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A study on meditation and psychological changes

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Abstract

Meditation offers you an escape from reality, yielding so many amazing and miraculous benefits. There is much more to meditation than meets the eye, with a limitless array of physical, spiritual, mental, & psychological benefits, anyone can benefit.

Stress and anxiety can cause many problems, including shortening your life. There are some schools of thought that believe stress and anxiety, once trapped in the body, can manifest into illness and disease. If you don't find a way to melt the layers of anxiety that accumulate within your energy field, the layers continue to build and build causing a myriad of health problems.

Keywords: Meditation, stress, health

Introduction

Regular meditation is like a mini vacation for your mind, and it is more effective than the strongest medication you can take. The psychological benefits of meditation are wide ranging: heightened creativity, decreased stress and anxiety, decreased irritability, improved memory and even increased happiness and emotional stability.

Regular meditation can also help you to be a better problem solver, with a more focused mind, leading to greater overall productivity. In addition, psychologically speaking, meditation can increase awareness, while making self-actualization more probable, help with mood swings, boost confidence, increase self-acceptance & empathy.

Like cool rain on a hot day, meditation clears out the emotional debris and waste. It offers you a fresh perspective and a new look. It can be done anywhere and anytime; no special equipment needed. Meditation helps you get deep into your subconscious mind to help you realize that you are much more than your thoughts. Meditation can help you shed the layers to reveal your true, amazing self.

By effectively warding off depression, anxiety, sadness, & addiction, meditation does a better job, in both the short and long term, than drugs and/or alcohol to alleviate stress.

Our emotions often control us and hold us back, causing us to constantly review and relive the past while fretting over the future. Meditation allows us to live in the present moment, which is a beautiful and rare gift. We tend to carry around our emotional baggage within our energy fields, and this can weigh us down. Meditation can help you release these painful emotional burdens, quite often transforming your life in miraculous ways.

When examining the psychology of meditation, one must not forget that meditation allows you to let go and go with the flow. When you learn how to simply let go, you can step away, if only momentarily, from the problems of everyday life. The often self-created problems we encounter in life prevent us from living in the present moment, as we tend to get lost or trapped within our own limited thoughts. You can escape these annoyances, these hindrances, these inhibitions and all the other aggravations of life in your daily meditation sessions.

Life can be very brutal, psychologically speaking: meditation offers us a rare opportunity to escape our thoughts. Meditation can teleport you to another place & time, shedding painful emotional burdens and self-defeating thoughts, tapping into your vastly untapped creative energy.

One can argue that for people to take maximum advantage of their cognitive intelligence (things such as their intelligence quotient [IQ]), they first need Emotional intelligence. If

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people turn others off with abrasive behavior, remain unaware of how they present themselves, or struggle under minimal stress, no one will notice their high IQs. The stronger the Emotional intelligence abilities, the greater the chances for success. Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize emotions in self and others and the capacity to use those emotions to enhance emotional and intellectual growth and decision-making.

Research Study

Researchers have noted that Emotional intelligence represents a set of core competencies for identifying, processing, and managing emotions that enable nurses to cope with daily demands in a knowledgeable, approachable, and supportive manner. An underlying assumption in Emotional intelligence theories is that using emotions in thinking and decision making can be a form of intelligence. This view assumes that joining emotions and cognition, when done well, facilitates decisions, manages emotions, improves relationships, and ultimately results in more intelligent decisions.

Healthy life can be considered as a by-product of practicing yogic techniques since it has been observed that meditation practitioners are physically and mentally healthier and have better coping skills to stressors than the normal population. Meditation is widely practiced and globally accepted. Hence, it can be very well integrated as a health promoting tool in our society. Documented scientific evidence strongly indicates that meditation has promotive, preventive as well as curative potential. As a non-pharmaco therapeutic and safe modality, it can be used as an effective lifestyle adjunct to medical treatment to reduce drug dosage and improve quality of life of the patients.

Modern medicine is very effective in controlling infections, performing surgeries and managing diseases. However, it has limited role in stress-based, chronic degenerative, old age and lifestyle related disorders which are the bane of modern society. Meditation has been found to be very effective in these conditions. Our public health delivery system is understaffed, fundstarved and reeling under severe economic burden. Knowledge of inexpensive, effective and easily administrable yogic techniques by health professionals will go a long way in helping us achieve the WHO goal of providing "physical, mental, spiritual and social health" to the society.

Healthy life can be considered as a by-product of practicing yogic techniques since it has been observed that meditation practitioners are physically and mentally healthier and have better coping skills to stressors than the normal population. Meditation is widely practiced and globally accepted. Hence, it can be very well integrated as a health promoting tool in our society. Healthy people as well as patients may inquisitively approach medical professionals to take consultation about meditation. Meditation is an experiential science. If this knowledge about meditation invokes interest in the medical professionals and they practice it themselves, it might open up new avenue in bringing together our traditional heritage of meditation and today's' objective knowledge of modern medicine.

Discussion

Documented scientific evidence strongly indicates that meditation has promotive, preventive as well as curative potential. As a non-pharmaco therapeutic and safe modality, it can be used as an effective lifestyle adjunct to medical treatment to reduce drug dosage and improve quality of life of the patients. It is to be emphasized that meditation is very

effective for prevention as well as management of all-pervading stress and stress-related disorders. Modern medicine is very effective in controlling infections, performing surgeries and managing diseases. However, it has limited role in stress-based, chronic degenerative, old age and lifestyle related disorders which are the bane of modern society. Meditation has been found to be very effective in these conditions. Our public health delivery system is understaffed, fund-starved and reeling under severe economic burden.

Meditation has preventive, promotive as well as curative potential. Meditation based lifestyle confers so many advantages to the practitioner that beyond doubt it is the best ever designed lifestyle in the history of mankind. Scientific studies have started giving documented evidence to this belief of the practitioners. Since lifestyle related diseases such as coronary artery disease, obesity and hypertension are alarmingly on the rise in our modern society, meditation based lifestyle should be given a special place in preventing and managing these diseases.

Meditators had greater gray matter concentration in the right anterior insula, which is involved in interoceptive awareness. This group difference presumably reflects the training of bodily awareness during meditation. Furthermore, meditators had greater gray matter concentration in the left inferior temporal gyrus and right hippocampus. These regions are deeply involved in meditation. The mean value of gray matter concentration in the left inferior temporal gyrus was predictable by the duration of meditation training, corroborating the assumption of a causal impact of meditation training on gray matter concentration. These results suggest that meditation practice is associated with structural differences in regions that are typically activated during meditation and in regions that are relevant for the task of meditation.

In addition, meditators showed significantly larger volumes of the right hippocampus. Both orbito-frontal and hippocampal regions have been implicated in emotional regulation and response control. Thus, larger volumes in these regions might account for meditators' singular abilities and habits to cultivate positive emotions, retain emotional stability, and engage in mindful behavior. These changes seem to be independent of a specific style and practice of meditation. Future longitudinal analyses are necessary to establish the presence and direction of a causal link between meditation practice and brain anatomy.

Conclusion

Meditation affects every cell of the body. It brings about better neuro-effector communication, improves strength of the body, increases the optimum functioning of all organ-systems, increases resistance against stress and diseases and brings tranquility, balance, positive attitude and equanimity in the practitioner which makes him lead a purposeful and healthier life.

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