



The Power of Meditation: Cultivating Blissfulness and Inner Peace

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Abstract

The practice of meditation involves focusing our attention and awareness on the present moment, and is an ancient technique practiced throughout a wide range of cultures and religions. It has been around for thousands of years and has been used by many cultures and religions for a variety of purposes. It typically involves sitting or lying down in a quiet place and directing our attention to a specific object, such as our breath, a mantra, or a visual image. The goal of meditation is to cultivate a calm and focused state of mind, free from distraction and mental chatter. One of the profound experiences that can arise from regular meditation practice is a sense of blissfulness—an inner state of profound joy, contentment, and peace. The meditation technique is very powerful in cultivating blissfulness and delves into its potential benefits for mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Meditation is a practice that has been used for centuries to promote inner peace, mindfulness, and overall well-being. It involves training the mind to focus on the present moment, cultivating a state of calm and clarity.

Keywords: mindfulness, Vritti, bliss, prana, peace, emotion.

Introduction

Worldly objects are bright and glittering and everyone is seeking happiness from worldly objects. We are not looking within us where real peace and bliss exist. All of us have different desires and we work hard to fulfill our desires. But from past experiences, we have learned that after fulfilling the desire we become happy for the time being but again start craving for another object. For example - a small child

becomes happy to see his favourite ice cream but the moment he finishes the ice cream, he demands another ice cream. If he gets another ice cream he will become happy again otherwise if his wishes will not be fulfilled, he will become sad. All worldly objects are subject to change and never remain with us forever. Nothing is imperishable in this world and this feeling is the cause of our suffering. Due to avidya (lack of knowledge), we are attached to worldly objects. Generally, our mind is under the control of our senses. Our mind can be compared to a jumping monkey who will never remain calm in any place. Training is required to tame the monkey mind. By controlling the senses through the practice of pratyahara, we can control our minds. If our minds will be under our control and in peace then only we will be able to discharge our duties efficiently.

The real nature of the mind is to remain calm but due to the presence of vrittis (modifications of the mind) it gets disturbed. When our mind is attached to sensory objects, it gets disturbed. Vrittis are like a veil and we see the world according to the colour of the veil. In clean water, if we will pour mud, we cannot see the bottom of the water likewise if our mind will be disturbed by the vrittis we can never be in a blissful state which is the original state of our mind. The real state of mind is clear like crystal. Wherever we will place the crystal, it will reflect the colour of the object on which it is placed. To make the mind crystal clear Maharshi Patanjali in the yoga sutra has described different means of yoga as a tool to control the modification of the mind. Abhyasa and vairagya are recommended to get rid of the vrittis. In the fourteenth verse of samadhi pada' Maharshi Patanjali has described that perfection will only come if we will do abhyasa for a long time without interruption with full strength and enthusiasm. There should be sincerity and respect for the practice we do.

For the practice of meditation, it is necessary to do some preparation like body stillness and concentration on breathing technique. If the practitioner's body is shaky he or she will not be able to sit in a meditative pose for a longer duration. So the first necessity is the stillness of the body through the practice of asanas. Maharshi Patanjali has defined asana as a posture in which a person remains steady and comfortable for a longer duration. After perfection, in asana, a sadhaka remains undisturbed by the dualities of pleasure and pain or happiness and sorrow.¹ Scientifically our body has electromagnetic energy which helps the mind to get better control. Being still makes the mind calm and one-pointed. Body and mind are interconnected, we cannot sit still for meditation if the mind is restless. A restless mind makes the body tense and nervous. Just a few minutes of sitting still make us joyous.

The second step for the preparation for meditation is to become aware of the breathing process. Deep breathing leads to a focused mind. Prana is the first unit of energy and is the link between the body and mind. Whenever there is any emotional strain experienced in our life, we can observe the changes in the breathing pattern. Our breath reflects the state of mind in all situations. When we are relaxed, we breathe deeply whereas in stressful situations we breathe shallowly. Deep

inhalation and exhalation make us healthy and longevity also increases by deep breathing. Through the regular practice of pranayama, we will have control over the prana. If we will control our breathing patterns, automatically our minds will be under control. In the second verse of chapter two of Hatha Yoga Pradeepika, Swatmarama Yogi has described the relation of prana vayu with the mind². Inhalation and exhalation are the vehicles of prana. If prana vayu is not under our conscious control our mind will also be disturbed. Therefore by doing regular practice of pranayama, we can control the dissipated mind. The moment our mind will be under our control, we will be able to do meditation.

Since childhood we are taught to behave properly with others, to examine and verify things in the external world and act accordingly. We do not know how to look within and verify within. While trying to get to know others, we remain strangers to ourselves. This lack of understanding leads us to confusion and disappointment prevail in our life. Our mind is like an ice berg of which a vast part is hidden in the water, likewise, only a small part of the mind is known to us which is the conscious mind. All the training and learning is directed to the conscious mind. The vast part of our mind is unconscious which is the reservoir of all our experiences, remains unknown and undisciplined, and is not in any control. Meditation expands the conscious mind so that we know ourselves in a better way. We have to understand the totality of the mind to become free from the bondage of the external world. Meditation is the only method to truly develop control over the totality of the mind. Meditation is a technique which purifies the mind and makes it one-pointed and introverted so that we are not further influenced by the outer world. As the name implies, meditation is a state of calm in which sensory thoughts are absent.³

As a result of meditation practice, a person is able to experience a sense of blissfulness, a sense of profound happiness, contentment, and inner peace that arises from deep inside them. Often described as a transcendent experience, it goes beyond ordinary pleasure and emerges from a connection with one's true nature and the present moment.

It has been shown that meditation can have profound effects on the brain and can activate parts of the brain associated with positive emotions, happiness, and well-being. There is a great deal of evidence that meditation and blissfulness have profound effects on the brain. There are various factors that contribute to the development of blissfulness in meditation, including a relaxed, focused mind, accepting the present moment, and cultivating compassion and mindfulness. It can help you cope with stress, anxiety, and depression and boost your emotional resilience in meditation. To achieve full self-awareness and emotional balance, individuals need to develop their self-awareness and emotional balance, so they can handle challenges with equanimity and compassion.

2 चले वाते चलं चित्तं निश्चले निश्चलं भवेत् ।
योगी स्थाणुत्वम् आप्नोति ततो वायुं निरोधयेत् ॥२॥(HYP)
3 ध्यानं निर्विषयं मनः (सांख्य दर्शन -6 / 25)

During meditation, you feel blissful, so you can think clearly, concentrate, and perform well on the cognitive frontline. As well as improving memory, attention, and overall cognitive skills, it can help you focus. When you are blissful, your body activates its relaxation response, resulting in a reduction in stress hormones and the promotion of deep relaxation, which leads to long-term stress reduction and improved stress management, which can lead to long-term mental health. A variety of studies have suggested that blissful meditation can be beneficial to our physical health, which shows the effectiveness of this practice. It can support the immune system, regulate blood pressure, improve sleep quality, and reduce the risk of certain chronic diseases.

Blissfulness in meditation can foster a sense of interconnectedness and compassion toward oneself and others. It cultivates qualities such as empathy, kindness, and forgiveness, which can lead to more harmonious and fulfilling relationships.

Liberation and bondage come from the mind alone. Just as there are many paths to reach a particular destination, there are also a variety of meditation techniques. In spite of the different varieties of meditation, the goal of all sadhana is to achieve inner concentration, calmness, and serenity. When we focus our dissipated mind on one particular point, our sadhana becomes intense. We can burn all mental impurities if we regularly practice meditation. In meditation, we experience the worlds inside and outside. Meditation can be both distressing and inspiring. By stilling, purifying, and harmonizing them, they help us discover who we really are. They calm mental turbulence. A mindfulness meditation involves being aware of the present moment without judgement. By cultivating mindfulness, individuals can develop a deeper sense of presence and experience blissfulness in the simplicity of the present moment.

There are various forms of meditation and mindfulness techniques, including mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), loving-kindness meditation, transcendental meditation (TM), mantra meditation, and vipassana (insight) meditation. Different techniques may appeal to different individuals, so it is important to explore and find the approach that resonates with the person.

Loving-kindness meditation involves cultivating feelings of love, kindness, and compassion toward oneself and others. By directing positive intentions and well-wishes, individuals can experience profound blissfulness and interconnectedness.

Focusing on the breath can help anchor the mind in the present moment and create a sense of calm and tranquility. It's possible to cultivate blissfulness and inner peace by observing the breath mindfully.

People can use visualization techniques to create feelings of bliss and relaxation by engaging their senses and imagination. Mantra meditation involves repeating a sacred word or phrase,

Practicing mindfulness means being aware of all of the things going on in your mind: both your focus and distractions. Mindfulness is a refinement of awareness. We have no reaction to distractions, and the mind is allowed to come and go. Mindfulness gives us the ability to observe the content of our minds and let it go. We're not going into the mind, but passing through it.

At first, mindfulness wasn't a state of being, but a collection of skills that could be learned and practiced. Meditation and mindfulness are practices that involve focusing our attention and awareness on the present moment. While they are often used interchangeably, they have slightly different meanings.

Both meditation and mindfulness have numerous benefits for mental and physical well-being. They can help reduce stress, anxiety, and depression, improve focus and concentration, enhance emotional regulation, and promote a sense of overall well-being. Regular practice of meditation and mindfulness can also lead to greater self-awareness and a deeper understanding of oneself and the world around them.

Conclusion

In the present scenario, meditation is needed because everyone is pursuing material or non-spiritual goals. The person should face his day with a sense of calm and serenity that comes from within. A sick body and uncontrolled mind can't be happy with materialistic happiness for long. The world is getting more interested in meditation these days. Modern man has been burdened with stress and anxiety due to a competitive environment and pressure to get the top job. To overcome these artificial crises meditation is mandatory even for a shorter duration.

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