

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).



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- 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.

