PRANAYAMA AND YOGA

- Conditions under which the body is over-worked or the mind is stressed, the breath becomes faster or constricted.
- When the body is in rest and the mind is calm, the breath is slow and calm.
- Regulation of breathing lowers the heartbeat and moderates blood pressure.

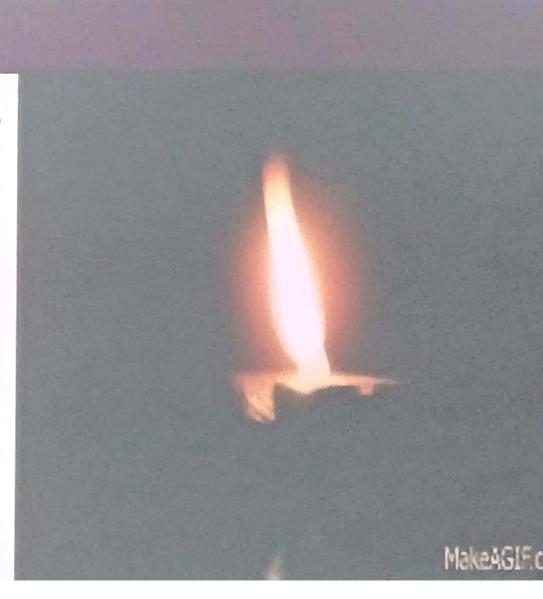
- This control on the physiological state results in physical relaxation.
- The message of this relaxation reaches the mind.
- The brain in turn sends the message of relaxation to different parts of the body.
- This enables the person to experience the state of relaxation.

MEDITATION

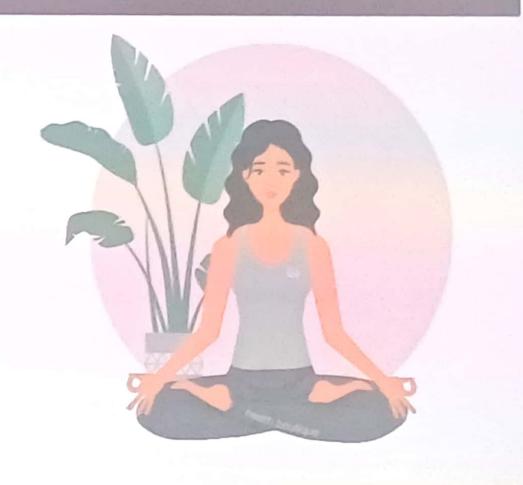
- Refers to the mental technique for quieting the body and mind.
- Scientific research on the benefits of meditation was initiated by Maharshi Mahesh Yogi and popularized by Western scientists.
- Coon (2000) claimed that any enjoyable hobby such as listening or playing music or taking nature walks can be meditation of sorts.
- Meditation techniques are increasingly used for relaxation and therapeutic purposes.
- It is a very simple form of calming the mind.
- You can practice it in the morning and evening for 15–20 minutes.

- Sit comfortably with the eyes closed.
- Initially, the mind wanders and fluctuates wildly.
- Gradually, it turns still and you can experience a state of 'restful awareness'.
- Your body relaxes completely.
- Your mind transcends all mental activity and experiences a state of 'consciousness'.

- Adopt a passive attitude of 'What happens,'
 happens'.
- Select a quiet non-disruptive environment (For example, do not have the phone in the room, do not face a light directly).
- Do not eat an hour prior to meditating and avoid caffeine and nicotine two hours before meditation.
- Take a comfortable posture. It is alright to change positions, stretch or yawn.
- Select a device to facilitate your concentration (For example, you can have a low level lamp normally lit before a deity, a plant or a burning incense stick).



- Perceive a word or sound (Like 'anyword' or a word like 'one') as you breathe in and breathe out.
- The idea is to perceive rather than say it. If you perceive a word like 'one', you may do so every time you inhale and exhale.
- If you have chosen a word like 'Om' you may choose to say it by stretching its sound. If you feel like chanting it aloud, you may do so several times and enjoy it. Gradually say it more and more softly.



- It may go louder and softer or disappear for sometime.
- Do not worry. Adopt a passive attitude and let it take its course.
- If disruptive thoughts disturb you, let them pass through. Do not try to avoid them or handle them.
- That may take you to the arousal level.
- If necessary, allow yourself to drift with an attitude of 'Let things happen the way they do'.
- Accept what you get. You cannot force relaxation effects on meditation.

