

# Satisfy Your Soul With a Meditation Snack

by Kirsten Elfendahl

Not just for monks and gurus, meditation is finding its way into the mainstream as an effective health practice, and as a useful tool for busy stressed parents. Medical studies have shown that meditation is effective for pain relief, and relief from headaches, lower back pain, and depression. It boosts the immune system and is profoundly positive and soothing to the body and brain.

For busy people with hardly a minute to spare, carving out hours of time to meditate is as likely as the groceries unloading themselves. Fortunately, we don't need to withdraw from the busy world to enjoy the benefits of meditation.

Mirra has been teaching meditation for over 10 years. She and the other teachers offer classes in Purna yoga meditation, teaching meditation "snacks," simple practices that anyone can do, anywhere in just minutes. The

"snacks" sometimes include a simple movement that helps awaken the mind to calmness.

"Purna yoga meditation is different from other meditations. This meditation uses various techniques that help you enter into your heart center to connect with light and love," says Mirra. "It differs from other meditations in that there is not an initial attempt to quiet the mind. Instead, the mind's gifts of concentration and imagination are used to focus on the light in the heart center, the home of the spirit in your body. Once the heart center starts to open and your connection to your spirit becomes stronger, your body and your life begin to heal and return to wholeness. This is a process that unfolds as you deepen your meditation practice."

Mirra recommends incorporating meditation snacks into everyday moments. "Whenever you are stopped at a traffic light, you can meditate," says Mirra. "Use that time to connect with your heart center (a spot in the middle of

your chest the same level as your arm pits), the home of peace, connection, and love. The heart center is where the mind, body, and spirit unite. This is the moment of 'now.'" When you're waiting in line at the bank, for instance, simply take a deep breath and use the middle finger of your right hand to touch your heart center, and draw your attention inward. "When you touch your heart center, you feel your focus coming to rest within you, reminding yourself that this is the place from which your daily actions should come, bringing peace and love back into your awareness," says Mirra.

When you feel the busyness taking over, a second meditation "snack" helps you center your mind and redirect its energy to your heart. To do this, close your eyes and place your hands, palms forward, at the side of your head behind your ears. Inhale. As you exhale draw your hands to the front of your face bringing them together. As you are scooping your hands forward, imagine you're gathering

your mental energy and cupping it between your hands. Inhale. While exhaling, draw your hands slowly down a straight line so that your thumbs rest on your chest at your heart center. "As you do this, say to yourself, 'I offer my mind to my heart,' redirecting your focus to your inner self," says Mirra.

These simple meditation "snacks," done before you pick up your children, between phone calls, in the bathroom, or while preparing a meal, can easily help busy people feel more centered and connected, and relaxed. All we need is the time we already have.

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## Meditation As Preventive Medicine

by Marcia Nelken

*"Do you realize what you did in that first meditation? If you really believed it, you rejuvenated yourself. You eliminated the probability of hobbling or stumbling along twenty, thirty years from now, just by going through that sequence of events. You are giving yourself rejuvenation to the point where it gives you perfection within those areas you look at."*

—John J. Gaudio, "So... You Say You Want To Feel Better?"

One day I was at the counter at the local wine shop waiting to make

my purchase and overheard two little old ladies gabbing while purchasing some Lotto tickets. One wistfully bemoaned to the other that winning some money meant nothing, nothing! It was one's health that mattered. If only they could win back good health! Her friend agreed.

What I took from this little moment was another variation upon a theme I hear from time to time, even when I am in the company of my peers who are a bit younger. Anxieties about health are on the minds of many these days. Whenever I hear these stories — and some of them are heart-breaking — the same thing runs through

my mind: if only you knew about the practice of meditation. If only you allowed yourself 15 minutes a day in meditation to rejuvenate your mind and body, and build upon who you are. Often I mentioned to friends that meditation has helped me stay on the centerline of health and balance for many years. A meditation practice builds upon itself, and after a while you will have earned for yourself a state that cannot be dissipated, as long as you use this tool of comprehension from day to day.

It all started for me when I dropped in on an informal evening meditation class many years ago, in

Connecticut. Teacher John Gaudio led us in a slow, relaxed, guided meditation for the first half of class, then gave a spontaneous talk in the second half, while inviting dialogue. That first evening was just the beginning of learning how to use what John calls "the proper use of the mind," to achieve the health and quality-of-life goals that we truly want for ourselves.

After experiencing my first guided meditation, I felt very relaxed, rejuvenated, and energized within my body and, as I began to practice meditation, an entirely new

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## Meditation For Information

by Tom T. Moore

Since I learned through my meditation that I'm supposed to encourage other people to meditate, I've heard a number of excuses why people don't. They all lead to the same general conclusion: it's boring.

Please understand that I didn't start meditating until July of 2005, so I had the same excuses. It was difficult to quiet my mind. I kept having 1,001 things that I had to do, or had just done, pop up in my mind. I was finally able to quiet my mind through hypnosis.

There are a number of CDs out there that can take you into an altered state. My personal preference when I first started were those of Dick Sutphen, although I don't need them anymore. I even wrote a simple one in the appendix of my book.

Now here is the fun part. I prepare a list of questions on the page of a spiral notebook before I begin what I call an "active meditation," and wait for the answers to come. I recommend that at first you write questions that you are not emotionally involved with, as this sets up barriers to receiving pure communication. As you become more confident in your reception, then start adding in those tougher questions.

When I began, my accuracy was down around 15% to 30%, and each month I would ask if my accuracy was improving. I was told to "practice, practice, practice" so many times that I stopped asking, but every so often I was told that I had received what was sent almost perfectly. This is a skill to learn just like anything else, riding a bike, playing chess, or learning a language. I've been told you are receiving "thought packets" which you convert to your language and level of understanding.

Don't be concerned with names of those you speak with at first. Just allow the information to flow. As an example, my guardian angel does not have a name that can be pronounced, so he eventually told me I could call him Theo. But there are whole "cosmic teams" out there ready to communicate with you, so don't try and limit yourself.

I personally type the questions on my computer and then type the answers as I receive them in my head. Don't expect to hear different voices. I hear it as if I'm thinking, but the words and sentences are different than I would write, and I don't remember too much of what is said to me, so I have to read the answers after I come out of my altered state.

Here are examples of questions that I have recently asked.

- Will the Democratic candidate be Mr. Barack Obama or Mrs. Clinton, or someone else?

*The candidate for the Democratic party will be Mrs. Clinton. Mr. Obama may or may not be her running mate. That is not decided yet.*

- Will Rudy Juliani be the Republican presidential nominee?

*Yes he will. He will outdraw Mr. McCain and the others, as he has the personality that will appear to be moderate to the Republican party members. You will see. It will be an interesting debate on the Republican side; although Mrs. Clinton and Mr. Obama will have some interesting debates, her organization will prove too powerful for Mr. Obama to overcome. Mr. Juliani on the other hand will appear to be the freshest candidate of the many men who are vying to be the Republican flag waver, as you call it.*

- Will there any other school massacres

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