

Why We Don't Meditate And How We Can Change This

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Let's explore why we don't meditate twice a day. Some of us do, but many of us don't meditate when we should. People come home after a long, hard day of work, finish their day and fall into bed. There's simply 'no time' for meditation. But why don't we find the time? There is so much proof of why meditation is good for you. If you were to visit some of the healthiest people on the planet you will be hard pressed to find someone who doesn't believe in, attest to, and practice meditation. If so many people expound in the benefits of meditation, why don't we meditate?

I think I can boil it down to two really specific things that keep us from meditating. I was exposed to meditation when I was 19 years old. I was studying psychology as an undergraduate in college and exploring the work of Herbert Benson out of Harvard. Herbert Benson really researched the benefits, physiologically, of meditation. I started meditating right away but there were gaps, breaks in my meditation. Though I was very impressed with Dr. Benson's work, I was 19 years old and things like blood pressure and medical benefits weren't really an issue for me at that time. Dr. Benson talked a lot about the physiological effects that meditation had on your body. I was 19 and quite healthy. I enjoyed meditation; but sometimes days, even weeks would go by without meditating.

This is really the first reason many of us don't meditate. We really need a good reason to do something. We need a reason to meditate. If we're going to spend a half an hour a day doing something we need to know what we're doing really changes us or adds to our overall happiness. Our lives are busy and our time is precious so we don't want to 'waste' it doing something that we don't know for sure is beneficial. We may think "yes, this makes me feel nice and relaxed but it doesn't really change me or add to my overall happiness." What changed for me is that many years later I met people who I felt were very deep, very healthy, very emotionally and spiritually mature people. What I learned about them, pretty much across the board, was that they meditated. They attested to meditation, they practiced meditation and they encouraged me to meditate. Because I really love growth, once I really understood how important meditation was to my own personal growth I started to meditate regularly. I saw the change within me, and people around me noticed it too.

So the first thing that keeps us from meditating is that we really need a reason to meditate. As humans, we vacillate between two poles. At one end there is immediate gratification. "I'm tired, it was a long day and I'm going to have myself a few beers to relax." Or "When I go to Vegas I always have such a great time, even though I come back exhausted. It sure feels great while I'm there, so I go." So the first thing we do is

look for something pleasurable. We want to feel good. Meditation can address this because once you start meditating on a regular basis you will begin to feel good. However, meditation takes time to work. You have to stick with it before you begin to really feel the deep effects of it.

So the second aspect that affects our behavior is our goals. As a profession in general, surgeons make more money than any other profession out there. But, they have to go to college for four years, and do very well. Then they have to go to medical school for another four years and do very well. Then they go off to do a residency for anywhere from five to seven years, working sometimes 100 hours a week. So why would they do this? They do this because of their goals. They realize that in the end they will be working in a very lucrative profession and have a very secure job. So besides the immediate effects of meditation we also need a deep, heartfelt reason as to why we are going to meditate day after day, week after week, year after year.

For me this reason came from learning from others; from people who taught me that meditation is truly the number one change agent on the planet. If you want to grow, if you want to wake up and have a beautiful life then meditation is the key factor to this. But you have to believe it at the core, because like the surgeons going through medical school can be hard sometimes; meditation can be hard sometimes. It's not a bad experience but sometimes we're just too tired, too busy to take the time to meditate.

Until we reach a point where meditation really is something we are invested in and believe that it will radically change our lives for the better, we're probably not going to meditate on a regular basis. There are just too many things out there that are calling for our attention. I can absolutely guarantee you that meditation is truly the most important thing you can do in your life for creating a beautiful, important, wonderful life. But until you believe this, other things will get in the way and distract you. What you can do is to find someone that can really motivate you to meditate. You can find a local group near your home to meditate with others..

So there are really two main reasons why we don't meditate. One is that at first it may not give us enough pleasure to keep our attention. My response to that is to be patient, it will bring you pleasure if you hang in there. It's similar to exercise, at first we don't realize how good the exercise makes us feel until we've started doing it regularly and then our bodies actually crave that exercise. Your mind reacts in the same way. As you meditate regularly your mind too will crave those meditative states. It will grow to be the highlight of your day.

The second thing that often keeps us from meditating is that we don't really believe that it's good for us. So if you want to meditate, make sure you're connected with someone or something that drives it deep down inside of you. Continue to meditate regularly and you will realize as time goes on that you feel the effects of the meditation. That person, that story, that connection that makes you realize the importance of meditation will also make you realize that meditation is a key part to your life.