



Yoga for Happiness Academy

# MEDITATION BASICS

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By  
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## Meditation Basics

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## Meditation Basics

### Introduction

People understand and practice meditation in many different ways. Often, the preparatory steps for meditation are mistaken to be meditation itself.

While there are several benefits to the body, mind, brain and spirit through meditation, it is often difficult to practice it.

Let us understand a few basics of meditation as given in the authentic Yoga texts.

# Meditation Basics

## What is meditation?

- Meditation is a state of being in the present, without thinking of the dead past or the unborn future.
- It is a state in which you are devoid of thoughts, as thoughts can be only of the past or future.
- It is a state in which you are aware and alert.
- It is a state of mental balance.
- It is a state of single pointed contemplation on the Divine Self.
- It is a state of inner peace that leads to the ultimate liberation.

From the above definitions it is clear that it is not an easy task, given the nature of the ever chattering mind.

In the first place, it is hard to keep the body still for some time, because of the tightness, ache or pain we experience in the body.

It is only when the body is stilled it is possible to work on stilling the mind which is the state of meditation.

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### **What are the benefits of meditation?**

#### On a physical level, meditation:

- Lowers high blood pressure
- Increases serotonin production that improves mood and behavior
- Improves the immune system
- Increases the energy level

#### On a mental level, meditation:

- Decreases Anxiety
- Improves Clarity
- Increases Creativity
- Increases Peace and Happiness
- Develops Intuition

#### On a spiritual level, meditation:

- Enables you to experience the higher and refined states of consciousness

When your consciousness evolves and expands, negative emotions like anger and disappointment stop affecting your life. You learn to let go of things and start living in 'the moment'.

- Enables you to explore the mystery of life and this universe

You begin to ask questions like - What is the purpose of my life? What is this world? Why am I born? And so on...

As you begin this process of inquiry, your life and attitude transform.

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### **What is the difference between meditation and guided meditation?**

Meditation can be done in silence all by yourself.

In a guided meditation, you are guided by an external voice to visualize scenes and actions that keep you in the present. You are made to be conscious of your actions. So, in a guided meditation, in addition to the experience of meditation, you also get to achieve a specific goal in life that will help you to reach deeper levels in meditation.

### **How does Guided Meditation Work?**

Guided meditation is a very powerful way to reach your desired goals in life in 3 ways:

#### **(1) Using the working of your brain**

Because you are guided to be in a certain state, your brain thinks that you are already in that desired state, and sends signals to the sensory organs to experience that state. This experience creates new impressions in the brain, which reprograms it and directs your mind in a better way in future actions.

For example, by visualizing yourself practicing a certain dance, your brain engages all the limbs, muscles and nerves as though you are actually practicing the dance. So you end up being much better at the dance.

By visualizing your body to have better health, you can actually enjoy better health. By visualizing your relationships to be better, you can actually enjoy better relationships. Thus every goal of yours becomes more achievable.



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### (2) **Using the power of thoughts**

As you think, so you become...For example, if you think yourself strong, strong you become! If you think yourself healthy, healthy you become!

### (3) **By enabling you to be in the present moment**

When you meditate in silence, your mind tends to hold on to something of the past or something about the future. On the other hand, in guided meditation, it is easier to stay in the present and achieve the desired result. After all, any action is possible ONLY in the present

### **What is the science and logic behind a guided meditation?**

You are who you are because of your past experiences. Each experience of yours has created specific impressions in the brain and mind. They determine your attitudes, behavior and character in every situation. The stronger impressions are stored in the very cells of your body.

It is these impressions that determine who you are.

It is hard to change these impressions directly. When you have new experiences, then the new impressions they create could modify or replace the old impressions.

In guided meditation, through images, sounds, and directing you to visualize using your senses, your brain gets an experience of what feels like a real experience. When you have a new experience, new impressions are created that affect your entire being. So when you listen to a guided meditation you are literally developing new attitudes, behavior and character for a NEW YOU.

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### What prepares a mind for meditation?

In Raaja Yoga (Yoga of mind mastery) as codified by Sage Patanjali, of the 8 limbs, meditation is the 7<sup>th</sup> limb and there are 6 limbs prior to it. The 5th and 6th limbs are preparatory steps for meditation directly, while the first 4 limbs prepare one for meditation indirectly.

Limb 1 & 2 - Following the eternal values in life

Limb 3 - Practicing Yoga poses

Limb 4 - Breathing techniques that control the vital force in the body

Limb 5 - Withdrawal of sense organs from the sense objects

Limb 6 - Practice of concentration

To help you in these preparatory steps, Yoga for Happiness Academy offers mini home study courses.

**Please see the resource section for details.**



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### Conclusion

Begin your practice of meditation even if it for only 5 minutes at a time.

If it is hard to focus your mind, begin with guided meditation where there is less chance of distraction.

Once your mind is trained to stay more in the present, every action of yours becomes a meditation. Then there will be less of mental chatter and more of inner peace in your life.

If you have any questions, write to [Namaste@yogaforhappiness.com](mailto:Namaste@yogaforhappiness.com)

Good Luck in your journey!



## Meditation Basics

### About Shanthi:



Shanthi Yogini is the founder of Yoga for Happiness Academy. Her mission is to pass on the science of Yoga as a science, unbranded, un-prefixed and un-suffixed, in its authentic, pristine and purest form.

Shanthi comes from a lineage of Yoga Masters who passed on their wisdom in a practical way. They have ALL been strict vegetarians for generations, living a Yoga way of life.

Shanthi has been incorporating every aspect of Yoga such as Meditation, Food, Dance, and Chanting as her way of life since she was 5 years old. This includes the Yogic language of Samskritam which is her home language. Her daughter Pavitra is the first female in USA to claim Samskritam as her mother tongue.

Yoga for Happiness Academy offers Samskritam & Lifestyle Based Non-Western Yoga Teacher Training to create authentic Yoga teachers. It also offers short term Yoga training to encourage an independent and confident personal Yoga practice.

Shanthi trains in-person, online and via digital media.

Shanthi graduated in engineering and worked in software until 2003.

Shanthi's "Liberate Yoga Liberate You" Movement declares that liberating Yoga from the chains of misuse, abuse and misrepresentation, liberates one from the chains of misery.

Shanthi is also an Interactive Workshop Presenter, Art & Culture Educator, Trained Classical Dancer, Speaker & Storyteller, Child Rights Activist, and Forthcoming Author.

**NOTE:** *Shanthi donates part of the sale proceeds to BBA, a Non-Profit ([www.bba.org.in](http://www.bba.org.in)), which works for the freedom and education of enslaved children. Its founder, Kailash Satyarthi, won the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize.*

**If you need any help or have any questions, feel free to contact Shanthi through email: [Namaste@yogaforhappiness.com](mailto:Namaste@yogaforhappiness.com)**

**You can also connect with Shanthi through:**

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/yogatohappiness>

**Facebook Group:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/AuthenticYogaSeekers/>

## Resources

Yoga for Happiness Academy focuses on educating and training you to become independent and confident in your practice. Therefore it is unlike any typical Yoga center where the emphasis may be on your going to their "Yoga classes" for an indefinite period of time.

To succeed in meditation, you must prepare yourself for meditation. To help you in the preparatory steps, several mini home study courses have been created. Each of the following is complete and enjoyable by itself, in addition to preparing you for meditation.

To have a jumpstart in limb 3 - practice of Yoga poses, [Yoga Saaram First Lessons](#) and [YogaLaasyam](#) have been created.

The basic step of limb 4 - Breathing techniques, is given by [Breath Right to Live Right](#)

Chanting, which helps in limb 6 – Concentration is achieved through [Joyful Ganesha Mantra](#) and [Yogadhvani – Chants for Meditation](#)

**All of the above courses can be accessed from [here](#) where you can get a short description of each home study course.**