



PROTOCOL FOR MEDITATION - NEED FOR HOUR

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ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE-Meditation is one of the best procedures mentioned since ancient times for mental well-being worldwide still our country is apprehensive about adopting this. Reasons may be many but the strongest one lacks unanimous protocol regarding this. There are numerous methods, approaches, types & results of meditation defined largely hence it becomes difficult for a common man to select the exactly needed method without confusion. So present study is an approach to designing crystal clear, readymade formula taking minimum time and yielding maximum results speaking clearly of its benefits. METHODS- It is research work done on 20 volunteers to see the effect of meditation. A 7 criteria-based scale was designed to compare before & after the process. RESULTS- Meditation criteria were statistically evaluated & found significant in changing the parameters positively. CONCLUSION-This meditation protocol can be adopted by everyone due to its simplified systematic approach & easy understandability.

Keywords: Meditation, Protocol for beginners & outcome

INTRODUCTION

Long & healthy life of 100 years with sensorial and intellectual wellbeing is always desired by mankind as *Jeevamesharadahshatam* says. *Ayurveda* mentions

that the mind prompts an individual to indulge in or refrain from virtuous and sinful acts and makes the basis of behavior. (Ch. Su.8/13)^[1] If the mind is filled

with negativity, it surely affects mental & physical health. One of the ways to control mental faculty is meditation. How it does is very clearly mentioned as Means we should control and curb the attitudes of the mind (*Vritti*) through meditation because a person becomes like them.^{2,3} **Meditation controls the mind and refrains it from negativity, so the positive tendencies stay and cultivate in a person which uplifts mental health & gets manifested in his attitude & his behaviour.** This was the hypothesis of research work done to evaluate meditation practices & its data is used here in this paper.

Why meditation is not mainstream?

Meditation is a gold standard procedure that is defined for spiritual as well as materialistic benefits since ancient times. Despite its several therapeutic & transformational effects, people don't even start the practice of meditation. Some of the reasons are:

1. Strict protocols or conducts mentioned in texts:

In ancient times it was described as *Sadhana* but in modern times when everything is getting ready-made and just a call away type, people want easy practices to excel in practical life too. Less investment of time and effort & more returns are expected.

2. Methodical approach to everything:

People want a simplified, individual-centric & result-oriented method.

3. People want a scientific, contemporary process:

Need of the hour is a contemporary standardized technique that fulfills the scientific criterion. Practice must satisfy the inner world of spirituality and the outer world of logic & science. In this research paper, we have adopted a practical & minimalistic approach to meditation that can be followed by people from all backgrounds, cultures, and walks of life, which allows us to do meditation effortlessly with clarity, and scientific evidence could be generated with the help of scale & table. Before proceeding further, I would like to throw some light on the concept of meditation.

The ancient concept of meditation (*Dhyana*): The various concepts of *Dhyana* practices originated in the Vedic era. In the *Yoga Sutra* of Patanjali, *Dhyana* is

the seventh limb of *Ashtanga Yoga*. *Dharana* means fixing one's mind on an object of meditation and *Dhyana*, is sustained attention of the mind to that chosen point".

Dharana-The stage of meditation preceding *Dhyana* is called *Dharana* which implies focusing one's mind effortfully on an object/thought. **It is the most important part of meditation upon which the result of meditation depends.**

Dhyana- *Dhyana* is the easy, continuous flow of the same thought (*Dharana*) without being distracted by any other thought".

Samadhi- *Dhyana* prepares a Yogi to proceed towards Samadhi. Samadhi is a state of absorption & oneness in which there is no distinction between the act of meditation and the object of meditation.

Samyama- The practice of *Dharana*, *Dhyana*, and *Samadhi* together is designated as *Samyama* in the *Yoga Sutra*. *Samyama* is a powerful meditative tool.

Process or act of meditation- For a beginner, it is very important to choose a material thing as *Dharana* because it will help in focus. A person who begins meditation, practices *Dharana* first. There are different *Dharana* /*Desha* or areas of focus^[5] mentioned in Yogic texts but practically one should choose according to one's own needs.

Dharana or suggestion should always be Positive & Pure. With practice one is able to gain ease in which he learns how to contemplate in a sharply focused fashion and to continue with uninterrupted attention to the meditation object. With further practice, the person enters a state of fusion with the meditation object i.e., *Samadhi*.

Different objects/places of *Dharana* in meditation

1. In Bhagvadgeeta, *Prana* is advised to fix on the *Agya chakra* or **glabellar region** (*Bh.G.8/10*)^[6]. This is one of the very popular methods which we have used during trial work on volunteers.
2. In *Yogsutra*, there are several *Bhoomi* or places for *Dharana* are mentioned (*P.Yo.Su.3/6,3/19,23-29*)^[5] where the person is advised to do *Samyama* on various qualities, notions, physical powers of animals, minute & hidden objects, etc.

3. In *Shivsanhita*, a meditation on *Chakras* is mentioned (*Sh.S. 5/88-188*)^[7]
4. In *Gherandsanhita*, meditation upon the heart, *Agya Chakra* & idol of the deity is described. (*Gh.S.6/2,17,8*)^[8]

Methods of the practice of meditation

It includes techniques, posture & places. **Place** - One should sit in a comfortable, quiet, clean & pious place. Practically, the same place, same time, and same mat should be used so that the same energy field could be maintained.

1. One should sit for meditation in a clean & peaceful place devoid of stones, fire, and sand. (*Shw. Sh. 2/10*)^[9]
2. One should meditate in a pious place with the focussed mind, on a mat made of wool, cloth, or *Kush*. (*Bh.G.6/11-12*)^[10]

Technique & Posture-

1. An intelligent person practicing *Dhyana* should sit in *Padamasana* with his head, neck, chest, and back erect and stable, sense organs should be withdrawn from the sense objects, the mind should be concentrated in the heart and should repeat *Om* *kara*. (*Shw. Sh. 2/8*)^[11] (*Shi.S. 5/59*).^[12] (*Bh.G.6/13*)^[13]
2. Here constant meditation is advocated in sitting, moving, sleeping, and waking postures. (*Shi.S.5 /153*)^[14] **Continuous Practice of meditation makes a person blessed with superpowers-** Meditation is a subjective phenomenon & its experiences depend upon the doer. This signifies the self-experiencing nature of meditation; it is only felt by one who does it. It blesses the doer with every kind of results like clairvoyance, purity, extraordinary capabilities & supernatural powers depending upon purity & intensity of efforts. (*Shi.S. 5/208*)^[18] ^[19] ^[20] ^[21] ^[22]

Material And Methods:

To explore this topic, the help of *Ayurvedic* & *Yogic* texts were taken and the base was chosen a research work which was done with the following plan-

- **Aims And Objectives:** To evaluate the intensity of meditation practices.

- To standardize the meditation practice on seven scale criteria.

- **Plan Of Study:**

Selection of patients- For the clinical study 20 apparently healthy volunteers attending our hospital were selected randomly. Each individual practiced the given meditation technique as follows-

Dharana

- **Thought taken-All the men and women of the world are my brothers & sisters.**
- **Place (Desha) -** Place (*Desha*) is *Agya Chakra* or *Bhroo Madhya* (between eyebrows) *Bh.G. 8/10*^[6]

Dhyana (Meditation)

The chosen method of Meditation is very common among meditators. Many people are aware of it. The process of meditation was divided into two parts-

1. Focus on the night- Volunteers were asked to take *Dharana* & meditate on their chosen *Pradesha* i.e. *Agya Chakra* at night before going to sleep.
2. Cleaning in the morning- Volunteers were asked to clean their *Desha (Agya Chakra)*
3. with the thought that "**All the impurities, grossness & heaviness are melting and going out in the form of Smoke from the front**" and imagine that as this process is going on, the structures behind are glowing". This was advised to be done in the morning earliest. This was a kind of active meditation.

Evaluation Of Intensity of Meditation Practices: A Seven-Point Criterion was made to measure the intensity of meditation practice. The intensity of meditation practice was assessed on the following parameters from the first day of starting meditation practice up to the end of the trial.

1. **Willingness** - (for meditation practices)
2. **Sincerity** - (during meditation)
3. **Focus** - (during meditation)
4. **Acceptance** - (for meditation)
5. **Devotion** - (for the practice)
6. **Feeling** - (arising during meditation and its continuation up to the next meditation session)
7. **Love** - (for overall practice)

This should be recorded just after completion of every session except point no 6 i.e., feeling which'll be assessed just before the beginning of the next session.

Time of practice - 10 minutes morning and 10 minutes at night.

Follow up - After 3 weeks

Selection Criteria:

Consent: Written consent was taken before trial.

Inclusion Criteria

1. Healthy volunteers are willing to try.
2. Group of 18 – 30 years irrespective of sex, race, religion, and socio-economic status.

Exclusion criteria

1. Volunteers with associated chronic ailments.
2. Pregnant and Lactating mothers.

Laboratory investigations

The routine hematological examination viz. Hb gm%, TLC, DLC, ESR, FBS, B. Urea, S. Creatinine, S. Uric acid, S.Cholesterol, SGOT, SGPT was done before the trial to rule out any pathology.

Results: Collected data were subjected to a statistical method i.e. Wilcoxon Sign Rank Test.

Table 1: Overall intensity of Meditation practices before and after study

Criteria for overall Intensity of meditation practices for 20 volunteers	Average before trial=Total BT score /20	Average after trial=total AT score/20
Willingness	62.3	72
Sincerity	59	67.5
Focus	36.35	66.35
Acceptance	43.75	63.6
Feeling	42.1	56.75
Devotion	47.5	71.45
Love	43.1	70.1
Total average % of the intensity of meditation	47.7	66.8

Table 2: Volunteers’ % Intensity for Meditation Practices during Trial and total Average % of Intensity of Meditation of whole group Date of commencement of Trial-1-10-2018. Date of completion of Trial-21-10-2018

*- Criteria of Intensity of Meditation Practice, **-Average % during the course of the whole trial

Sr.No.	*	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7	V8	V9	V10	V11	V12	V13	V14	V15	V16	V17	V18	V19	V20	**
1	Willingness	97.18	58.74	57.4	97.8	75.7	40.23	78.12	61.3	69.3	58.33	56.6	61.4	61.7	76.9	72.02	64.05	58.71	77.41	58.45	57.75	66.6
2	Sincerity	93.52	65.3	60.2	89.5	79.2	54.85	75.43	59.6	71.9	51.55	58.81	61.2	51.4	77.09	58.80	69.2	51.9	72.52	42.235	59.35	64.76
3	Focus	70	33.6	62.2	77	67.7	58.21	62.04	54.1	57.6	50.24	45	52.25	41.6	73	46.42	65.7	44.05	58.8	32.09	50.45	54.62
4	Acceptance	94.62	54.6	65.3	56.1	72	66.96	66.97	59.5	64.04	29.52	35.95	58.81	37.9	73.3	68.80	56.3	64.04	65.4	49	39	58.57
5	Feeling	92.14	51.9	65.2	65.5	72.9	63.53	65.12	57.2	65.1	41.90	55.72	60.5	31.4	31.4	58.45	48.92	54.2	62.81	48.45	27.04	59.12
6	Devotion	95.43	44.05	62.1	69.4	75.35	66.99	69.86	64.4	61.9	46.90	61.8	61.7	44.6	68.42	68.9	58.215	64.5	69.6	30.95	11.65	55.62
7	Love	100	57.24	64.2	80.45	76.5	74.01	68.93	47.02	67.4	45.6	76.90	47.4	44	77.04	62.4	52.74	47.02	65.31	43.935	12.15	60.07
Average % intensity of the whole group during trial=																					59.92	

Table 3: Statistical analysis of criteria of Intensity of meditation before & after trial and whole average% of it, during the trial period.

Sr. No.	Criteria of Intensity of meditation	Average % during the trial	W critical	W Stat	Significance(value) P-value	Significance
1.	Willingness	66.6	40	50.0	Willingness $p=0.130$	Insignificant
2.	Sincerity	64.76	46	58.5	Sincerity $p=0.145$	Insignificant
3.	Focus	54.62	52	11.5	Focus $p=<0.001$	Highly Significant
4.	Acceptance	58.75	46	30.5	Acceptance $p=0.007$	Moderately Significant
5.	Feeling	59.167	46	40	Feeling $p=0.026$	Significant
6.	Devotion	55.624	40	13	Devotion $p=<0.001$	Highly Significant
7.	Love	60.018	40	12.5	Love $p=<0.001$	Highly Significant

DISCUSSION

I-Meditation Intensity: How "Criteria of the intensity of meditation" affect meditation practices. (Table no.3)

- 1. Willingness:** Willingness means promptness or readiness for any practice. Whenever a new practice is being adopted, everyone cannot be 100% prepared to do it. The $p = 0.130$ although shows the insignificance of this factor in this trial but the final results further show that even if one is not 100% willing but is sitting to do meditation, he is going to get good results.
- 2. Sincerity:** Here $p=0.145$ showing the insignificance of this factor in this trial means a person just needs to sit and try to meditate.
- 3. Focus:** Here p -value <0.001 means high significance. It clearly means one needs to focus without which no Meditation is possible.
- 4. Acceptance:** Due to p -value = 0.007, this is a moderately significant factor. One takes time to accept a new process, still, the practice is effective.
- 5. Feeling:** Here p -value = 0.026 indicates its significance. Needless to say, doing with feeling is the core or soul of any practice.
- 6. Devotion:** Here p -value is <0.001 & it is a highly significant factor for Meditation. The higher the devotion higher will be results and perfection.

- 7. Love:** Love is the highest energy. It propels a strong feeling of interest. The more deeply we are engrossed in any practice, the more good results we are going to get. This truly signifies the p -value <0.001 means higher significance.

How does Meditation Affect Criteria of Intensity?

Table no 1. clearly shows an incremental effect of meditation on willingness, sincerity, focus, love, etc. With time people inculcate likeliness & seriousness for the process. It is quite natural that in the beginning, our feelings are not much intense. Efforts & time change everything. The total average % of increment is 19% in all criteria. Thus, we can say that Meditation was greatly significant in changing in criteria involved in meditation.

CONCLUSION

Through research work, we could standardize the meditation process & convert subjective experience into a measurable process. We can say- Everyone can do it easily with monitoring and self-evaluation irrespective of condition & place. Meditation is a powerful process of changing oneself. It trains our mind & even our attitude is changed positively.^[20] Meditation is like a tool that can be used positively as well as negatively depending upon Dharana. So, one must practice positive affirmations. This will be a harbinger of a positive & better world.

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