

Meditation

Summary

just chill

meditating is acknowledging and observing whatever happens – pleasant or unpleasant – in a relaxed way.

no 'no thoughts'

the goal of meditation is not to empty the mind, but to observe the present moment non-judgementally.

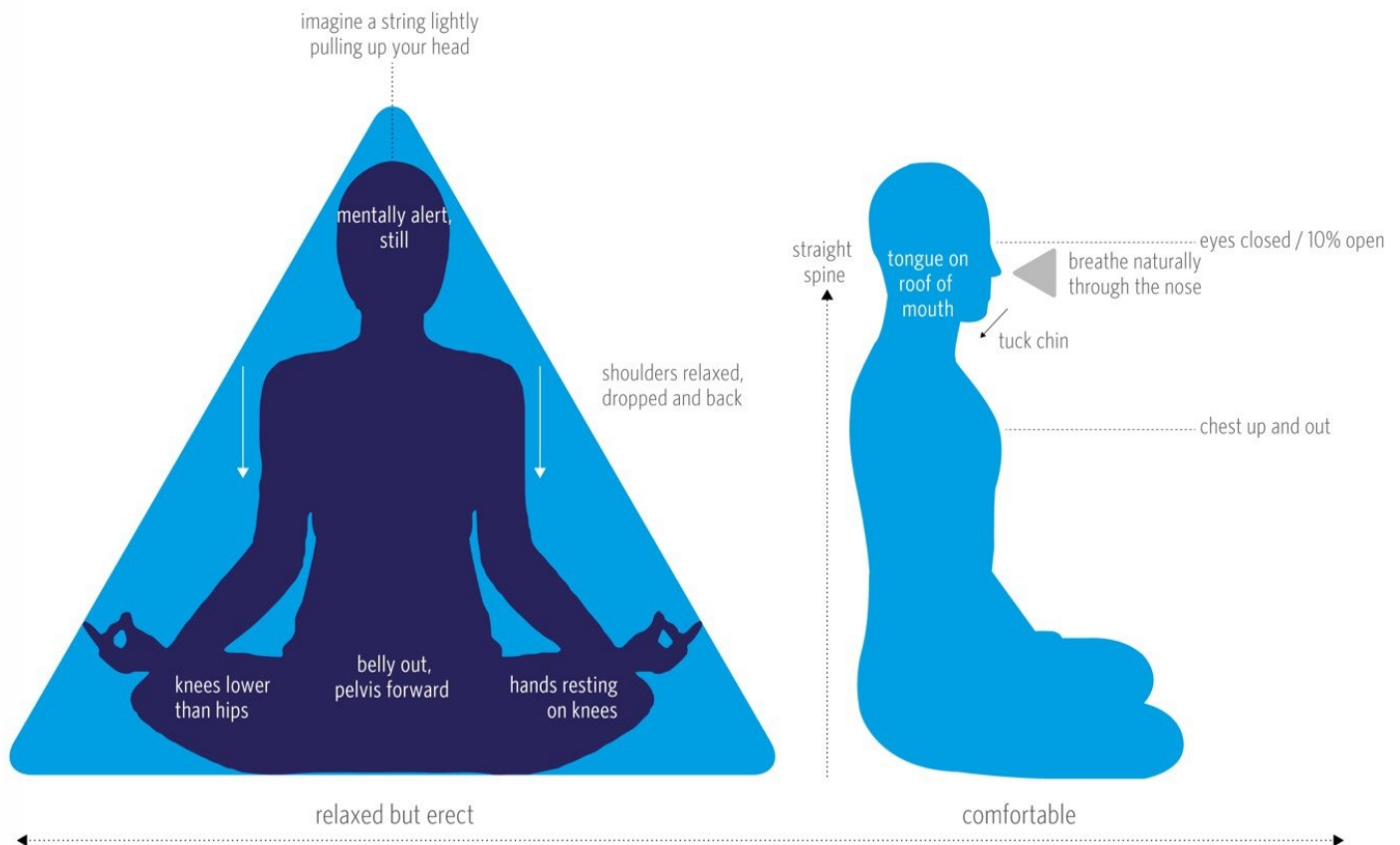
open

this gives insight into how the mind really works, reducing attachment, letting us relax more deeply...

microscope

...transforming the mind and using it as a device to explore itself and the nature of reality.

Ideal Posture



also good



Types of Meditation

object of concentration



meditation name
alternative name

Simple, condensed instructions on how to practise the technique

tradition of origin



concentration
focussed attention

Hold attention on a primary object, usually your breath. Mentally note the upward movement of your abdomen as 'rising', downward as 'falling'. That's it!

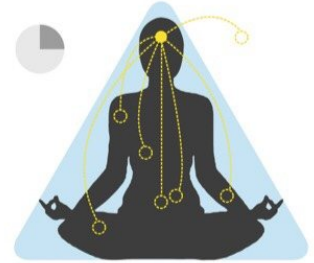
Many



mindfulness
open monitoring

Watch your thoughts, let them come and go, without reacting, judging or holding on.

Buddhism



attending
open monitoring

Concentrate while carefully naming thoughts, sensations and other mental processes and distractions.

Buddhism



loving kindness for self
metta bhavana, cultivation of love

Acknowledge whatever you're feeling. Playfully extend loving kindness to yourself by silently expressing feelings like: 'May I be happy / healthy / loved' etc. Maintain this flow of intention.

Buddhism



silent gratitude
visualisation

Imagine the face of someone you feel grateful to in great detail and silently thank them. Repeat for 4-5 people.

Buddhism



loving kindness for others
metta bhavana

Picture someone you respect and love. Send a stream of metta (loving kindness) towards them using silent, suitable words. If a feeling of happiness arises, absorb yourself into it.

Buddhism



walking

Feel every sensation in your feet while slow walking - contact, rolling, lifting etc. Add attending and name every distraction. Add 'loving kindness' and extend metta to everyone who you see

Buddhism



belly
kath, hara, tan t'ien

Just focus on the sensation of the breath in the belly as it rises and falls.

Many



three-part breath
long deep

First fill the abdomen with air, then expand the chest, then lift ribs and collar bone. Exhale in reverse.

Yoga



breath of fire
agni pran

Rapid rhythmic breaths through the nose. Exhale explosively by contracting anus, inhale by relaxing abdominal muscles.

Kundalini Yoga



circular breathing

Inhale from the base of your spine up to the base of your neck. Exhale down the back of your spine.

Yoga



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Many

Yoga

Kundalini Yoga

Yoga



sensing loop

body scan, body contemplation

Feel into the sensations in your right foot and then work up around each segment of your body - lower leg, knee, thigh, hip, hand, arm, shoulder - in a loop.



zen

zazen, 'just sitting'

Counting your breaths (1 for inhalation, 2 for exhalation) up to 10. If your mind wanders, gently go back to 1. Just sit like this.



microcosmic orbit

Use the breath to circulate energy through an oval 'microcosmic' orbit. Start at the throat, end at the forehead.



transcendental

TM

Silently, repeat a given, single, rhythmic sound-phrase (*mantra*) over and over again.

Sufism

Zen Buddhism

Taoism

Many



mantra

Chant a single, rhythmic sound-phrase (*mantra*) over and over again. Examples: 'Haum Mani-Padme-Om', 'Sa-Ta-Na-Ma', 'Sabbe Satta Sukhi Hontu', 'So Hum' (I am),

Many



eating

metta bhavana, cultivation of love

Take twenty minutes to eat 3 raisins. Savour every detail: the look, the anticipation, the chew, the taste, the swallow.



analytical

rushen, self-inquiry

Sit with a deep question in your mind. 'Who am I?' is a good one. Explore who is thinking, hearing, seeing, wondering. What happens in the immediate moment as you ask this question?

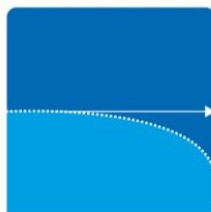
Dzogchen (Tibetan Buddhism)

Common Hindrances



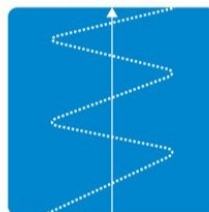
laziness

not meditating regularly or putting meditation off until later



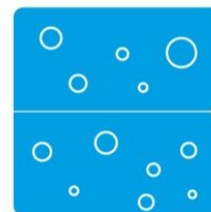
sinking

fading of concentration, a feeling of dullness, sleepiness



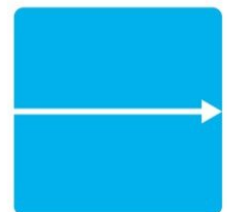
drifting

restless flightiness of mind, creating excitement or anxiety



stray thoughts

random mental phenomena like interference on a radio



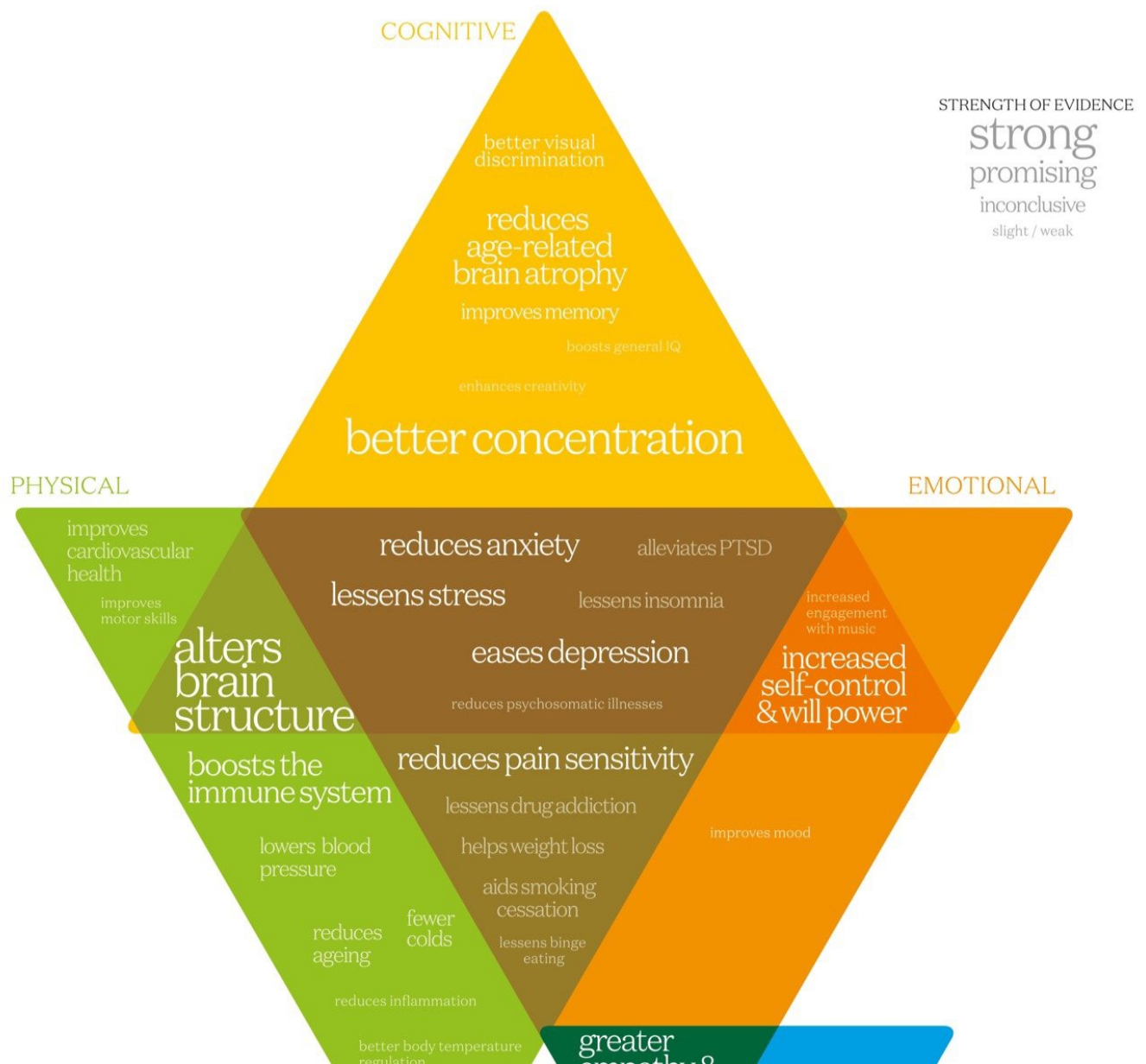
trying too hard

over-focussing or trying to control restricts & tightens the mind

Qualities of Mind Developed in Eastern elemental terms



The Effects of Meditation / Mindfulness summarising the science



The Effects of Meditation / Mindfulness

summarising the science



SOURCES

Ahmed 2013, Anderson 2008, Barnes & Orme-Johnson 2012, Barnes 2004, Barret 2012, Brook 2013, Brown & Jones 2009, Canter & Ernst 2003, Carim-Todd 2013, Chen 2012, Chiesa 2011, Chiesa & Serretti 2010 & 2009, Cochrane 2009, Cochrane 2010, Colzato 2012, Dakwar & Levin 2009, Daubenmier 2011, Davis 2013, Desbordes 2012, Epel 2009, Frieze 2012, Fjorback 2012, Fjorback 2013, Goyal 2014, Grant 2010, Grant 2011, Hasenkamp & Barsalou 2012, Hirsh 2012, Hoge 2013, Jacobs 2013, Kang 2013, Katterman 2014, Kearney 2012, Kearney 2013, Keng 2011, Kerr 2013, Kim 2013, King 2013, Kox 2012, Kozhevnikov 2013, Lang 2012, Leung 2013, Levy 2012, Lutz 2008, Lutz 2009, Maclean 1997, Maclean 2010, Marchand 2013, Mascaro 2013, Menezes 2013, Miller 2013, Moore 2012, Naranjo & Schmidt 2012, Oman 2008, Ospina 2007, Pace 2009, Paholpak 2012, Paul 2013, Raes 2013, Rakel 2013, Ramsburg 2013, Rosenkranz 2013, Saaticoglu 2013, Saggar 2012, Schneider 2012, Singh 2012, Skanavi 2011, Sojcher 2012, Suskhsahale & Phatak 2012, Tang 2010, Tang 2013, Vago 2012, Vestergaard-Poulsen 2009, Vellestad 2012, Walton 2004, Zanesco 2013, Zeidan 2013