

# Beginner FAQs: Why Are We Doing This? Why Meditate? ~ Shinzen Young

00:00:00 Certainly, one of the most frequent questions from beginner students is, why meditate?

00:00:14 What's the whole point of it?

00:00:18 Why are we doing this kind of thing?

00:00:22 I've given actually a fairly elaborate classification of the reasons to meditate in terms of the

00:00:35 notion of total human happiness, that we meditate for our own personal, unconditional happiness

00:00:44 as well as for our personal happiness.

00:00:47 And we also meditate so that we can best contribute to the conditional and unconditional happiness

00:00:54 of others.

00:00:55 That's sort of the model that I give.

00:01:01 From beginners, the question would be, why should I even bother doing this?

00:01:06 And essentially, the answer is, well, this particular case is mindfulness practice, a

00:01:18 certain form of meditation.

00:01:21 And this form of meditation elevates your concentration, clarity, and equanimity.

00:01:27 And if you elevate your baseline of concentration, clarity, and equanimity, then you'll elevate

00:01:34 your baseline of human happiness in the broadest and deepest sense or senses that a human being

00:01:47 can be happy.

00:01:48 So in all the different ways that a human being can be happy, including the deepest

00:01:53 possible ways a human being can be happy, for all of the above, we do this practice.

00:01:59 You might say that the centerpiece is sensory happiness independent of conditions.

00:02:09 And sensory happiness independent of conditions comes about when you're able to have complete

00:02:15 sensory experience of your body and your mind.

00:02:23 And you have complete sensory experience of your body and mind when you cross a certain

00:02:28 threshold of intensity of concentration, clarity, and equanimity applied to body sensations

00:02:35 and the thinking process.

00:02:37 Then your experience of ordinary body-mind becomes utterly extraordinary.

00:02:43 And your relationship to your body and mind change from your body and mind being a prison

00:02:50 to your body and mind being a home where you abide but can leave any time you want.