

Meditation Benefits for Healthy Living

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As the pace of life in today's world gets faster, and we become more aware of environmental contaminants that affect the body, the development of a healthy lifestyle becomes increasingly necessary. The standard lifestyle today is one that promotes high levels of stress and neglect of physical and spiritual health. We place ourselves in a tornado of complexity as we sacrifice our overall health to maintain these unnecessary complexities. Making good decisions concerning our lifestyle is where we need to start on this road to overall health. The incorporation of regular meditation practice into our daily routine is a perfect place to start. The style of meditation we teach at MeditationSLC is called mantra meditation (kirtan). In this article, we will be exploring the positive health benefits that come from doing the meditation.

Meditation for Mental Health-Stress

Stress is without a doubt one of the main factors contributing to a person's lack of health. Stress is defined as, "A state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances."

So, if we analyze what stress is, we can break it down into two parts or components. Challenging situations taking place around us, and our perception and way of dealing with these situations. As we try to get healthy by managing stress, we can either keep these challenging situations from happening or change our way of dealing with them. This meditation practice can help do both. Mantra meditation uses sounds, or mantras, described in the texts of yoga as having a spiritual quality. These spiritual mantras have a purifying effect on our mind and heart, which results in an ability to make life decisions more clearly. Going through life with a 'clear head' makes it so we can see the results of our potential actions/decisions, keeping us from getting into unnecessarily complicated and stressful situations.

Now, of course, this type of management is not always possible. Adversity and difficult situations will always be a part of life no matter what we do to avoid them. So, our reactions and ways of dealing with the things that happen are very important. Meditation gives us the chance to step back and see the 'bigger picture'. When we develop this broader view of life, we automatically have a clearer perspective on what is truly important. This vision makes the problems that used to seem insurmountable, as small as a pebble in the highway. So many of the things that we consider such a big deal will not even be a thought in a year or even a week. Yet we let our self get taken for a ride by the waves of temporary struggles.

Also, with meditation, we learn to find our happiness on the spiritual platform, which is beyond the temporary pleasures and miseries in daily life. Our struggles are really a struggle to be happy. Spiritual happiness does not require the fierce struggling the way everyday material happiness does. So, if we are satisfied spiritually, various challenges can arise without them affecting us in the way that they used to.

Meditation for Physical Health

Our mental condition very much affects our physical health. The mental health that we just discussed will automatically improve our physical health and vibrancy. Not properly managing our levels of mental and emotional stress has been linked to numerous diseases of the physical body.

The teachings of the yoga/meditation system promote the development of physical health. Aspects of this system such as a healthy vegetarian diet, sleep habits, freedom from intoxicants, cleanliness, and exercise do a lot to develop a healthy body. We often go into detail about these during discussions in our classes. Doing meditation develops a desire and determination to make the positive changes necessary to have a healthier physical body.

Meditation for Spiritual Health

Spiritual health and spiritual matters, in general, are almost always misunderstood. A clear understanding of spiritual health is most valuable to our overall well-being. In the ancient texts of yoga, it is described in great detail that our identity, our actual self, is a tiny spark of spiritual energy referred to as the 'Atman' or soul. It is difficult for the mind to grasp, but spiritual energy is without beginning or end. The material energy, on the other hand, is very temporary. And therefore, all pleasure connected with the physical body is also temporary. But since we are not of the same temporary material nature as the body, we need satisfaction on the spiritual level if we are to be blissfully satisfied.

The meditation practice which uses spiritual sound can provide us with the satisfaction on the spiritual level that we need. Spiritual sound is described in yoga as being food for the soul. When we, the spirit soul, experience the nourishment coming from these spiritual mantras, the distress of the mind and body automatically settle down, leaving us in a peaceful and healthy condition. We have discussed different ways meditation can improve our overall health. We have done this in a general way without going into any deep detail, strictly on a philosophical/theoretical level. Meditation is a process that must be applied to daily life and be appreciated if the health-giving results are to be experienced. To learn how to do this in a practical and easy way, please visit one of our free weekly programs.