

A few months ago, I had the honor of being a guest on the Gary Mantz radio talk show, *Mastery and Mystery*. During the interview, Gary asked me why I meditate every day. Why don't I save meditation for stressful times when I needed to calm down?



Everyday Spirituality

by Colleen Foye Bollen

I immediately explained that meditation provides me with a slice of quiet time each day when I can withdraw from all the "have-tos" and focus inward. Later, when I had time to reflect on his question, I realized the answer is more complex.

In many ways daily meditation is similar to working out in a gym. For both activities to

have an optimal effect on my health and well-being, I need to do them regularly.

A big reason I exercise regularly is to retain my strength and agility, two attributes that need to be built up and maintained over time. If I want to put out the extra physical effort required to lift a 40-pound bag of cat litter into my shopping cart or to dance past midnight, I need to exercise regularly.

Meditation imparts different, yet equally important qualities. Since I began meditating



A big reason to exercise regularly is to retain strength and agility, two attributes that need to be built-up and maintained over time. Meditation imparts different, yet equally important qualities: stillness of mind, and a sense of peace with the world around you.

New Location **Astara's Psychic Salons**

Friends, Philosophy & Tea
Tea Bar & Event Center
13850 Bel-Red Rd, Bellevue 98005
www.PsychicSalons.com

RAVEN DANCE

Tools for your Spiritual Quest

Shamanic Arts ♦ Crystals ♦ Readings
CDs, DVDs & Books ♦ Wands ♦ Candles ♦ Sage
Oils, Burners & Incense ♦ Ceremonial Tools... and More!

Visit ravendance.net

Pure, organic supplements since 1915.

GET CLEAN PRODUCTS, AS SEEN ON OPRAH

newoldwayshealth.com 360-652-9788

Combining the best of science and nature for over 50 years.

EXPERIENCE www.crystalvoyage.com

the Crystal Voyage

Catch the Wave of Future Medicine

Acupuncture
NW Academy of Healing Arts
Licensed Massage Therapy • Hypnotherapy
Personal Counseling / Coaching
Theta Healing • Reiki

Be Pampered by

Lyons' Bridge, Prof. Herbalist and Massage

GIFTS & SERVICES FOR BODY, MIND & SOUL.

2601 East D Street (corner of 26th and D St.)
Exit at the Tacoma Dome

10 years ago, I have found a place of stillness inside myself. Now, when I notice I am in a stressful situation, whether it a conflict with a person or dealing with a computer problem, I can tap into that source of stillness and in a short time feel more at peace with the world around me and with myself. Meditation also clears my mind and allows me to work more efficiently. But, there is one requisite: I have to meditate regularly in order to draw on these benefits at a moment's notice.

I remember years ago, when, just out of college I found myself looking for a new job in a new town. With each passing week, my savings shrank while my sense of hopelessness rose.

Looking back on that time, I can see that my despondency worked against me. Instead of presenting myself as a self-assured professional, my legitimate, yet overt fear of not being hired, give me an air of neediness and desperation. The exact opposite of what an employer wants in an employee.

If I had meditated during that period of my life, I could have drawn on my ability to stay calm in times of stress. A regular meditation routine would have allowed me to take several deep breaths and recreate the sense of peace, before I entered my interviews.

Awareness of the wonderful outcomes I gain from regular exercise and meditation doesn't make it any easier to maintain these habits. Being disciplined remains challenging. Some days I would rather do anything – clean the toilet or pick splinters out of my finger – than trudge to the gym. Those days require a set of mental calisthenics to prod me into

going to the gym. The same holds true for meditation. I frequently experience internal battles with myself about time spent sitting still when I "should be" doing other things.

I blame these struggles on an inner gremlin that regularly urges me skip a day or two or three. It has taken many years for me to realize that my inner gremlin does not have my best interests at heart. When I recognize her voice, I patiently listen to her suggestions that I skip the gym or meditation. I do not argue with her or disagree with her opinions. That would be an exercise in futility. She always wants the last word. Instead, I thank her for her viewpoint, then pack up my gym bag and head out the door or sit down and meditate.

Because it is impossible to know in advance when I am going to need to draw on the physical strength I gain from regular workouts at the gym or the inner sense of tranquility I develop through daily meditation, I maintain my regular routines. Then, when unexpected situations arise, I am ready.

Read more about this topic at <http://flowingstillness.blogspot.com>.

Colleen Foye Bollen is a healing arts practitioner offering Jin Shin Jyutsu and other healing modalities. For information visit www.flowingstillness.com or call (206) 367-0491. In May 2009 Colleen is teaching two classes at the University of Washington Women's center: a workshop on everyday spirituality and an introduction to Jin Shin Jyutsu. See www.depts.washington.edu/womenctr for details.

Ananda
Meditation Temple
Teaching Center
Institute of Living Yoga

5th Annual Ananda Silent Auction
May 29 - 31st East West Bookshop, Seattle
Over 200 items donated by artists, practitioners, merchants. Come enjoy the uplifting atmosphere & delicious sweets & savories. Benefits Ananda Temple Building Fund.

Harmonium Chanting (Seattle)
May 9 - Taught by Hriman McGilloway
This beginning class teaches the basics of playing the harmonium. Bring your own or borrow. Please Pre-register.

Hatha Yoga Retreat (Bothell)
May 9 - Immerse yourself in a day of Yoga: Asana & Pranayam Practices, Physiology of Stress & the Anatomy of Relaxation, Restorative Postures.

Based on the teachings of Paramhansa Yogananda

Register Online!

TWO LOCATIONS! Bothell & Seattle 425-806-3700 www.AnandaSeattle.org