**What is Ayurveda?**

Thousands of years before modern medicine provided scientific evidence for the mind-body connection, the sages of India developed Ayurveda, which continues to be one of the world’s most sophisticated and powerful mind-body health systems. More than a mere system of treating illness, Ayurveda is a science of life (Ayur = life, Veda = science or knowledge). It offers a body of wisdom designed to help people stay vibrant and healthy while realizing their full human potential.

The two main guiding principles of Ayurveda are 1) the mind and the body are inextricably connected, and 2) nothing has more power to heal and transform the body than the mind. Freedom from illness depends upon expanding our own awareness, bringing it into balance, and then extending that balance to the body. This process isn’t as complicated as it may sound. For example, when you meditate you effortlessly enter a state of expanded awareness and inner quiet that refreshes the mind and restores balance. Since the mind and body are inseparable, the body is naturally balanced through the practice of meditation. In the state of restful awareness created through meditation, your heart rate and breath slow, your body decreases the production of “stress” hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline, and you increase the production of neurotransmitters that enhance wellbeing, including serotonin, dopamine, oxytocin, and endorphins.

Meditation is just one of the most powerful tools the ancient Ayurvedic physicians prescribed for balancing the mind and body. Ayurveda also offers many other practices for expanding self-awareness and cultivating your innate state of balance.