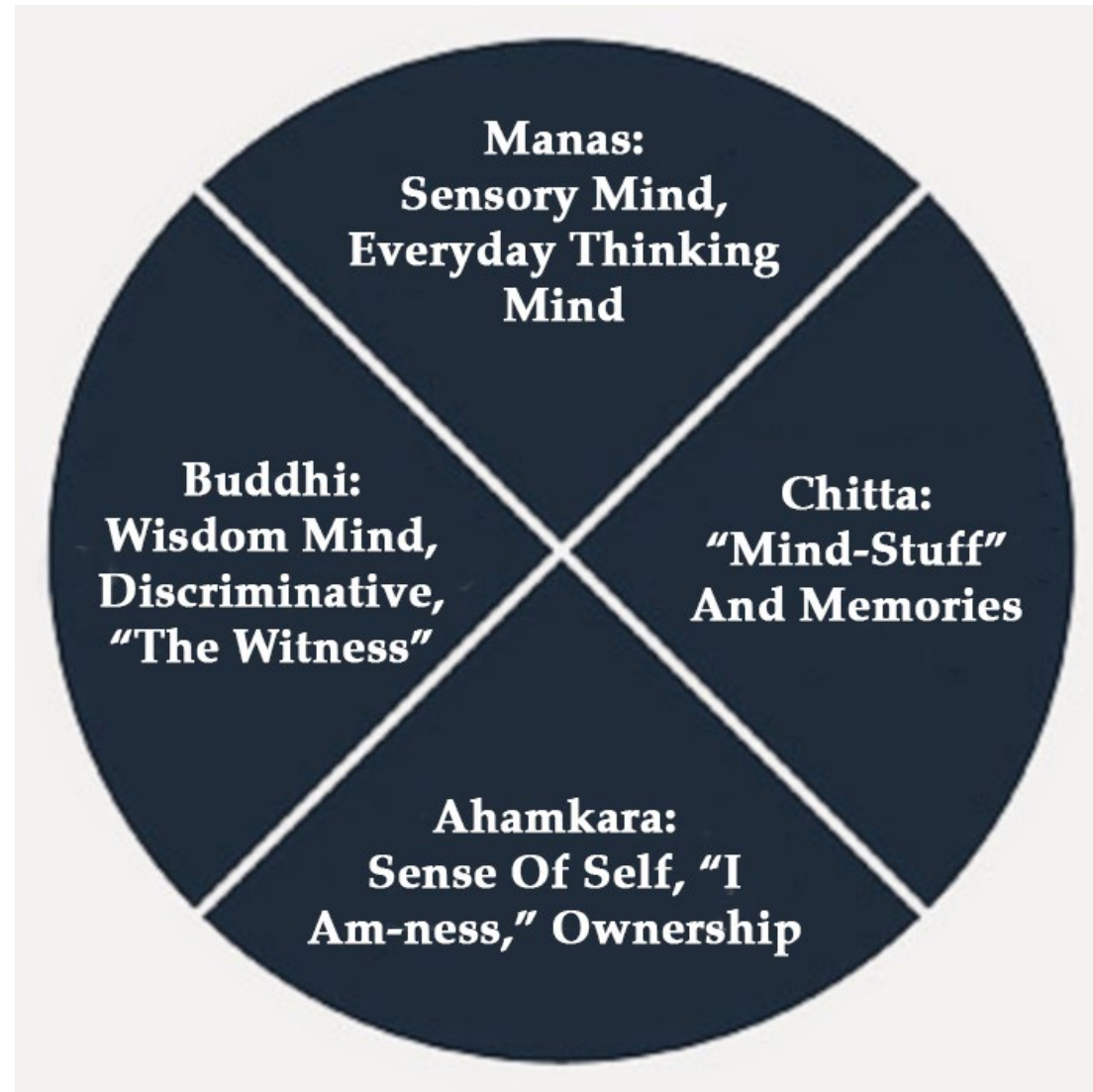
- Yoga Chitta Vritti Nirodaha: Yoga is the process of harnessing the waves of your heart-mind.
- Yoga (Yoga) Chitta (heart-mind) Vritti (waves of thought) Nirodaha (harness)
- Many define Yoga in Yoga Sutra 1.2 as “the process of stopping or ceasing the fluctuations of the mind/mind stuff.” And that’s fine. But, Sanskrit is a polysemic, codified language meaning there’s no one way to define a Sanskrit-English translation and it’s based on context, usage, one’s code-breaking ability, etc. For instance, did you know that Paramahansa Yogananda defined chitta as “heart-mind” in writings as far back as 1927 or that T. Krishnamacharya defined nirodaha as “harnessing,” not stopping or ceasing like so many others. Kinda changes a lot, especially considering that the heart’s electromagnetic field is 5000x stronger than that of the brain and 60-65% of the cells are neural, identical to those present in the brain.

# Yoga Sutra 1.2

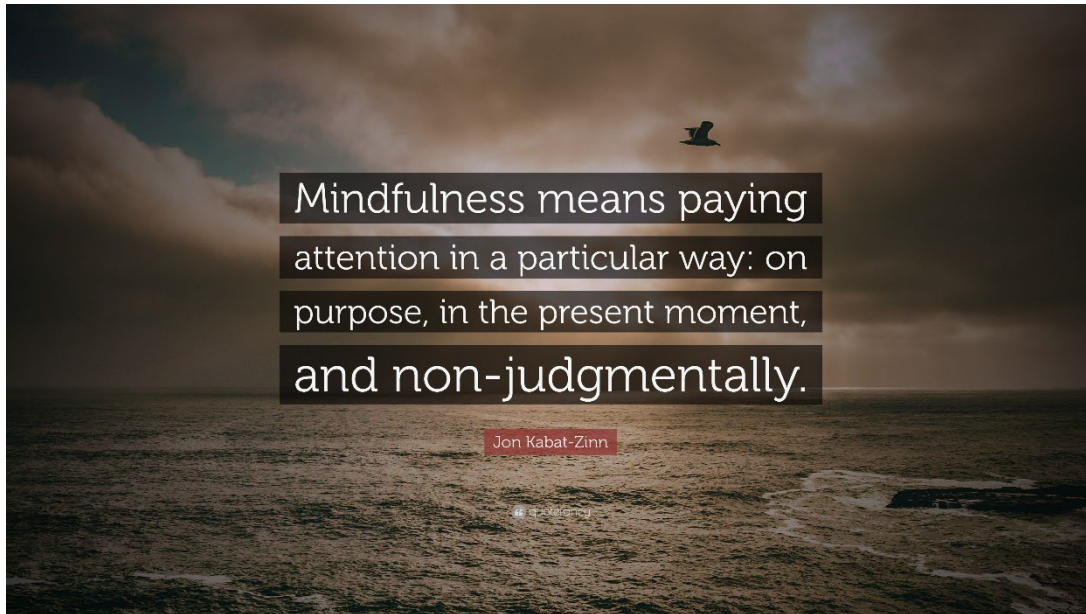


In this way in Sutra 1.2, and especially for householders, Yoga is less like a beaver dam and more like a hydroelectric plant. When you really think about it, too, who wants to “stop” their mind? Those who have a negative message playing on repeat, which is many people, and why it sounds so appealing to them. Yet, most really just want to change what our minds are saying – not to turn it off – but to become [all California hippie stuff aside] better friends with our hearts and minds. So, what about this? Instead of beating yourself up inside, try compassionate self-speak. Instead of seeing faults, try seeing beauty. Instead of judging, try radical acceptance. Instead of hating, try loving-kindness. Instead of reacting, try breathing. If you practice that in your meditation and Yoga practices, you won’t want to shut off your mind. You might, in fact, want to pump up the volume!

# 4 Aspects Of Mind According To Yoga



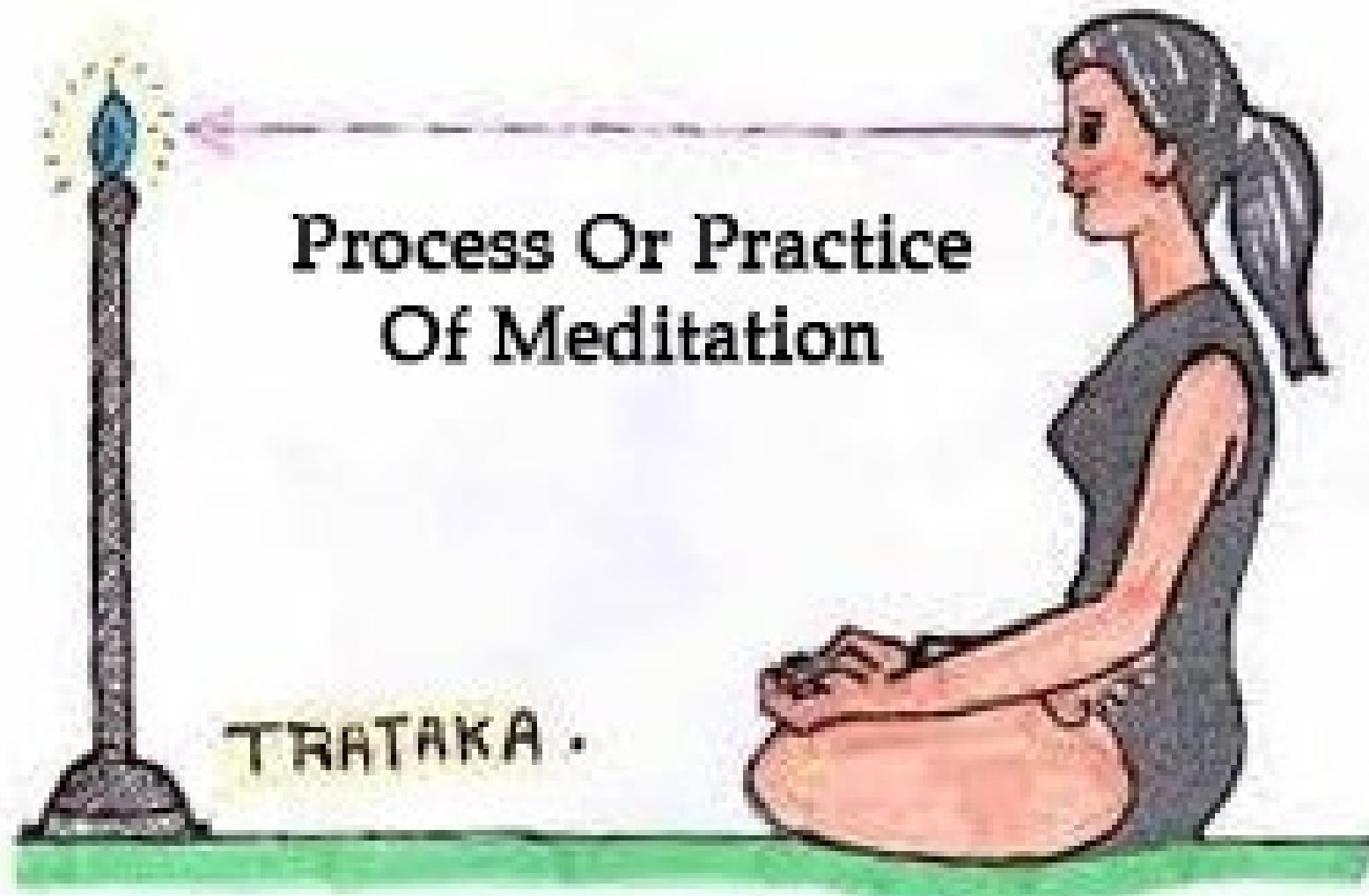
# Mindfulness Vs. Meditation



- The Oxford Dictionary defines mindfulness as “the quality or state of being conscious or aware of something” and “a mental state achieved by focusing one’s awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one’s feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations, used as a therapeutic technique”
- Meditation is a formal practice as a means of quieting, focusing, harnessing, clearing, enhancing, and/or transforming the contents of the mind where an individual uses a technique – such as mindfulness or focusing the mind on a particular object, thought, or activity – to train attention and awareness to according to Patanjali, develop a sattvic mind
- Attaining a meditative state was originally the entire goal of Yoga
  - Ancient yogis identified that as a state that is free from suffering
  - Yoga as a philosophy, contemplative practices, and way of life took root in the USA thanks to Transcendentalist thinkers in the early 1800s (Emerson and Thoreau) and the postures were popularized by LA celebrities in the mid 1900s
- Thus, mindfulness is a quality or a state of being, whereas meditation is practice or a tool that helps us develop mindfulness
- We have mindfulness classes in USC PE + MBH!

Object

Subject



Process Or Practice  
Of Meditation

TRATAKA .

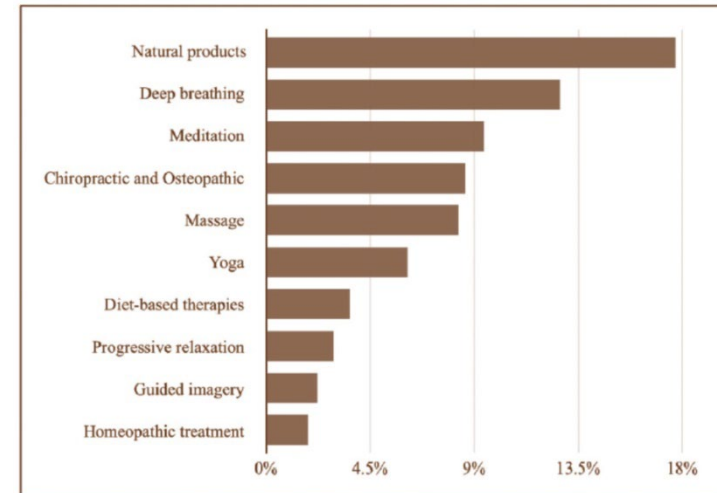


Meditation is the means of  
unification of the subject and  
object. Meditate.

— *Swami Vivekananda* —

# Meditation Overview

- *Meditation* is a catchall term that refers to innumerable techniques that can be done sitting quietly with the eyes closed. Typically, in Yoga and mindfulness, meditation is practiced to balance our mental health internally and/or reframe situations externally into a context where they make sense and provide us with deeper meaning and relationships in life. According to government statistics, more than 20 million people in the United States practice meditation, which is almost 10 percent of the adult population (Barnes, Bloom, and Nahin 2008).



# Meditation Notes #1

- *Meditation can be simple.* Select something you enjoy repeating—a word, sound, phrase, prayer, mental image, breath-counting sequence, or a muscular motion such as breathing or a mudra (gesture). Attend to this in the same effortless way you attend to anything that attracts you. When your attention wanders off, return to your repetition kindly without judgement or trying to block out your thoughts (Beary and Benson, 1974; Roche, 1998).

From “An Instinctive Approach to Meditation Therapy by Lorin Roche, Ph.D.

Payne, Larry, et al. *Yoga Therapy and Integrative Medicine: Where Ancient Science Meets Modern Medicine*.  
North Bergen, New Jersey: Basic Health Publications. 2015. pp. 146-147.

# From The Shvetashvatara Upanishad



“Fire is not seen until one firestick rubs  
Against another, though the fire remains  
Hidden in the firestick. So does the Lord of Love  
Remain hidden in the body until  
He/She is revealed through the mystic mantram.

Let your body be the lower firestick;  
Let the mantram be the upper. Rub them  
Against each other in meditation  
And realize the Lord of Love.

Like oil in sesame seeds, like butter  
In cream, like water in springs, like fire  
In firesticks, so dwells the Lord of Love,  
The Self, in the very depths of consciousness.  
Realize Him/Her through truth and meditation.

The Self is hidden in the hearts of all,  
As butter lies hidden in cream. Realize  
The Self in the depths of meditation,  
The Lord of Love, Supreme Reality,  
Who is the goal of all knowledge.

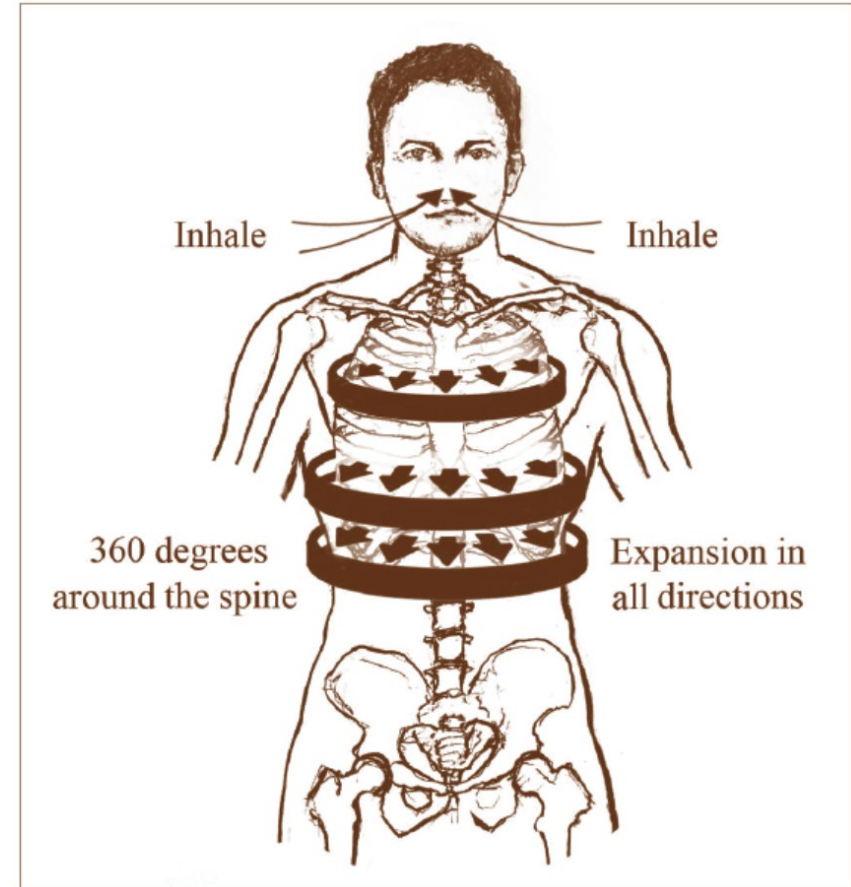
This is the highest mystical teaching;  
This is the highest mystical teaching.”

# Meditation Notes #2

- *Meditation can be powerful.* In a series of studies at Harvard Medical School throughout the 1970s, Herbert Benson and his associates found that when experimental subjects in a physiology lab follow the simple meditation instructions described above, an integrated full-body response is activated, which creates profound restfulness and relaxation; within a few minutes, subjects are in a state of rest deeper than deep sleep, although they are awake (Wallace, et al., 1971).

# Meditation Notes #2 (Cont.)

- During meditation, oxygen consumption decreases by 10 to 17 percent in the first 3 to 5 minutes (Beary, and Benson, 1974). By comparison, during sleep, oxygen consumption drops gradually by about 8 percent over a period of hours. Thus, meditation gives quick access to a kind of rest and relaxation that is deeper than sleep, and daily practice has been shown to have significant clinical benefits for many stress-related illnesses (Benson and Proctor, 2010).



# Meditation Notes #3

- *Meditation is instinctive.* The body has wonderful responsiveness built in, as part of our survival intelligence (Sapolsky, 1994). If you perceive something frightening in your environment, your body instantly activates the fight-or-flight response to deal with the emergency. If you even *think* of something frightening, your body responds in the same way—your heart rate, blood pressure, breathing, digestion, and blood chemistry are all immediately affected.

# Meditation Notes #3 (Cont.)



- Conversely, if you think of something peaceful and wonderful, the body responds by activating the parasympathetic, “rest and digest,” relaxation response. Ultimately, we all have this built-in ability to activate the relaxation response, and it is as natural and instinctive as the stress response. Meditation can be considered a powerful, reliable, and efficient way of activating this relaxation and healing response, which is the mirror opposite of the stress response.

*Let's do a body scan practice!*

# Dr. Richard Miller: Interpreting Yale Neuroscience Research On The Meditation Experience

## **Default Network (DN)**

- I-Me-Mine autobiographical self
- Recursive thinking (positive & negative)
- Negativity Bias (mistake a stick for a snake)

## **Dorsal Attention Network (DAN)**

- Focusing of attention and concentration
- Planning and encoding coping strategies

## **Control Network (CN)**

- Executive control of attention/concentration
- Switches between DN and DAN



# Dr. Richard Miller: Interpreting Yale Neuroscience Research On The Meditation Experience

## **Present-Centered Mode Network**

- Reduced Beta
- Increased Gamma
- Being (Non-self; Non-separation)
  - Insight
  - Open to Infinite Possibilities
  - Positive overcomes Negativity Bias
  - Equanimity, Well-Being

*Let's do a breath-centered practice to try to experience the present-centered mode network!*

# UNDERSTANDING YOGA NIDRA AND BRAIN WAVES

BETA

14-30 Hz



Awake, normal alert  
consciousness

ALPHA

9-13 Hz



Physically and mentally  
relaxed, awake but drowsy

DELTA

Below 4 Hz



Deep (dreamless) sleep,  
loss of bodily awareness

THETA

4-8 Hz



Reduced consciousness,  
deep meditation, dreams,  
light sleep, REM sleep

GAMMA

30 Hz and above



Heightened perception

# What Is Mindfulness

## And What Are Some Benefits To The Practice

- Mindfulness is "the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment" (p. 145, Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Kerrigan et al., 2017).
- Mindfulness has been shown to improve memory and testing performance, reduce stress levels, and foster better physical health (Bonamo, Legerski, & Thomas, 2015; Kerrigan et al., 2017). Mindfulness practice has also been shown to improve mental-health outcomes for students who are struggling in an academic setting (Dvorakova et al., 2017). While the goal of mindfulness is not to help people achieve more, it has remarkably reliable effects on well-being, job or academic performance, stress reduction, and general health for its practitioners.
- Check out the comprehensive addendum list of mindfulness research studies! ;-)

<https://cmhc.utexas.edu/wellbeing/stressreduction.html>

# Have a Cup Of Tea With It

- When you have a cup of tea with a friend, it's so that you can slow down, listen to them intently and compassionately, and show up to kindly assist with whatever is going on in their life
- In many practices and traditions of mindfulness meditation, we “have a cup of tea” with our thoughts, feelings, emotions, and sensations that come up in the practice, observing these as messengers that might have something insightful to reveal to us about ourselves or our lives if we witness, embrace, and leaned into them skillfully.
- Rather than silencing or forcing out our “vrittis” or “fluctuations of mind-stuff,” as stated above, we have a cup of tea with whatever comes up, in order to learn from it while allowing it to remain as long as is needed to deactivate its potency and increase our own understanding.



# Renouncing Vs. Engaging

## **Nun Or Monk/Sadhu Style**

- Detachment
- Distance
- Celibacy
- Denial
- Poverty
- Obedience
- Forced
- Kill Desire
- Homelessness
- Repress Ego

## **Householder/Householder Style**

- Attachment
- Intimacy
- Celebrating Sexuality
- Acceptance
- Generating Wealth
- Independence
- Spontaneous
- Live Desire
- Homey, Nesting
- Express Individuality

# Meditation According to Patanjali's 8 Limbs

## Yoga's Eight Limb Path (Ashtanga) To A Sattvic Mind

- Relationship guidelines (*yamas*): The perfect balance of honesty, kindness, and fairness (simultaneously)
- Lifestyle guidelines (*niyamas*): Ongoing refinement, reflection, and gratitude/acceptance
- Qualities of the Body: (*asana*) A balance of firmness (*sthira*) with softness (*sukha*) till the sense of body disappears
- Qualities of the Breath: (pranayama) The breath is both long (*dirgha*) and smooth (*sukhma*) allowing the mind to channel consciousness
- Correct use of the Senses: (pratyahara) the senses are in control and serve as an instrument of consciousness
- Control of the Mind: (*dharana, dhyana, samadhi*). The mind is consciously focused, relaxed, devoted and detached.

## Monier-Williams polysemic definitions of Limbs 5-8:

- Pratyahara – drawing back (troops from a battle), retreat, withdrawal, abstraction, dissolution of the
- Dharana – holding, possessing, supporting, bearing, concentration
- Dhyana – appreciate, meditation, attention, contemplation, musing
- Samadhi – trance, concentration of mind, putting together, settlement, joining with, deep concentration, meditation

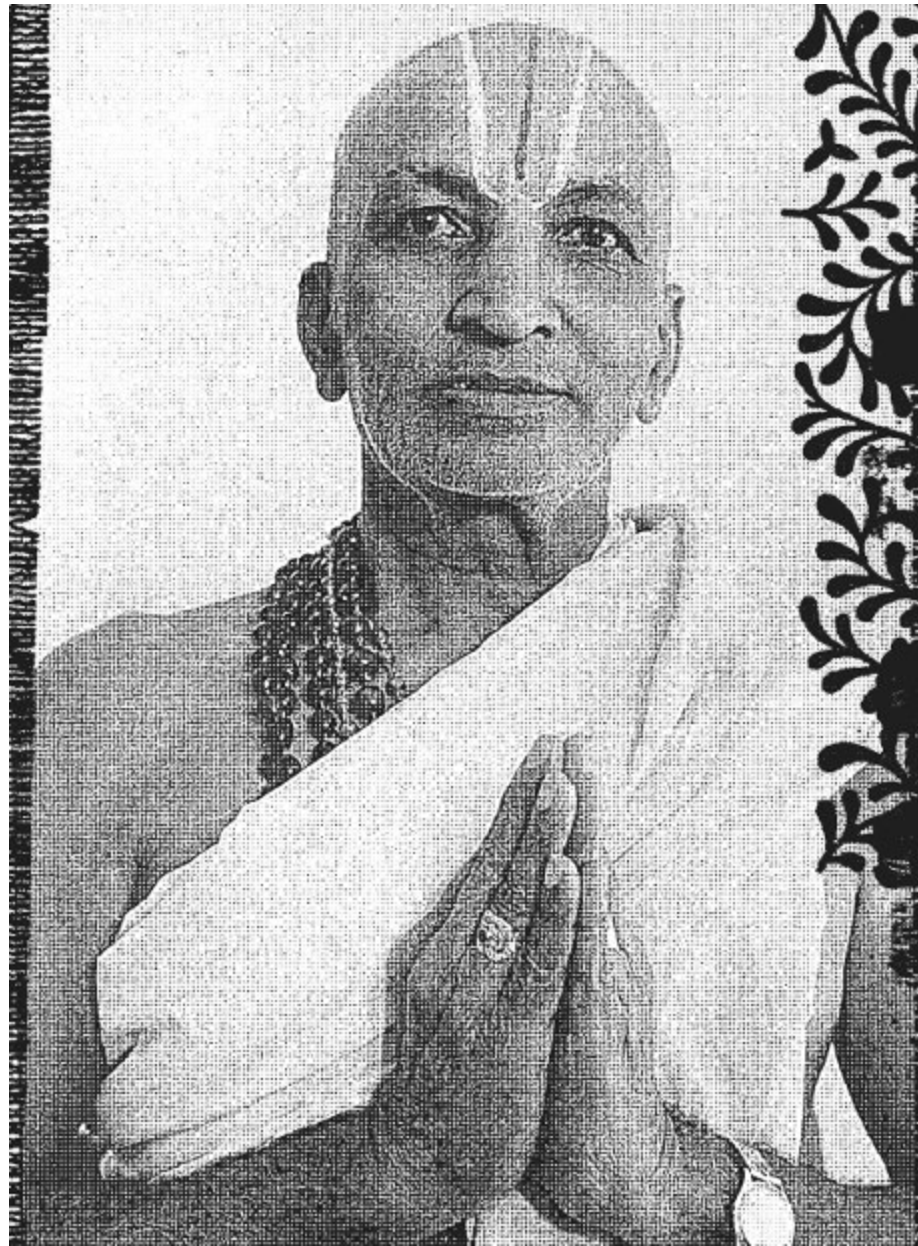
# Yoga Sutra 1.12

- Abhyasa Vairagyabhyam Tan Nirodaha
- Practice delinking and disassociating yourself from the things that don't fulfill you and harness [your mind and heart] to the things that bring you more sustainability
- The mind is like a baby with a toy...give the baby a new toy to play with before taking away the other one
- AKA Replacement Therapy Sutra



# Patanjali's Formula For Changing Behavior (The Dynamics Of Habituation)

- **Abhyasa – Practice**, adding new behavior, changing course to lead us closer to the goal. To be effective and sustainable, abhyasa must be done:
  - for a long period of time
  - without interruption
  - with enthusiasm
  - with conviction
- **Vairagya – de-linking**, letting go of an old behavior, letting go of an obstacle to us achieving our goal. If possible viragya follows abhyasa, and is done in stages from mere compliance (faking it) to actually effecting a change of heart, of character (making it)
- **SRADDHA (THE ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT)** – According to Patanjali, confidence (**Sraddha**) is required for us to have the energy to persevere and achieve our goals. Sraddha is the ability to visualize, remember, stay focused on the goal rather than the obstacles. Bhavana is the practical tool to help visualize the goal in a way that is positive, concrete, and specific.

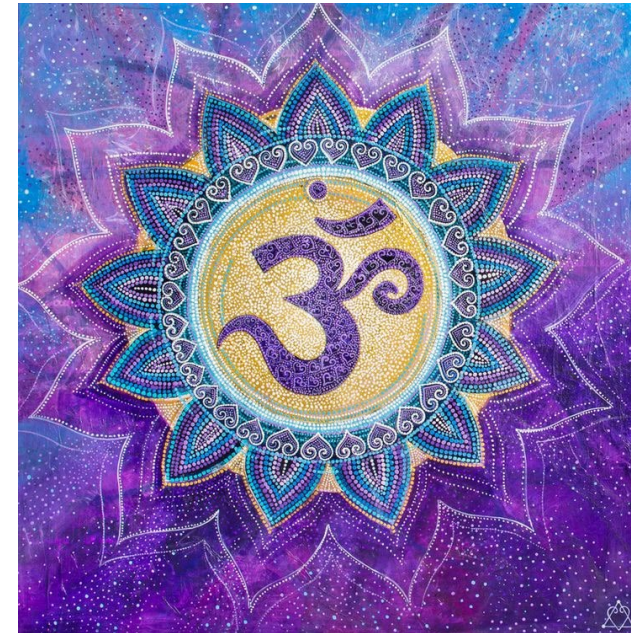


Yoga is a  
process of  
replacing  
old patterns,  
with new  
and more  
appropriate  
patterns.”

~ SRI T KRISHNAMACHARYA

# Yoga Sutra 1.23 – 1.29

- Yoga Sutra 1.23 – 1.29: The Benefit And Correct Use Of A Higher Power (Iswara)
- Yoga Sutra 1.23: Isvarapranidhanad Va – Orrrr, consider dedicating and devoting yourself to a Higher Power
- Yoga Sutra 1.27: Tasya Vachakah Pranavah – The mystical sound OM (pranavah) is the unlimited form of Isvara
- The Va Sutras 1.23-1.29 and 1.32-1.39 O:-)
- *Let's practice a meditative OM chant together in udgita pranayama style!*



# Radiance Sutras 16

Sanskrit:

*pranava adi sam uccharat  
plutante shunya bhavanat  
shunyayaparaya shaktya  
shunyatam eti bhairavi*

English Translation:

The roar of joy  
that set the worlds in motion  
Is reverberating in your body  
And the space between all bodies.

Find the exuberant vibration  
Humming in your secret places,  
Streaming through the channels of delight,  
Rising new in every moment.  
Know you are flooded by it always.

Beloved, listen.  
The ocean of sound is inviting you  
Into its spacious embrace,  
Calling you home.  
Float with the sound,  
Melt with it into divine silence.  
The sacred power of peace will carry you  
Into the dancing radiant emptiness  
That is the source of all.

# Radiance Sutra 49

Sanskrit:

jagdhi paana krita ullaasa rasa aananda  
vijrimbhanaat bhaavayet bharitaa  
avasthaam mahaa aanandah tatah bhavet

English Translation:

Tasting dark chocolate,  
A ripe apricot,  
A luscious Shiraz  
Your favorite elixir –  
Savor the expanding joy in your body.  
Nature is offering herself to you.

How astonishing  
How astonishing  
How astonishing  
This world can taste so good.  
So good.

Raise your glass,  
Close your eyes,  
Toast the universe.

The Sun and Moon and Earth danced together  
To bring you this delight.  
Receive the nectar on your tongue  
As a kiss of the divine.

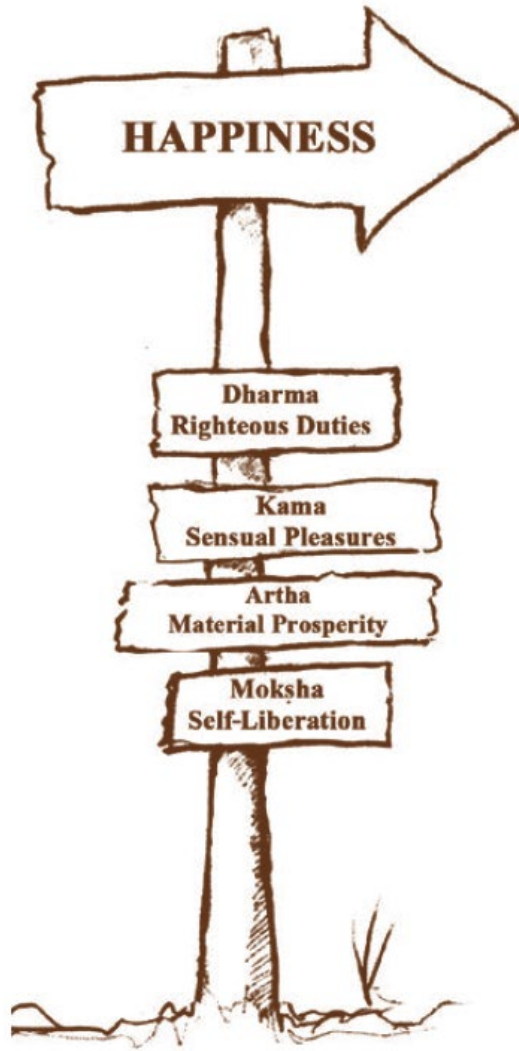
*Let's turn this sutra into a practice and track our mmmm!*

Action  
Rehearsal  
Phase  
"To Do" List, Work,  
Safety Scans

Resting  
Phase  
Peacefulness,  
Calmness,  
Relaxation

Pulsing  
Rhythm  
And  
Cycle  
Of  
Meditation

Restoring Phase  
Healing, Regenerating, Repairing



The 4 Purusharthas

# Swami Shakarananda Poem

To catch the mind and keep it still,  
Is no small problem for my porous will;  
As many times as I shut it down,  
Unceasing thoughts on me rebound.

In youth I tried through alcohol,  
To ease my stress and cool my gall;  
In later years I turned to grass,  
The effects were good – but did not last.

At last with failing hopes I turned,  
To Eastern paths, and my soul yearned  
To scale the mystic heights of bliss.  
Alas, no easy method is this.

And now with age and turmoil weary,  
All that's left me is this query:  
Will heart break or mind implode,  
Before my vrittis do nirode.

# Open Monitoring & Labelling Thoughts

- In open monitoring mindfulness meditation, meditators are instructed to openly monitor their thoughts and feelings non-judgmentally, non-reactively, and non-personally.
- Hamlet, Act II, Scene ii, “There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.”
- In labeling thoughts mindfulness meditation, the practitioner monitors the thoughts and then labels them accordingly to the types of thoughts they are; whether they are past, present, or future; and whether they have a negative, neutral, or positive charge to them.

# Examples of Labeling Thoughts

- Thinking about something in the past and the thought is *neutral*, – “I went to the zoo last week.” – is **REMEMBERING**.
- Thinking about the past and the thought has a positive charge – “The chopped salad I ate last Friday was amazing!” - is **REMINISCING**.
- Thinking about the past and the thought has a *negative charge* – “I can’t believe he broke up with me via text message!!!” – is **REGRETTING**.
- Thinking about something in the present and the thought is *neutral* – “I wonder how if it’s going to rain tomorrow?” – is **WONDERING**.
- Thinking about the present and the thought has a *positive charge* – “Boy, I would really like to have a vegan hot fudge sundae right now.” – is **DESIRING**.
- Thinking about the present and the thought has a *negative charge* – “I cannot believe that girl on the next mat chose that nail color!” – is **JUDGING**.
- Thinking about something in the future and the thought is *neutral* – “I’m going to email my ex when I get home.” – is **PLANNING**.
- Thinking about the future and the thought has a *positive charge* – “I hope he has enough money so we can honeymoon at the 4 Seasons in Kauai.” – is **FANTASIZING**.
- Thinking about the future and the thought has a *negative charge* – “If that brown spot isn’t melanoma now, then it certainly will be some day!” – is **FEARING**.

# Meditation Effect on The Heart And The Respiratory System

- A study done at the Department of Physiology at B.J. Medical College looked at the vital capacity, tidal volume and breath holding capacity of long-term meditators, short-term meditators and non-meditators
- Long term meditators had significantly higher vital capacity and expiratory pressure than the other two groups
- In addition, diastolic blood pressure and serum cholesterol levels were significantly lower in both groups of meditators as opposed to the non-meditating group
- As my grandmother used to say, LOL,  
“Those with a happy heart live longer.”



“Adaptability is the Holy Grail  
of human evolution.”

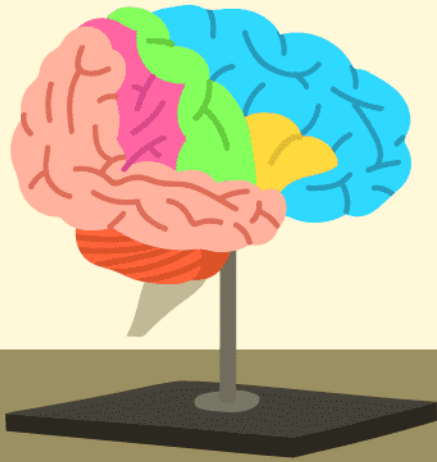
– Erwan LeCorre

# Neuroplasticity

- Derived from the root words *neuron* (or nerve cells in the brain linked together by synapses) and *plasticity* (or the capacity to be sculpted, molded or altered), **neuroplasticity** is the brain's potential to create neural pathways and reorganize itself according to how it's being used – or not being used.
- Similar to muscles, nerves can grow or reduce in their connections and pathways; essentially, they become larger and stronger the more they are used, and unused regions become weaker and atrophy.
- For example, every time you have the experience of being “stressed out,” the neural networks and areas of the brain responsible for the experience are reinforced and grow stronger. Meanwhile the structures that produce the experience of being “calm, cool and collected” are neglected and weaken.

# The 2 Types of Brain Plasticity

**What is Neuroplasticity  
(aka Brain Plasticity)?**



**Brain's ability to  
change and adapt**

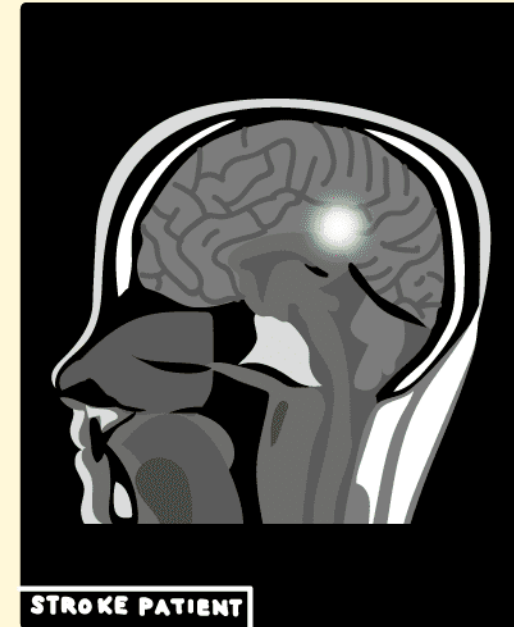
**verywell**

**Type 1: Structural Plasticity**



**Experiences or memories  
change a brain's physical  
structure**

**Type 2: Functional Plasticity**



**Brain functions move from  
damaged area to  
undamaged area**

# How Yoga Views Emotional Health

- Emotional health is viewed as an extension of one's emotional intelligence, which is the ability to identify and manage your own emotions and the emotions of others. Emotional intelligence is generally said to include three skills: emotional awareness; the ability to harness emotions and apply them to tasks like thinking and problem solving; and the ability to manage emotions, which includes regulating your own emotions and cheering up or calming down other people.



# Emotional Regulation

- **Emotional regulation** is a term generally used to describe a person's ability to effectively manage and respond to an emotional experience. People unconsciously use emotion regulation strategies to cope with difficult situations many times throughout each day. Most of us use a variety of emotion regulation strategies and are able to apply them to different situations in order to adapt to the demands of our environment. Some of these are healthy, some are not. Healthy coping strategies, such as managing stress with a walking program, do not cause harm. They can help to diffuse strong emotions, often allowing for a greater understanding of what led to the emotional experience.

# Emotional Dysregulation



- **Emotional dysregulation** is when an individual does not respond to a person, place, thing, or event in a manner that would generally be considered within the normal range of emotions. An example of this might be rage over a broken nail, or hysterics over a missed appointment. It refers to an emotional response that is not well modulated.

# Examples of Common Emotional Regulation Strategies

## **HEALTHY**

- Talking with friends
- Exercising
- Writing in a journal
- Meditation Therapy
- Taking care of self when physically ill
- Getting adequate sleep
- Paying attention to negative thoughts that occur before or after strong emotions
- Noticing when you need a break – and taking it!

## **UNHEALTHY**

- Abusing alcohol or other substances
- Self-Injury
- Avoiding or withdrawing from difficult situations
- Physical or verbal aggression
- Excessive social media use, to the exclusion of other responsibilities

In the end, only three things  
matter: how much you loved,  
how gently you lived, and  
how gracefully you let go of  
things not meant for you.

-Buddha

# The Science of Gratitude



- Several studies in the past decade have analyzed the effects of a gratitude practice (like keeping a gratitude journal) versus traditional Western therapies like talk therapy, emotional purging (discussing life's hassles), and monitoring one's daily mood and satisfaction with life. "People who practiced gratitude enjoyed a higher percent of happy days, where they felt optimistic and expected the best, decreased anxiety, were more satisfied with their lives, which they perceived to be more meaningful, and they felt more connected with others each day." In effect, gratitude enhanced all of these outcomes.

# Starting a Gratitude Practice As A Meditation

## How to Get Started:

### 1) Keep a Daily Gratitude Journal

This is probably the most effective strategy for increasing your level of gratitude. Set aside time **daily** to record several things that you are grateful for. (Typically, people list three to five.) In the words of Robert Emmons, author of *Thanks!: How the New Science of Gratitude Can Make You Happier*, the act of writing "allows you to see the meaning of events going on around you and create meaning in your own life."

### 2) Use Visual Reminders

Two obstacles to being grateful are forgetfulness and lack of awareness. Counter them by giving yourself visual cues that trigger thoughts of gratitude.

### 3) Have a Gratitude Partner

Social support encourages healthy behaviors, because we often lack the discipline to do things on our own. Just as you may be more likely to exercise if you have an exercise partner or participate in a class, you may be able to maintain the discipline of gratitude more easily if you have a partner with whom to share gratitude lists & to discuss the effects of gratitude in your life.

# Starting a Gratitude Practice (Continued)

## **How to Get Started:**

### **4) Make a Public Commitment**

We feel accountable when we make commitments to others. The fact that the goal is made publicly to a group, makes it more likely that people will follow through.

### **5) Change Your Self-Talk**

We all carry on an inner dialogue with ourselves that is often called "self-talk." When this inner conversation is negative, our mood is usually low. Research has shown that we can change our mood by changing the tone of the things we say to ourselves.

# Metta/Maitri Meditation

## AKA Loving Kindness Meditation

- The Buddhist concept of metta meditation, known in Yoga as maitri meditation, is commonly referred to in the western world as loving kindness meditation. In this practice, we train a heart-oriented, harmonizing style of mindfulness meditation that reframes situations and helps to heal the heart. Practicing in this manner, builds better relationships with our emotions that improve our well-being over time and can gradually be extended beyond ourselves and into the world as emotional intelligence.
- Loving kindness meditation has been scientifically shown to: reduce anxiety, reduce negative affect or mood, reduce physical and emotional pain, reduce anger, reduce psychological stress, increase feelings of hope, increase positive social emotions in regard to others as well as one's overall emotional intelligence
- What's more, here's a great Huffpost article by a Stanford researcher that goes into even more scientific detail about the benefits of the loving kindness meditation practice:  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/emma-seppala-phd/18-sciencebased-reasons-t\\_b\\_5823952.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/emma-seppala-phd/18-sciencebased-reasons-t_b_5823952.html)



*Let's practice an extended loving kindness meditation!*

# Meditation Techniques to Encourage Sleep

- Yoga nidra, aka yogic rest, is a transformative meditation technique comprised of a series of inquiries designed to extend our understanding of and liberate the mind's penchant to divide what's whole into separate parts. The practice supports the psychological, physical, and spiritual healing and awakening to the unchanging peace and equanimity fundamental to our essential nature.



# A Yoga Bed Time Ritual

- As we all already know, flowers grow better when they are planted in good soil AND human beings sleep better if we appropriately prepare ourselves and our environment for sleeping



- Consider what is listed to the right as a sleep hygiene makeover or a Yoga bedtime ritual. 😊
  - Personalize the ideas and come up with some of your own, too, to make it feel natural, organic, and repeatable.
- **The goal is improved rest** and several options exist to help you:
    - In the 3-4 hours before you go to sleep, try dimming the lighting on your cellphone to sleep mode
    - In the 1-2 hours before bed, consider not using any electronics (phone, iPad, computer, TV)
    - Consider the 3-2-1 Rule: 3 hours before you go to sleep stop drinking alcohol. 2 hours before you go to sleep, stop eating food. 1 hour before you go to sleep, stop drinking fluids.
    - Look to dimming lights around your home and doing quieter activities before bed like:
      - Meditating/Yoga nidra
      - Calm and/or Restorative Yoga Stretches
      - Reading something inspiring
      - Journaling about the day or what you're grateful for
      - Taking a warm bath
      - Doing breathing exercises that lengthen the exhale breath
      - Having a hot cup of tea to soothe you before bed

# Create A Sleep Sanctuary



- To the best of your ability create a safe, clean, quiet space for
- We have “location associations”
  - If you’re doing your homework on your bed, eating on your bed, watching shows on your bed, and scrolling social media on your bed, when it’s time to go to bed, your brain will think “Well, what are we going to do now?”
- If you’re in a single room or a dorm room and have no other options, consider doing all of those things “turned around” with your head where your feet go and feet at head to mix it up for yourself
- If you like to hit the snooze button, consider plugging your phone in across the room at night so you have to get up to get it and can’t press snooze
- Most importantly, try to set a consistent wake-up time to help regulate your circadian rhythm

# A Yoga Bed Time Ritual

The Yoga poses below might help, assist, and support you in winding down for a good night's sleep

1. Paścimottanāsana  
(Seated Forward Bend Pose)



2. Bālāsana  
(Child's Pose)



3. Viparita Karaṇī  
(Legs Up the Wall Pose)

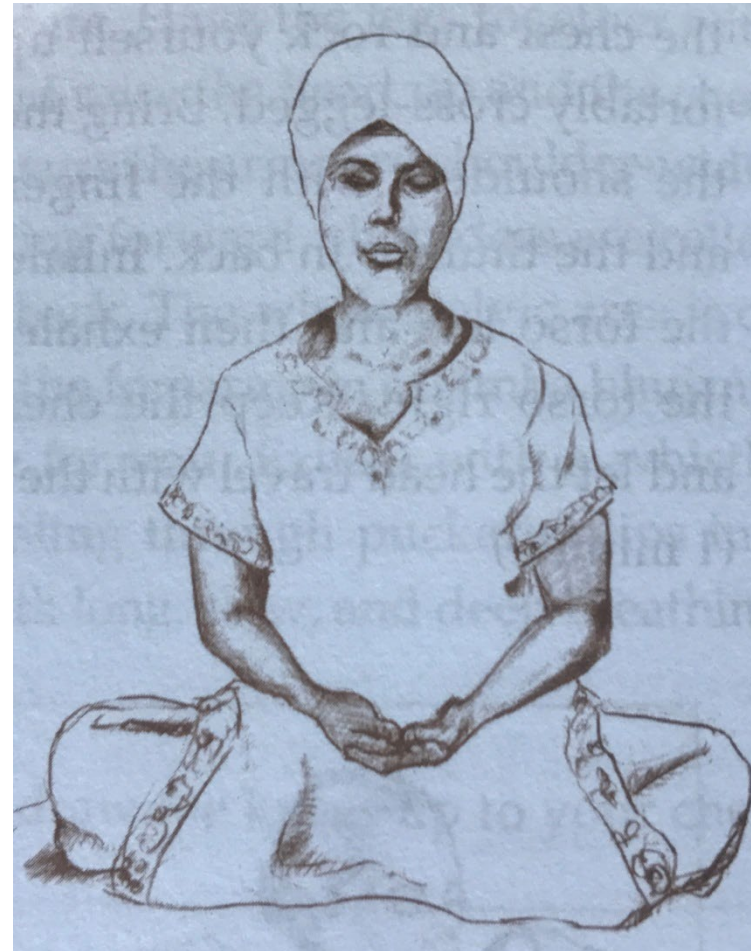


4. Śavāsana (Corpse Pose)



# Meditation Techniques to Encourage Sleep

- Shabad Kriya, from the Kundalini Yoga tradition, is one of the only clinically studied Yoga techniques that encourages sleep and proper rest. It is performed with the palms resting in the lap facing upward with right over left and the thumbs touching. Eyes are 1/10 open and gaze is downwards past the tip of the nose. The inhale is in 4 segments or “sniffs,” followed by breath retention for 16 counts, and an exhale in 2 segments, so that the ratio of inhale:hold:exhale is 4:16:2. During the inhale, the mantra “Sa, Ta, Na, Ma” is mentally recited with each segment. During the breath retention, this mantra is mentally repeated four times on the fingers. During the exhale the mantra “Wahe Guru” is mentally recited concurrently with each exhale segment for up to 11 min.



## Main Point To Take Home...

Practicing meditation makes daily mental and emotional health deposits in your “inner account.” So, in the moments in your life where the world challenges you or where you want to appreciate something beautiful that brings you a sense of awe, you are not as reactive and you are able to slow down and be grateful making withdrawals from within that don’t take away from your overall sense of peace.



