100 Benefits of Meditation

There are many advantages to meditation. Meditation is a powerful practice – whether in a spiritual or neutral context. The list here is a summery of most benefits.

There are many forms of meditation, ranging from contemplative prayer to Buddhist Zen meditation. All have their value for what they try to accomplish. The list below shows mostly positive side effects of meditation, but does not necessarily constitute the sole purpose of meditative practice. While we appreciate these benefits, the purpose of zazen (sitting meditation) is *clearing the mind*. Everything we do becomes meditation, i.e. Zen, and hence our Zen practice results ultimately in a peaceful, meditative lifestyle.

It needs to be emphasized that the effects of meditation will become apparent in relation to the intensity of meditation. In other words, occasional meditation can only produce relatively few of these elements, while regular meditation, especially under the guidance of a teacher (Zen master), will produce most if not all of these benefits.

Zazen is about silent meditation, focusing on breathing and posture in an environment that is conducive to clearing the mind. Hence we do not advocate any type of “guided meditation”, background music and the like.

### I. Physiological benefits

1- lowers oxygen consumption  
   decreases respiratory rate  
2- increases blood flow and slows the heart rate  
3- increases exercise tolerance  
4- leads to a deeper level of physical relaxation  
5- good for people with high blood pressure  
6- reduces anxiety attacks by lowering the levels of blood lactate  
7- decreases muscle tension  
8- helps in chronic diseases like allergies, arthritis etc.  
9- reduces pre-menstrual symptoms  
10- helps in post-operative healing
12- enhances the immune system
13- reduces activity of viruses and emotional distress
14- enhances energy, strength and vigor
15- helps with weight loss
16- reduction of free radicals, less tissue damage
17- higher skin resistance
18- drop in cholesterol levels, lowers risk of cardiovascular disease
19- improved flow of air to the lungs resulting in easier breathing
20- decreases the aging process
21- higher levels of DHEAS (Dehydroepiandrosterone)
22- prevented, slowed or controlled pain of chronic diseases
23- makes you sweat less
24- may help in curing headaches & migraines
25- greater orderliness of brain functioning
26- reduced need for medical care
27- less energy wasted
28- more inclined to sports, activities
29- significant relief from asthma
30- improved performance in athletic events
31- normalizes to your ideal weight
32- harmonizes our endocrine system
33- relaxes our nervous system
34- produces lasting beneficial changes in brain electrical activity
35- may help in curing infertility (the stresses of infertility can interfere with the release of hormones that regulate ovulation).

II. Psychological benefits

36- builds self-confidence
37- increases serotonin level, influences mood and behaviour
38- resolves phobias and fears
39- helps control own thoughts
40- helps with focus and concentration
41- increases creativity
42- increased brain wave coherence
43- improved learning ability and memory
44- increased feelings of vitality and rejuvenation
45- increased emotional stability
46- improved relationships
47- mind ages at slower rate
48- easier to remove bad habits
49- develops intuition
50- increased Productivity
51- improved relations at home and at work
52- ability to see the larger picture in a given situation
53- helps ignore petty issues
54- increased ability to solve complex problems
55- purifies your character
56- develops will power
57- greater communication between the two brain hemispheres
58- react more quickly and more effectively to a stressful event
59- increases one’s perceptual ability and motor performance
60- higher intelligence growth rate
61- increased job satisfaction
62- increases the capacity for intimate contact with loved ones
63- decreases the potential for mental illness
64- more sociable behavior
65- less aggressiveness
66- helps in smoking cessation and alcohol addiction
67- reduces the need and dependency on drugs, pills and pharmaceuticals
68- less need of sleep to recover from sleep deprivation
69- requires less time to fall asleep, helps to cure insomnia
70- increases sense of responsibility
71- reduces road rage
72- decrease in restless thinking
73- decreased tendency to worry
74- increases listening skills and empathy
75- helps to make more accurate judgments
76- greater tolerance
77- gives composure to act in considered and constructive ways
78- grows a stable, more balanced personality
79- develops emotional maturity

III. Spiritual benefits

80- helps to keep things in perspective
81- provides peace of mind, happiness
82- helps to discover your purpose
83- increased self-actualization
84- increased compassion
85- spiritual growth
86- deeper understanding of yourself and others
87- brings body, mind, spirit in harmony
88- deeper level of spiritual relaxation
89- increased acceptance of oneself
90- helps to learn forgiveness
91- changes attitude toward life
92- creates a deeper relationship with your higher power or deity
93- attains enlightenment
94- greater inner-directedness
95- helps living in the present moment
96- creates a widening, deepening capacity for love
97- discovery of the power and consciousness beyond the ego
98- experience an inner sense of assurance
99- experience a sense of oneness
100- increases the synchronicity in one’s life

Meditation is completely free. It requires no special equipment, and is not complicated to learn. It can be practiced anywhere, at any given moment, and it is not time consuming (15-20 minutes per day is recommended). Best of all, meditation has no negative side effects, whatsoever. There is nothing but positive to be gained from it. With such a huge list of benefits, the question to ask yourself is, “Why am I not meditating yet?”

[This list was compiled from an original blog posting by Frederic Premji and has been edited and expanded by Fajian]