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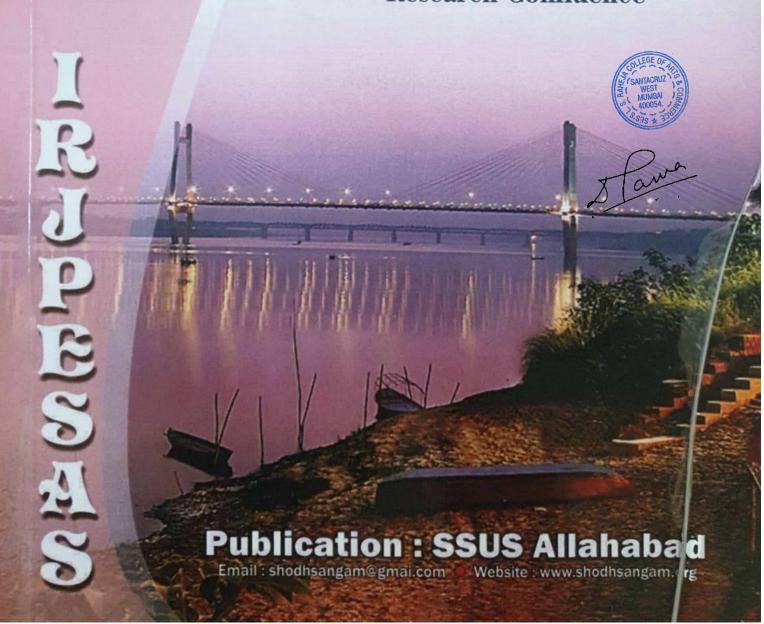
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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MINDFULNESS AND TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION

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ABSTRACT:

This practice of 'present moment awareness' ranges from 10 day Buddhist retreat courses, to less austere and challenging practices during local drop in sessions, or even an app to download at your convenience. This accessibility for both novices and potential teachers has introduced millions to the concept of meditation. But not all meditations are the same. Which technique should they learn in the first instance? Having learned mindfulness, will moving on to TM give them that depth or progression they are seeking? Or having learned TM, would they still benefit from learning mindfulness? What is the difference?

Keywords: Mindfulness, Transcendental Meditation

INTRODUCTION:

Mindfulness is not new – it has been around for thousands of years in the Yoga tradition, although it is more commonly recognized for its association with Buddhism which itself sprang from Yoga. But its sudden rise in popularity and move into the mainstream can be attributed to its ease of integration with popular therapies such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) as used in modern psychology.



CBT has been the most researched and widely available psychological therapy for many years, for reducing symptoms of everything from mild anxiety to schizophrenia, and has even been used in the business world to enhance success. A key aspect involves identifying our faulty thinking (with the use of a thought diary) and starting to challenge those thoughts and associated beliefs to create a shift in unhelpful emotions and behaviors.

Literature Review:

Transcendental Meditation (TM) is a simple, natural method of allowing the mind to go beyond thoughts and gain access to the silent inner field of creativity, energy, peace, and happiness that is our own essential nature, our Self. Widely known and prescribed by physicians for its powerful stress-reducing effects, TM is much more than that. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (1918–2008), who brought TM to the West, said that TM offers any individual not only a gateway to the highest spiritual unfoldment (Enlightenment), but also "sound physical and mental health, greater ability in action, a greater capacity to think clearly, increased efficiency in work, and more loving and rewarding relationships with others." Five million TM practitioners around the world and more than 360 published, peer-reviewed scientific studies have consistently corroborated these lofty claims.

Meditation: The First and Last Freedom shows that meditation is not a spiritual discipline separate from everyday life in the real world. In essence, it is simply the art of being aware of what is going on inside and around us. As we acquire the knack, meditation can be our companion wherever we are-at work, at play, at rest.

Meditation contains practical, step-by-step guides to a wide variety of meditation techniques selected by and/or created by Osho, including the unique OSHO Active Meditations which deal with the special tensions of contemporary life. Recognizing that it's almost impossible for most people these days just to stop and sit silently, these meditations - including the Osho Dynamic Meditation and Osho Kundalini Meditation - begin with one or more stages of vigorous physical activity. This brings our physical and mental energies to a peak, so that the following silence is easy -- leaving us alert, refreshed, and newly energized.

Objectives:

- (i) To find difference between mindfulness and transcendental meditation
- (ii) To find out which technique one should learn in the first instance
- (iii) To investigate having learned mindfulness, should one move to TM or having learned TM learning mindfulness would be beneficial

Research Methodology:

The data and information have been collected from secondary sources like Journals, Reports, Text-Books and Websites.

Transcendental Meditation (TM):

Transcendental Meditation (TM) refers to a specific form of silent mantra meditation called the Transcendental Meditation technique and less commonly to the organizations that constitute the Transcendental Meditation movement. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (1918–2008) introduced the TM technique and TM movement in India, in the mid-1950s.



The Maharishi taught thousands of people during a series of world tours from 1958 to 1965, expressing his teachings in spiritual and religious terms. TM became more popular in the 1960s and 1970s, as the Maharishi shifted to a more technical presentation, and his meditation technique was practiced by celebrities. At this time, he began training TM teachers and created specialized organizations to present TM to specific segments of the population such as business people and students. By the early 2000s, TM had been taught to millions of people, and the worldwide TM organization had grown to include educational programs, health products, and related services.

The TM technique involves the use of a sound or mantra, and is practiced for 15–20 minutes twice per day. It is taught by certified teachers through a standard course of instruction, which costs a fee that varies by country. According to the Transcendental Meditation movement, it is a non-religious method for relaxation, stress reduction, and self-development. The technique has been seen as both religious and non-religious; sociologists, scholars, and a New Jersey judge and court are among those who have expressed views. The United States Court of Appeals upheld the federal ruling that TM was essentially "religious in nature" and therefore could not be taught in public schools.

TM is one of the most widely practiced and researched meditation techniques. It is not possible to say whether it has any effect on health as the research, as of 2007, is of poor quality.

Practice:

The meditation practice involves the use of a mantra for 15–20 minutes twice per day while sitting with the eyes closed. It is reported to be one of the most widely practiced, and among the most widely researched, meditation techniques, with hundreds of published research studies. The technique is made available worldwide by certified TM teachers in a seven-step course, and fees vary from country to country. Beginning in 1965, the Transcendental Meditation technique has been incorporated into selected schools, universities, corporations, and prison programs in the US, Latin America, Europe, and India. In 1977 a US district court ruled that a curriculum in TM and the Science of Creative Intelligence (SCI) being taught in some New Jersey schools was religious in nature and in violation of the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. The technique has since been included in a number of educational and social programs around the world.

The Transcendental Meditation technique has been described as both religious and non-religious, as an aspect of a new religious movement, as rooted in Hinduism, and as a non-religious practice for self-development. The public presentation of the TM technique over its 50-year history has been praised for its high visibility in the mass media and effective global propagation, and criticized for using celebrity and scientific endorsements as a marketing tool. Also, advanced courses supplement the TM technique and include an advanced meditation program called the TM-Sidhi program.

Dynamic Meditation:

Dynamic meditation is a form of meditation in which physical actions are involved. The term appears in the early 1970s when Osho's descriptions of his "Rajneesh Dhyan Yoga," developed at meditation camps in the Indian mountains, were translated into English. His prototypical method is still named "Dynamic Meditation."

The term has come into more general use to describe any approach to meditation that includes movement: examples are Sama and Hadra among the Sufi mystics, the Gurdjieff in the Dynamic Body Awareness (Conscience movements. corporelle dynamique or Consapevolezza corporea dinamica) created in France by artist and anthropologist Martino Nicoletti and other sacred dances, Qigong and the many exercises developed in Buddhism and Taoism, in India those found in Yoga and Tantra, the Latihan of Subud.

Practice:

OSHO believed that cathartic methods were necessary, since it was difficult for modern people to just sit and enter meditation; "I never tell people to begin with just sitting. With a mad dance, you begin to be aware of a silent point within you; with sitting silently, you begin to be aware of madness." His "dialectical" methods alternate activity and passivity, adapting elements of *mantra* and *pranayama*, *latihan*, kirtan and psychotherapeutic catharsis.



Mindfulness as an effect of Transcendence

As stress is gradually released from the body, an infinite range of mental and physical benefits are noticed, including changes in our emotional responses to life. Even freedom from anger can become a reality, for example, as we are no longer bound by the impressions of past experience (karma). This liberation to behave differently is actually liberation of present moment awareness. Present moment awareness is the gift of a stress free nervous system — we can respond to the actual demand being placed on us in the present moment rather than being forced into reactions pre-fabricated by our stress. So when we rid ourselves of the vast majority of these stresses, we're at liberty to actually read the present moment. And the infinite silence starts to support all of our activity on the surface, free of restrictions and with a greater range of choices for action.

This increased mindfulness is just one of the many spontaneous effects of TM, as indicated by research: a 3-month randomized controlled trial found that those practising TM reported significantly greater increases in mindfulness than waitlist participants (Journal of Clinical Psychology, 2009). And so practices such as mindful eating, which is recommended as a practice both in modern psychology's mindfulness programmes, and by the ancient practice of Ayurveda which includes TM, tend to become spontaneous and automatic effects.

CONCLUSION:

Mindfulness and transcendence are two important stages of the Yoga process. They involve different techniques and processes (as evidenced by different effects in the brain) and are working on two different but complimentary and mutually enhancing levels.

Many people come to learn Transcendental Meditation (TM) having already learned mindfulness because they wish to complete the yoga process, deepen their practice, and benefit in all areas of life from this most effective and easy method of transcendence.

Whilst regular transcendence produces an automatic and natural result of increased mindfulness (by liberating rather than training the mind), some people do choose to continue some form of mindfulness practice in their daily lives, e.g. walking mindfully; to approach its development from that level as well. Also, after learning TM students are encouraged to begin incorporating a particular set of Yoga asanas (mindful stretching), and pranayama (mindful breathing) into their daily program of TM to enhance the process. So, whilst these two stages of Yoga can be practised separately, they are most usefully practised together, one as preparation for the other, and each beautifully enhancing the effects of the other.

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