

# Meditation: The Inward Journey eBook



by Blair Lewis, PA-C

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**Legal Disclaimer** - No portion of this document is intended to substitute for doctor's advice, or medical treatment. It is always best to consult your family doctor or practitioner before choosing your therapy.

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# Introduction

Why meditate? Why now? ... because you have no choice. No choice according to you. You already know that you are way too busy. So busy that you have become a stranger to yourself. All of us have paid so much attention to the world around us, that we know nothing about the world within us. Our life has kept us running here and there, succeeding, failing, winning and losing -- this is all we seem to know. When we are not socializing with our friends and family, we are socializing with the Internet or the television.

What happens when we become a stranger to ourselves? We lose our confidence. We get confused about why we are living such a hectic life. We feel empty inside. As our outer pillars of support crumble around us, we become afraid. Very afraid. We expect answers to magically come from heaven and solve all of our problems. We hope that our politicians will solve all the social ills and the police will keep us safe. In short, we have become so powerless that we blame others for our troubles and we demand others to take care of us. Peace and prosperity was just a wish, a mere desire, we never made it a priority and thus, we did not make it happen.

In ancient times, we used Mother Nature's herbs and fresh foods to help us heal. Then for decades we ignored all of this. Today modern medicine is re-awakening the knowledge of herbs, nutrition and natural healing. Why? Because traditional medicines have a very long tradition of helping us. These methods worked way back then and we are seeing that they still work today. The ancient knowledge of meditation is also coming back. This inward science can lead us to the heights of spiritual wisdom and worldly success.

I have been practicing meditation since I was 17. It started as a search for happiness - an antidote to the pain and confusions of adolescence. Over time, an awareness and an identity started to emerge. It was not as a Christian or a Jew, Republican or Democrat, it was a purely human identity. I was starting to identify myself with the plain, simple me. Fallible, lovable, trainable, me.

For over 30 years I have continued to meditate. The insights and rewards are too numerous to count. If you have the slightest doubt about the benefit of meditation, jump right now to Chapter 12 and read some of the 2000-plus clinical trials that show meditation's benefits on physiology and emotions.

There is a true humanness to the science of meditation. All of us know things we could do to improve our lot in life - but we do not always do them. This is not a modern dilemma, this is a human dilemma.

This straight-forward view of human frailty and sincere human effort is what endears me to the science of meditation. The best thing that I can do for you and that you can do for me, is to be real and authentic. Meditation lifts us out of our false fantasies and out of our troubling trifles. Uplifted from these, we finally see the wonder and beauty of the true human spirit.

In that wonderment and in that beauty, I offer you this little guide to meditation.

Blair Lewis

# Defining Meditation

Let's start with some definitions. You need to know the basis and origin of this science. Even the dictionaries seem to confuse meditation with contemplation. When you cannot find an accurate definition of meditation, it makes it all the more confusing about what meditation really is and how to apply it in our lives today.

The word meditation is a noun that is based on the root word 'med.' 'Med' means "to attend to." When a word ends in 'tion,' this means "the condition of." Thus, meditation means the condition of paying attention. Any thing that we are paying attention to, we could technically say we are meditating on that. However, in the spiritual sciences, meditation refers to the process of paying attention to a specific object that is supportive of the goal of self-transformation. The most common objects are the breath and a mantra. We will talk more about them both in a little while.

Here are some basic definitions, so we can move quickly into the deeper aspects of meditation.

**Meditation:** the science of paying attention to an object that will help us further unfold the finer aspects of our own self.

**Spirituality:** the comprehensive science of how to make qualitative changes in our life. These changes will make our mind more stable and our senses more sturdy. The philosophical principles of this science surface spontaneously in every culture, climate and decade since the dawn of time. They do not belong to any one country, religion or dogma. Most religions are composed of a few tiny gems of spirituality, but commonly leave out the science and specific techniques that make the goal of spirituality attainable. When the human heart cries out in desperation, this knowledge starts to flow into our lives once again.

**Mantra:** A sacred awakened sound that guides and protects each individual. Mantra is composed of two words: 'man' -- thinking beings, human beings and 'tra' -- that which guides and protects. What do we really need guidance and protection from? Our own mind ... it's impulses, confusions, distortions and deletions. When our own mind is confused and feeling hopeless, mantra meditation will help to set things right.

# The History of Meditation

The science of meditation flows from the beginning of human existence. This ageless, timeless science will help you have the mental clarity and emotional stability to do the right thing. World history tells us that the most ancient civilizations lived in and around the foothills of the Himalayan mountains. The mantras used in authentic meditative traditions come from the original languages that existed before the Tower of Babel and the onset of confused tongues.

Applying these ancient skills today will lead you to the same heights of knowledge, insight and compassion that the ancient seers attained in centuries long past. In keeping with the oral tradition of the Himalayan sages, we will focus on techniques that have direct application in your life. You will re-verify the validity of this science, by simply meditating. As our forefathers wrote over 200 years ago, “and we hold these Truths to be self-evident...” This means that with proper instruction, the truth about you and your relationships in this world will be directly evident to you. You will not need outside verification in order for you to figure out how to live a happy, wholesome life. I greatly admire that the rich tradition of meditation cures us of co-dependency and false weaknesses.

*“Meditation can do that which nothing else can do, it introduces you to yourself.”*

-Swami Rama of the Himalayas

## Short-cuts

Right now I will summarize for you this entire book and help you learn how to meditate right now.

In the beginning:

**Learning to Pay Attention** -- The essential skill of meditation is learning to concentrate, condense and compress your awareness to be totally focused on the very subtle object of your meditation. As your entire being becomes absorbed in meditation, every stress and strain of daily life will fall from your shoulders. In a few short minutes you will become rested and refreshed. Your attitude will be more positive and compassionate. Your family and co-workers will immediately see the benefits of your meditation. You will make better decisions, have greater creativity and become playfully clever in managing the challenges of the day. In short, by regularly meditating, you will like yourself much more and we will too.

**The Setting** -- This should be quiet, restful and still. The atmosphere should be serene, with no sense of hurriedness. A clean pleasant place that is suggestive of inner exploration. Free of interruptions, we move forward.

**You** -- Your body should be clean and properly nourished. Use the nasal wash and brush your teeth. Wash your face, hands and feet. Take a moment and refresh yourself. Empty your bowel and bladder. Wear comfortable loose fitting clothes that will allow you to breathe and sit comfortably. Stretch out any tension in your muscles, coordinate your stretching with your breath.

**Sit Down** -- Using a proper chair or meditation cushions. Sit down in a manner that allows your head, neck and trunk to be in straight alignment. It is preferable to not lean against walls or the backs of chairs. However, if your back and abdominal muscles are weak, you will need the support of a chair or wall.

**Be Still** -- Breathe gently through your nose. Let your abdomen rise and fall with each breath. The abdomen expands during inhalation and then collapses during exhalation. Your shoulders stay quiet and still. Continue to breathe as you feel all the restlessness, itchiness and tension melt away.

**Focus on Your Breath** -- Let your breath become smooth, slow, continuous and quiet. Eliminate any pause between inhalation and exhalation, this requires you to pay close attention during the end of each breath. Make a smooth transition between inhalation and exhalation. Notice that at the tip of your nose, right inside your nose, you can feel a slight sensation of coolness when you inhale and a very faint sensation of warmth during exhalation.

**Your First Meditation** -- Your first meditation is to meditate (pay attention) to the sensation of coolness when you inhale and a very faint sensation of warmth during exhalation. You will notice this inside each nostril on the wall that divides the two nostrils at the very tip of your nose. For the next 5-10 minutes, please notice the sensation of coolness on inhalation and warmth on exhalation.

Notice what happens to the noise of your mind as you intensify your awareness of the cool and warm sensations at the tip of your nose. Notice how your body feels after three or four minutes of this introductory meditation.

**Alternate Nostril Breathing** -- Now we will learn a more advanced form of breathing that will deepen your meditation and revitalize you in profound and measurable ways. Sorry, for this technique, you are going to have to read this chapter. Here you will also learn more about the science of nasal physiology ... it is really fascinating. Really!

**Your Second Meditation** -- So Hum

Just like the benefits of the 'coolness and warmth' technique, there are specific sounds that further help lengthen the breath and calm the mind. These sounds are repeated silently in the mind and are coordinated with the breath. As you inhale, be aware of the sound 'So.' Emphasizing the 'o' sound will help lengthen your inhalation and further quiet your mind. During exhalation, have your mind quietly focus on the sound 'hum.' 'Hum' will further help you lengthen your exhalation and quiet your mind. Spend 10 or 15 minutes focusing your mind on the sounds of 'So - Hum.'

**Making Friends with the Mind**

By now you are aware of how your mind distracts you from the object of your meditation. Whether it is the coolness and warmth or the sound of "So - Hum," the mind tries to flood you with impulses, memories, conversations and more. While meditating do not suppress these experiences, however, keep redirecting the focus of your mind back to the specific object that you are meditating on. Be gentle and be consistent in guiding your mind. In time, your mind will obey you. Sitting still and skillfully guiding your mind through these distractions will help you overcome your inner unrest. Do this with a playful attitude and don't be dismayed when the mind sweeps you away now and then.

**Inward Traveling -- the 61 Point Relaxation Exercise**

Eventually, you will want to dive deeper into the lake of your mind. Meditation has shown you glimpses of the gems of knowledge and insight that lie within you. Now you want more. Already you are becoming more peaceful, more insightful and much more content. People that once easily destroyed your high hopes and charming moods are no longer able to do that. You



are becoming your own person. This is very exciting and pleasing and yet, there are still moments when the mind erupts in ways that really upset you. The 61 point relaxation exercise will drastically decrease the momentum of these powerful thoughts and memories that disturb you and distract you. As they become less powerful and less frequent, your concentration will greatly improve and you will become more happy and trusting of yourself.

### **Holistic Health**

A real meditator realizes the importance of good physical health and proper hygiene. Your body has become like a shrine and the inner dweller of that shrine is your very soul which you may know as your conscience. Using natural means to keep this shrine clean and bright starts to make a lot of sense to you now. You are realizing that a healthy mind is not completely possible without a healthy body. It is time to get the body, the breath and the mind into good shape and holistic therapies are usually the best way to do this.

### **Your Happy Mind**

Meditation will help you have a good relationship with your own mind. Eventually, your mind will no longer frighten you, degrade you, distract you nor discourage you. You and your mind will be best friends. This means your sleep is great, your mind is focused and you have become more thoughtful and wise.

### **Taking Charge of Your Destiny**

In the past, your mind was the saboteur who would ruin many of your plans and destroy your dreams. The science of meditation creates a healthy working relationship between you and your mind. Now you can plan and accomplish your goals without inner fears and doubts. Your judgements are more accurate and your attitude is more forgiving.

### **The Health Benefits of Meditation**

Meditators are healthier than the general population. They are happier, wealthier and healthier because of meditation. In the beginning, either curiosity or desperation was driving you to meditate. Once established in the skills of meditation, this chapter will further entice you to learn more about yourself through active meditation. Every scientific study on meditation (there are now over 2000 studies), every one of them, shows that meditation is helpful.



## **Resources**

Meditation is a life-long process of evolution. The meditative tradition is thousands of years old and has produced thousands and thousands of books. The following is a resource guide for you of valid books on the science of meditation and spirituality. I have done my very best to choose writers that focus on the science without dragging in cultural and religious views that may limit the comfort of my readers. Even today the sages say, “Without meditation, religion becomes a cult of its leader or a victim of the politics of its organization.” Teaching you the same authentic techniques that allowed the great sages to attain their lofty compassion and spiritual profundity is the goal of meditation. For attaining that goal, I further offer you these companion texts and tapes.

## **Appendix**

More information for you to deepen your meditation.

# Chapter One

## Learning to Pay Attention

### Summary

The essential skill of meditation is learning to concentrate, condense and compress your awareness to be totally focused on the very subtle object of your meditation. As your entire being becomes absorbed in meditation, every stress and strain of daily life will fall from your shoulders. In a few short minutes you will become rested and refreshed. Your attitude will be more positive and compassionate. Your family and co-workers will immediately see the benefits of your meditation. You will make better decisions, have greater creativity and become playfully clever in managing the challenges of the day. In short, by regularly meditating, you will like yourself much more and we will too.

We are way too scattered these days. We are tossed and tugged from every direction. Overwhelmed with data and duties, we scurry from place to place. Cell phones, pagers and emails further obligate us to write back, call back and respond in one form or another. We have so much to pay attention to, that the most important priorities fall through the cracks. And the most important priority of all, our relationship with ourselves, is almost completely ignored.

Just the fact that you are curious about meditation means that it is not too late. Life has not driven you so far off course that you have completely lost your own identity. You have to remember you are the foundation of all that is whirling around you. If you crumble, you will not be able to help others. It is not selfish to pay attention to yourself. In truth, to help others you must truly take care of yourself. “You do not strengthen the weak by weakening the strong.”

Every building has a foundation. The bigger the building, the stronger the foundation. Once the building is fully constructed, the foundation is hidden. It is buried deep into the earth, yet supports the entire structure. When we forget our roots, our foundation, life is full of stress and fear. Only by diving deep within, can we reconnect with our own roots, our own foundation. Meditation is the science of self-discovery, self-understanding and self-transformation. From meditation, we remember who we are and thus, re-gain our self-respect and our love for life. That is why meditation is a primary, foundational issue for all of us. We have to pay attention.

# Chapter Two

## The Setting

### Summary

The setting should be quiet, restful and still. The atmosphere should be serene, with no sense of hurriedness. A clean pleasant place that is suggestive of inner exploration. Free of interruptions, we can move forward.

### Living in a Good Space

There are two important sanskrit words in the meditative tradition, they are *sukha* and *dukha*. *Sukha* means 'good space.' *Dukha* means 'bad space.' A bad space is characterized in three ways, it is dark, it is cramped and it is crowded. When we are in a bad space, we may feel like we cannot see our way clearly (darkness), we may feel too cramped on supplies -- meaning that there is a shortage and we do not have enough time, money, love, freedom, etc, to go around. The third feeling is that of being too crowded with duties, people and obligations.

When we are in a good space, *sukha*, there is plenty of light to see our way, we have unlimited resources to help ourselves and others, and we have plenty of room in our schedule and in our lives. We can welcome others into our life without hesitation. Like the ocean in which all the rivers of the world flow, we never overflow and never deny that which is coming our way. Creating a good space to live in and to work in is important. Creating a good clean space to sit for meditation and introspection is just as important.

Most of us do not have a private meditation room, while such a luxury would be wonderful, it is not necessary. All you need is a place free of distractions and disturbances that you could use for ten or fifteen minutes. That is plenty of time to start to learn to meditate. At first, the only private place may be in your car, your church or synagogue, or in the park. Regardless of where, just choose a space that is clean, quiet and pleasant. Turn off your cell phones and pagers, sit comfortably and you are in *sukha* -- a very good space.

# Chapter Three

## You

### Summary

Your body should be clean and properly nourished. Use the nasal wash and brush your teeth. Wash your face, hands and feet. Take a moment and refresh yourself. Empty your bowel and bladder. Wear comfortable loose fitting clothes that will allow you to breathe and sit comfortably. Stretch out any tension in your muscles, coordinate your stretching with your breath.

Every scientist has a laboratory where they conduct their experiments and make their observations. A clean lab with clean test tubes makes science accurate and easy. As a student of meditation, your own mind and body is your laboratory. Keeping yourself clean and comfortable will greatly enhance your progress in meditation.

The teachers of meditation advise us not to meditate when we are overly tired or hungry. If our emotions are on the rampage, it is better to get some physical exercise to calm down before trying to meditate. And if our body is tight and stiff, some gentle stretching is advised.

When you have a few moments to meditate, first go to the bathroom and freshen up. Emptying your bowel and bladder will further lessen the distractions in your mind. When any aspect of the mind or body is not properly attended to, then the mind will continue to make us aware of the areas that need our attention and care. Whether it is a tight muscle or a very hungry stomach, this will hamper your efforts to find solace in meditation.

It is important to remember that you can meditate anytime you want. The suggestions in this chapter are designed to help you create an optimal environment for meditation. These are not rules that must be followed, they are only suggestions. However, the cleaner the laboratory, the more precise the experiment will be. Clean speech, clean thoughts, clean diet, clean clothes - all of these will help you. I remember an old saying from my childhood, "*Cleanliness is next to Godliness.*" From a medical point of view, cleanliness is always a good and helpful idea.

One specific technique for cleanliness that you may not know about is the nasal wash. The Nasal Wash pot is an amazing invention from hundreds of years ago. I use mine twice daily year round and right now, it is a wonderful way to flush out dry caked mucus (sorry for the vivid descriptions) and for the huge colorful globs of mucus when they are present. Please see our [FREE Report on the Nasal Wash](#) if you would like to learn about the ceramic pot and the magic it can do for you.



For the more serious student of meditation, there are very specific guidelines about the diet. When menu planning is oriented towards both nourishment and mental clarity, then a delicious food program can be developed. Historically, a balanced vegetarian diet that includes dairy and cooked leafy green vegetables is recommended. Cooking your own food and limiting microwaved packaged foods is also helpful.

# Chapter Four

## Sit Down

### Summary

Using a proper chair or meditation cushions, sit down in a manner that allows your head, neck and trunk to be in straight alignment. It is preferable to not lean against walls or the backs of chairs. However, if your back and abdominal muscles are weak, you will need the support of a chair or wall.

Sitting with your head, neck and trunk in straight alignment is very important for both good health and for meditation. Today when we go to sit down, the chair and sofa have replaced the floor. To fully understand the best seated postures for meditation, a picture really is worth a thousand words or more.

Photo 1

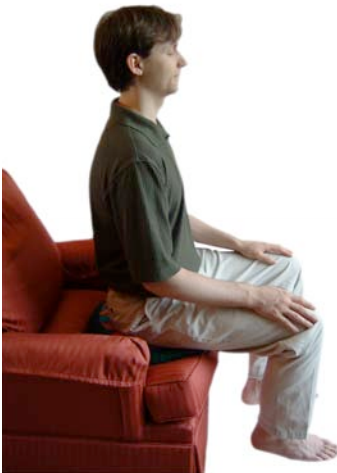


Photo #1

This is called the friendship pose. The feet are flat on the floor. The palms are resting comfortably on the knees or thighs. And, as always, the head, neck and trunk are in straight alignment.

Photo #2

To sit on the floor, a cushion or thick blanket is highly recommended. It is important to be comfortable and, of course, it is important to keep the head, neck and trunk in straight alignment. Here is how to accomplish both.



Photo 2

Unless your knees and hips are extremely flexible, you are going to need to have your knees lower than your bottom. See Photo #3 A good comfortable cushion or series of blankets will help you.



Photo 3

If this elevated posture puts too much pressure on your ankles, then use a secondary thin cushion for your ankles. I like this platform of a cushion on a large pad. See Photo #4.



Photo 4

To prevent slouching, hold the tailbone in place by using a small blanket against and slightly underneath the tailbone. See Photo #5. This slight pressure will hold the tailbone steady and prevent slouching in your low back.



Photo 5

Finally, for the serious meditator, a mulabhandha cushion is used to hold the root lock firmly closed. The root lock is a closure of the lower pelvic area that contracts by pulling this area upwards. Once you pull it up, use a mulabhandha cushion to then hold these tissues in place. See Photo #6.



Photo 6



Here are several views of a comfortable floor posture for meditation. Photo #8 shows you the advanced meditation posture for your feet. In the last photo you will see how a simple wool shawl is used to cover you and keep you warm and free of drafts. See Photos #7 through #9.



My thanks to [Seat for Your Soul™](#) for donating the cushions and the models for these photos. They produce the most comfortable and supportive cushions I have ever found. You can find their cushions by [clicking here](#).

# Chapter Five

## Be Still & Use Your Breath

### Summary

Breathe gently through your nose. Let your abdomen rise and fall with each breath. The abdomen expands during inhalation and then collapses during exhalation. Your shoulders stay quiet and still. Continue to breathe as you feel all the restlessness, itchiness and tension melt away.

Focus on your breath, let your breath become smooth, slow, continuous and quiet. Eliminate any pause between inhalation and exhalation, this requires you to pay close attention during the end of each breath. Make a smooth transition between inhalation and exhalation. Notice that at the tip of your nose, right inside your nose, you can feel a slight sensation of coolness when you inhale and a very faint sensation of warmth during exhalation. Keep your awareness there. Coolness on inhalation, warmth on exhalation.

Breath awareness can improve your physical and emotional health in very dramatic ways. Awareness of the breath seems too simple to be important, but soon your experiences will document the power of breath awareness.

We can study one profound aspect of breath awareness by looking at our nervous system. We have two types of nervous systems: a voluntary nervous system that responds to our will and an involuntary nervous system that automatically watches over the functions of the body.

Hormonal secretions are affected by both nervous systems, but it is the involuntary system that mainly regulates hormones. Therefore, an imbalanced involuntary nervous system is more likely to cause chronic ailments physically and emotionally.

The involuntary nervous system keeps us alive when we sleep - it maintains our breathing and keeps our heart beating while we sleep. While we sleep, the voluntary nervous system rests. *So when does this important system get to rest?*

The answer seems to be that only when we consciously take over the act of breathing for 12 - 24 minutes does the involuntary nervous system rest and re-balance. And during this time, if we stop thinking about our breath for even a moment, the involuntary nervous system rushes in to take over the breathing in order to keep us alive. However, with consistent gradual training, all of us can practice breath awareness, and it will provide deep rest to the body and involuntary nervous system.

We begin by allowing the breath to flow in and out of the nose exclusively. The breath will become smooth, serene, and quiet. Gradually the flow of air becomes slow, continuous and diaphragmatic. The upper chest and shoulders remain quiet and still, while the abdomen pushes outward on inhalation and then gently falls inward on exhalation. Later, we may even gently pull in with our abdominal muscles at the end of an exhalation to insure a full and complete exhalation.

To observe the flow of air, notice that at the tip of the nose, on the inside of the wall dividing the two nostrils you will feel a sensation of *coolness on inhalation* and a faint sensation of *warmth on exhalation*. Allow the mind to focus on this sensation of coolness and warmth as the breath lengthens to a slow gentle continuous flow of air. The air flow should be equal on breathing in and breathing out. Start with a goal of inhaling for 8 seconds and exhaling for 8 seconds, remember to always keep the breath continuous without a pause. The slower you breathe the easier it is to eliminate the natural pause between the two different motions, inhalation and exhalation.

Within a week or two, it will be very natural to breathe in this very serene manner. Now we are ready to gather tremendous rest for our mind, body and the entire nervous system, by consciously breathing 12 minutes twice daily. This amount is based on one minute of proper breathing for each hour of the day, thus a total of 24 minutes for the 24 hours of the day.

Keeping the head, neck and trunk of our body in straight alignment will further enhance the comfort and rest of our body while we breathe. It will take a few weeks to be able to sustain 12 minutes without becoming distracted. Gentle persistence will help you overcome these distractions.

Everyone in your family can be taught to breathe slowly and consciously with breath awareness. The health benefits for our body and emotions increase over the years with consistent practice.

## Tips on Breath Awareness

- ◆ Inhale and exhale through the nose.
- ◆ Breathe smooth, slow, quiet and continuously.
- ◆ Keep your head, neck and trunk in straight alignment.
- ◆ Notice the sensation of coolness on inhalation at the tip of the nose and the sensation of warmth on exhalation.
- ◆ Practice slow serene breathing with an initial goal of inhaling for 8 seconds and exhaling for 8 seconds. With proper guidance this capacity can be expanded.
- ◆ It is important to stay within your comfortable capacity. Do not strain the breath.
- ◆ Practice your breath awareness for 12 minutes twice a day or longer. For your nervous system to get great benefits from this practice, strive for consistent awareness of your breathing for the entire 12 minutes.

# Chapter Six

## Your First Meditation

### Summary

Your first meditation is to meditate (pay attention) to the sensation of coolness when you inhale and a very faint sensation of warmth during exhalation. You will notice this inside each nostril on the wall that divides the two nostrils at the very tip of your nose. For the next 5-10 minutes, please notice the sensation of coolness on inhalation and warmth on exhalation.

Notice what happens to the noise of your mind as you intensify your awareness of the cool and warm sensations at the tip of your nose. Notice how your body feels after three or four minutes of this introductory meditation.

Write your own observations here:

# Chapter Seven

## Alternate Nostril Breathing

### Summary

Now we will learn a more advanced form of breathing that will deepen your meditation and revitalize you in profound and measurable ways. Here you will also learn more about the science of nasal physiology ... it is really fascinating. Really!

### An Introduction to Alternate Nostril Breathing

Modern science has now verified that breathing through a particular nostril for several minutes will strongly affect the brain and nervous system. Alternating the breath flow between the two nostrils has maximal psychological and physiological benefits. The body itself has a natural rhythm of switching the breath flow from one nostril to another every 90 to 120 minutes. While this is accomplished by the unilateral swelling of the nasal turbinates, it is an easy phenomena to observe.

As you are reading this eBook, note the time right now. Then use your fingers to shut off your right nostril. Notice how easy or difficult it is to breathe through your left nostril. Observe this for 5 - 10 breaths, then switch nostrils. Use your fingers to close off your left nostril and breathe for 5 - 10 breaths through your right nostril. One nostril will be more open and thus, much easier to breathe through -- and that nostril is your active nostril. Write down which nostril is most active beside the clock time you just recorded.

In the next 60 - 90 minutes, your active nostril is going to switch to the other nostril. In an hour or so, use your fingers to repeat the same test. You will discover that you are now breathing through the other nostril.



The exercise you are about to learn will let you gain tremendous benefits by breathing through one nostril smoothly and slowly, and then switching to the other nostril. Alternating your breath flow between your two nostrils will benefit your sleep, your blood pressure, your learning ability and deepen your state of relaxation.

There are three different styles of alternate nostril breathing. The essence of the practice is to use one nostril for 3 breaths, then the 2nd nostril for the next 3 breaths, and then to breathe through both nostrils for 3 breaths. These nine breaths comprise one set of alternate nostril breathing. You then continue until you complete 3 - 9 sets of alternate nostril breathing.

## Alternate Nostril Breathing

1. Sit with your head, neck and trunk in straight alignment.
2. Establish smooth, diaphragmatic, nasal breathing.
3. Remove yourself from all other places and all other spaces, allowing yourself to sit quietly and comfortably.
4. Determine which nostril is the most active (the most open) by using your fingers to close off one nostril at a time. The active nostril is the nostril that is most easy for air to flow through.
5. The essence of this practice is to breathe through one nostril for 3 breaths, and then to breathe through your other nostril for the next 3 breaths. Always start with an exhalation, exhaling through the most open (active) nostril. After breathing through each nostril, then breathe through both nostrils for 3 breaths. On page 25, you will find three different styles of alternate nostril breathing. Choose the style that you prefer.
6. These nine breaths comprise one set of alternate nostril breathing. You then repeat these nine breaths (one set) until you have completed 3 - 9 sets.
7. Upon completion of alternate nostril breathing, begin your meditation practice.

# A Few Quick Reminders

- All breathing is diaphragmatic breathing. Your upper chest and shoulders stay quiet and still as your abdomen moves with your breath.
- Make sure your head, neck and trunk are in proper straight alignment.
- A clean nose is very helpful. Use your nasal wash pot for clean and happy nostrils.
- Alternate nostril breathing can be done several times a day. Start with twice a day and follow it with 5 -15 minutes of meditation.

\*\* If you would like me to talk you through this exercise and explain some of the major research studies on alternate nostril breathing, I am happy to do so. To obtain my audio tape or CD on alternate nostril breathing, [just click here](#).

# Alternate Nostril Breathing

Alternate nostril breathing consists of repeating 3 full sets, choose which style you prefer:

## Style #1

<u>Active Nostril</u>	<u>Passive Nostril</u>
exhale	inhale
exhale	inhale
exhale	inhale
	exhale
inhale	exhale
inhale	exhale
inhale	

**then three full breaths using both nostrils**

## Style #2

	<u>Active Nostril</u>	<u>Passive Nostril</u>
1		exhale -- inhale
2	exhale -- inhale	
3		exhale -- inhale
4	exhale -- inhale	
5		exhale -- inhale
6	exhale -- inhale	

**then three full breaths using both nostrils**

## Style #3

	<u>Active Nostril</u>	<u>Passive Nostril</u>
1		exhale -- inhale
2		exhale -- inhale
3		exhale -- inhale
4	exhale -- inhale	
5	exhale -- inhale	
6	exhale -- inhale	

**then three full breaths using both nostrils**

# Chapter Eight

## Your Second Meditation

### Summary

Just like the benefits of the ‘coolness and warmth’ technique, there are specific sounds that further help lengthen the breath and calm the mind. These sounds are repeated silently in the mind and are coordinated with the breath. As you inhale, be aware of the sound ‘So.’ Emphasizing the ‘o’ sound will help lengthen your inhalation and further quiet your mind. During exhalation, have your mind quietly focus on the sound ‘hum.’ ‘Hum’ will further help you lengthen your exhalation and quiet your mind. Spend 10 or 15 minutes focusing your mind on the sounds of ‘So - Hum.’

Now it is time to meditate. Once again, establish yourself in a quiet room and proper posture. Do three sets of alternate nostril breathing and then start to remember the sound of “So Hum.” Repeating these sounds silently in your mind coordinated with your breath. As you inhale, be aware of the sound ‘So.’ Emphasizing the ‘o’ sound. During exhalation, have your mind quietly focus on the sound ‘hum.’

As other thoughts and impulses arise, gently guide your awareness back to the sound of “So - Hum.” As you continue to practice, it will gradually become easier to focus your mind on this sound. As your concentration improves, mind will become quiet and more responsive to your guidance. Slowly, slowly you are training your mind to follow your commands.

Continue your “So - Hum” meditation for 5 - 20 minutes, depending upon your comfort and clarity. Below make some notes of your observations and experiences.

Observations:

# Chapter Nine

## Making Friends with Your Mind

### Summary

By now you are aware of how your mind distracts you from the object of your meditation. Whether it is the coolness and warmth or the sound of "So - Hum," the mind tries to flood you with impulses, memories, conversations and more. While meditating, do not suppress these experiences; however, keep redirecting the focus of your mind back to the specific object that you are meditating on. Be gentle and be consistent in guiding your mind. In time, your mind will obey you. Sitting still and skillfully guiding your mind through these distractions will help you overcome your inner unrest. Do this with a playful attitude and do not be dismayed when the mind sweeps you away now and then.

### Mind as Friend, Mind as Foe

How wonderful to have a constant companion that is always helpful and fun! A true friend that helps you understand the criticisms of others and lovingly beckons you to do your best. However, few of us ever meet such a fellow. Maybe we are looking in the wrong direction.

People complain about how their mind distracts them and how unhappy they have become. Such complaints are common and yet the solution is overlooked. If a friend distracted you the way your mind does, what would you do?

Most likely, you would sit down and gently confront your friend and ask them not to disturb you. After hearing both points of view, a mutually agreeable plan of action can be designed. This "win-win" situation is very important to lasting friendships, especially if you are planning to live together for a long, long time.

Developing a friendship with your mind is no different. Having a friendly chat with your mind can broaden your understanding of your whole life. The mind is the inner instrument designed to serve your every need. However, when untrained and ignored, the mind is left to interpret all sensory input as best it can. This is when misunderstandings begin and history repeats itself.

Loving guidance allows the mind to change its reactions in the present, thus preventing the past from repeating itself over and over. For such repetition is simply a sign that no one has explored new options when faced with the same situation, time and again. Your mind needs your attention and direction. Don't let such a close friend falter and stumble without you.

You and your mind both live at the same address. Friends do not tease or degrade you unless you ignore them. Withholding attention is a mistreatment that offends every mind. For it has this child-like quality of wanting our attention and will do anything to get that attention.

Paying attention to your mind will dramatically increase your sense of peacefulness and understanding of your life. Having others as a great friend is wonderful, but your mind should first and foremost be the greatest of friends. I hope you folks will get to know each other better and establish a life-long friendship.

# Chapter Ten

## Inward Traveling & Holistic Health

### Summary

Eventually, you will want to dive deeper into the lake of your mind. Meditation has shown you glimpses of the gems of knowledge and insight that lie within you. Now you want more. Already you are becoming more peaceful, more insightful and much more content. People that once easily destroyed your high hopes and charming moods are no longer able to do that. You are becoming your own person. This is very exciting and pleasing and yet, there are still moments when the mind erupts in ways that really upset you. The 61 point relaxation exercise will drastically decrease the momentum of these powerful thoughts and memories that disturb you and distract you. As they become less powerful and less frequent, your concentration will greatly improve and you will become more happy and trusting of yourself.

### Inward Traveling -- the 61 Point Relaxation Exercise

The 61 point relaxation exercise was designed by a great yogi of modern times, named Swami Rama. He taught this exercise to help with many psychological and physical health problems, including sleep problems, blood pressure problems, depression and anxiety.

This very powerful healing exercise is simple and easy to do. It consists of laying down on the floor or firm surface in the corpse pose. This pose is shown in Photo #1. As you can see in the photo, you place a small pillow under your head. Covering yourself with a light blanket or shawl is also recommended.



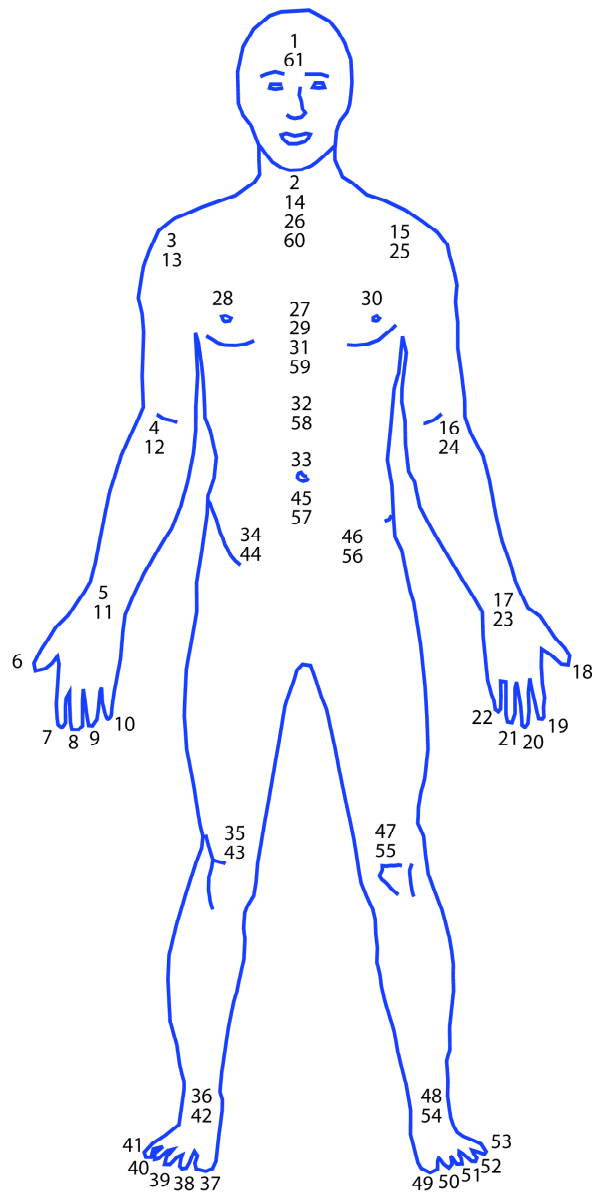
Photo 1



This exercise consists of mentally traveling from point to point in numerical order. You will stop at each point and maintain a mental awareness of the number of the point while visualizing a blue dot or ball at each point. At first, you will need to keep your notes at your side until you have memorized the location of all 61 points. In the beginning you can also listen to the exercise on a tape or CD, if you would like me to talk you through this exercise, you can obtain my audio tape or CD by [just clicking here](#).

Here is a **chart** of the 61 points in the order in which to follow them.

## The 61 Points



## Holistic Health

Meditation helps you realize the importance of good physical health and proper hygiene. Your body becomes like a shrine and the inner dweller of the shrine is your very soul, which you may first know as your conscience. Using holistic therapies to keep this shrine clean and bright starts to make a lot of sense to you now. You are realizing that a healthy mind is not completely possible without a healthy body. It is time to get the body, the breath and the mind into good shape and holistic therapies are usually the best way to do this.

The topic of rejuvenation and holistic health is huge. It is also an essential part of achieving the higher goals of meditation. You are in a very special situation. You are interested in rejuvenation for all the right reasons. It is for you that this science exists.

Rejuvenation was originally offered as a gift to sincere students, like yourself, as a way for them to have enough longevity to finally attain their goals in life. Knowing that a healthy body and mind are an essential pre-requisite to tread any path of life (including the spiritual path), this science gives the methodology for healing. Most people are so distracted with worldly pursuits that their best intentions to do good never get a chance. Meditators learn how to gently handle these powerful desires while pursuing higher knowledge.

The science of rejuvenation is one branch of Ayurvedic medicine. Today, herbal therapies are the most accessible part of Ayurvedic rejuvenation. Five master herbs for rejuvenation have been used since the dawn of time to help keep the body, breath and mind in good shape. These five master herbs (Ashwagandha, Brahmi, Purnarnava, Shankpushpi and Vacha) are still easily available today. When taken properly in the right proportions, they have an amazing ability to help us.

Ashwagandha is known for re-awakening our self-confidence and self-esteem. Brahmi, the memory miracle, is an excellent brain tonic for writers, artists and speakers. Purnarnava is the gentle rejuvenator of the very weak, the very allergic and the very feeble. Shankpushpi and Vacha both help us have the clarity and courage to speak out in a helpful manner. They both also help with abstract thinking and rising above agonizing memories of the past that keep us feeling bad about ourselves or our life.

You can receive many kinds of benefits by changing the proportions of these five master herbs and their specific companion herbs. The companion herbs strongly influence how the master herbs will help you. Certain herbal combinations are recommended for meditation students to keep the mind sharp, the memory precise and joy ever-present. This is the outcome commonly produced by Joyful Mind, a rejuvenation formula by Himalayan Heritage. You can contact Himalayan Heritage about Joyful Mind and their other fine traditional formulas that use the five master herbs. [Click here and you can learn much more.](#)

Obesity, arthritis and blood sugar problems are some of the most common health problems I see today. These are also problems where holistic medicine and meditational therapies are very helpful. I have pre-recorded audio seminars with some of the finest insights into the holistic treatment of obesity, arthritis and blood sugar problems. If you would like to learn more about how holistic medicine can help you, please take a moment to look at my audio seminars, you can access them by [clicking here](#).

To give you a broad overview of how to start thinking more holistically about your lifestyle, here is a checklist for newcomers to this path. It will take just a few moments to find your own starting point. In the pursuit of health and happiness, your own conscience is the best guide. My list of suggestions from my office is waiting for you on the next page.

# Six Steps to Better Health

1. First determine that living a stress-free lifestyle is important to you and your family.
2. Gradually make lifestyle improvements in terms of sleep, activity and environment that are compatible and comfortable for you.
3. Make simple dietary additions and deletions to insure that your nourishment is clean burning and wholesome. Your food needs to be delicious and fresh.
4. Learn breathing and cleansing exercises, such as alternate nostril breathing, the nasal wash and agni sara (abdominal exercises), to gradually remove residues of stress and poor diet. Nasal breathing should be smooth, slow, quiet, and diaphragmatic.
5. Learn to do stretching exercises that will calm and rejuvenate your mind and body. Endorphins, the body's own pain relieving and antidepressant compounds, are the vehicles for the hypothalamus to perform its function. Enjoyable exercise, stretching, breathing exercises, massage and other bodywork and energywork methods can also promote the release of endorphins.
6. There are safe and effective methods to slow the aging process. The best approach is to explore and understand which methods are best for you. Your happiness and self-esteem is your greatest wealth and your most important consideration.

# Chapter Eleven

## Your Happiness & Your Destiny

### Summary

Meditation will help you have a good relationship with your own mind. Eventually, your mind will no longer frighten you, degrade you, distract you nor discourage you. You and your mind will be best friends. This means your sleep is restful, your mind is focused and you have become more thoughtful and wise.

### Taking Charge of Your Destiny

In the past, your mind was the saboteur who would ruin many of your plans and destroy your dreams. The science of meditation creates a healthy working relationship between you and your mind. Now you can plan and accomplish your goals without inner fears and doubts. Your judgements are more accurate and your attitude is more forgiving.

### **You have to be a master if you really want to enjoy life here -- the master of your mind.**

To be the master of your mind, you must first learn to train your attention. Paying attention is the key to concentration and meditation. Secondly, you must develop the ability to make mistakes without condemning yourself. This is a great virtue. You have to determine that no matter what happens, no matter how many times you stumble in life, that it does not matter. So do not be afraid of making mistakes, like any child learning new things, you will stumble many times. Any activity that affects your mind in a negative way can lead you to a state of self-condemnation and negativity. In time, this could make you feel passive and helpless.

All teachers of meditation tell us not to identify ourselves with negativity, with a passive mood or with weakness. Instead, decide that you will help yourself. It is never too late to try again. When you commit mistakes, simply do your best not to repeat them. If you stumble, try again. Help will come to you. Do not condemn yourself.

# Chapter Twelve

## The Health Benefits of Meditation

### Summary

Meditators are healthier than the general population. They are happier, wealthier and healthier because of meditation. In the beginning, either curiosity or desperation was driving you to meditate. Once established in the skills of meditation, this chapter will further entice you to learn more about yourself through active meditation. Every scientific study on meditation (there are now over 2000 studies), every one of them, shows that meditation is helpful.

Meditation helps you gain rest, self-confidence and compassion. Your concentration at school and work becomes sharper. Thus, you accomplish much more in a much shorter period of time - because your mind no longer distracts you, doubts you, confuses you. You set out on a task and get it done in a very thorough and complete manner. Your teachers, your employers and your co-workers will notice that your productivity has skyrocketed. Overall, you are going to be healthier, happier, more rested and less cranky by meditating regularly.

In preparation for this book, I reviewed hundreds of research articles on meditation - good clinical studies done in the United States and all over the world. Over and over again the results show that practicing meditation can only be helpful. Meditation is helpful for both men and women, regardless of age, race, or nationality. Here is a tiny peek of what your own research would find:

- Meditation helps balance your blood pressure - for people with high blood pressure, meditation helps to decrease their mean diastolic ambulatory blood pressure (your bottom blood pressure number).
- Meditators have decreased medical care expenditures. And the greatest savings are seen in the elderly and high cost medical risk groups.
- Meditation promotes better sleep and decreased smoking in industrial workers. The workers reported a decreased time to fall asleep, reduced waking during the night and decreased smoking.
- Meditation showed improvements in general physical and mental well-being in industrial workers with decreased physical complaints, decreased impulsive tendencies, reduced emotional instability and decreased neurotic tendencies.

- Meditators demonstrate an improved immune response to stress.
- Meditation is shown to reduce high blood pressure in all groups, with a reduction of systolic blood pressure to more ideal levels (your top blood pressure number).
- Meditation in the elderly has demonstrated a reversal of aging and increased longevity (higher survival rate).
- Improved mental health (improvements on nurses' mental health ratings).
- Meditators do better in school. Studies show that meditation has increased cognitive flexibility (less premature cognitive commitment, increased learning ability on associate learning and greater perceptual flexibility). They have increased word fluency.
- Meditators age more gracefully. Studies show improvements in self-reported measures of behavioral flexibility and aging (greater ability to cope with inconvenience, reduced feelings of being old, less impatience with others). They have lower erythrocyte sedimentation rate levels indicating less serious illness and slower aging. Meditators can reverse their biological aging, showing that they have a younger biological age compared with the normal population.
- Save money for you and your insurance company. Meditators have lower health insurance usage. And when they do get sick, they have significantly fewer hospital inpatient days and outpatient visits. Meditators have fewer inpatient admissions for all major categories of disease.
- Meditation has been used to decrease stuttering.
- Meditators have improved mental and physical health and decreased use of prescribed and non-prescribed drugs.
- Want to stop smoking and drinking alcohol? Studies on meditators show that they have a decreased use of alcohol, decreased use of cigarettes and decreased drug abuse. Meditators have a decreased need for anti-hypertensives, drugs for heart disease, sleep medications, tranquilizers, antidepressants, anti-asthmatics, antihistamines, analgesics, and drugs for hypertension, asthma, and heart disease.

Could anything else be better, easier or less expensive than meditation? If this chapter has not convinced you, maybe some books and resources in the next chapter will finally drive the point home. Yes, this is my sales pitch - to make the world a happier, healthier place:  
*“Learn to meditate now. It is good for you and good for us.”*

# The Essentials of Meditation

**Posture** head, neck and trunk in straight alignment

**Stillness** with comfort, using Internal Dialogue

## **Breath Awareness**

*coolness on inhalation*

*warmth on exhalation*

## **Alternate Nostril Breathing**

### **Mantra Meditation**

mentally remembering **So - Hum**

So -- on inhalation

Hum -- on exhalation



# Chapter Thirteen

## Resources

Meditation is a life long process of evolution. The meditative tradition is thousands of years old and has produced thousands and thousands of books. The following is a resource guide for you of valid books on the science of meditation and spirituality. I have done my very best to choose writers that keep focused on the science without dragging in cultural and religious views that may limit the comfort of my readers. Even today the sages say, “Without meditation, religion becomes a cult of its leader or a victim of the politics of its organization.” Teaching you the same authentic techniques that allowed great people to attain their lofty compassion and spiritual profundity is the goal of meditation. For attaining that goal, I further offer you these companion texts and tapes.

### Audio CD's and Tapes

- ***The Dynamics of Meditation***

The complete 4-hour course with booklet. This course teaches you the basic principals of meditation and guides you through several meditation sessions.

- ***61 Points -- A Technique for Health and Relaxation***

This is a wonderful tape that provides clear instruction in how to use the current of the mind to cleanse the neuropathways and marma points for deep relaxation and rejuvenation.

- ***Natural Solutions for Arthritis***

A 3-tape series on how to use natural therapies to treat arthritis and chronic inflammatory diseases.

- ***Natural Solutions for Weight Loss***

Beyond the hype and the lies - here are things you can do today to lose weight naturally, gradually and safely. An excellent instructional guide is included with the CD.

- ***The Complete Homeopathy Home Study Course***

This is a 6-tape series with a detailed instructional manual that will teach you how to use Homeopathic remedies to treat mild to moderate health problems. Topics include women's health, trauma, colds and flus, and remedies for children. This course is an absolute must for all families.

- ***Natural Solutions for Blood Sugar Problems***

Diabetes is reaching epidemic proportions in America. Learn how you can use natural therapies and lifestyle changes to combat your blood sugar problems.

### **Book List**

- **Living with the Himalayan Masters** by Swami Rama
- **Inner Quest** by Pandit Rajmani Tigunait
- **The Power of Mantra and the Mystery of Initiation** by Pandit Rajmani Tigunait
- **Practical Guide to Holistic Health** by Swami Rama
- **The Art of Joyful Living** by Swami Rama

### **Meditation Supplies**

Cushions, mats, shawls, pillows and more. Meditate in style and comfort.  
[www.AliveandHealthy.com/meditation.html](http://www.AliveandHealthy.com/meditation.html)

### **Rejuvenation Herbs**

Authentic Herbal Rejuvenation Formulas from Himalayan Heritage  
[www.HimalayanHeritage.com](http://www.HimalayanHeritage.com)

### **Attention Deficit Disorder**

Attention Span Network - [www.AttentionSpan.Net](http://www.AttentionSpan.Net)

# Want to learn more?

**A FREE Audio eBook  
will soon be available.**

Do your best to practice the exercises and meditations in this eBook for several weeks or longer. Thirty to 45 days would be the ideal length of time. There is a magic time period of about 40 days to establish a new habit. After meditating for 40 days, meditation will more easily become part of your lifestyle. Be consistent and establish a daily routine. This will help you on those difficult days when you are not feeling motivated.

**I would love to hear from you!** What are your experiences with the practices we have discussed? Everyone will experience meditation slightly differently. However, many of you will have very similar results. I will include your experiences in upcoming publications. **[Send me your stories by clicking here.](#)**

Alive and Healthy will also be publishing an audio eBook coming in February 2004. This will be a follow-up publication to this eBook called “**Deepening Your Meditation.**” If you would like to get this free eBook, **[click here to sign up](#)** and I will mail it to you as soon as it is available.

Finally, I would like you to be aware that I have published an audio series on meditation. It is called “**The Dynamics of Meditation.**” This is a 4 hour audio course that takes you through the basic meditations and goes into detail on each one. I strongly recommend this course for anyone that is serious about meditation.

Thank you for requesting your copy of “**Meditation -- the Inward Journey.**” All of us at the Alive and Healthy Foundation hope it will help you feel inspired to meditate. Through meditation we hope that your life and relationships will become happier and healthier.

Best Wishes,



Please share this eBook

*“If you have knowledge,  
let others light their candles in it.”*

- Margaret Fuller, 1810-1850, American philosopher, writer, feminist leader

Please share this eBook with all your family and friends. If they wish to receive our free monthly newsletter and more information on meditation, please have them sign up at our web-site, [www.AliveandHealthy.com](http://www.AliveandHealthy.com). You can also request other information on holistic health and meditation seminars from Blair Lewis at our web-site.

### Free Books and Programs

As a non-profit foundation, we offer free books and programs to the public. Our next offering will be available mid-February 2004, it will be a free audio seminar called, “**Deepening Your Meditation.**” [Click here](#) to receive this free audio eBook as soon as it is released. Check the Alive and Healthy web-site often for new releases, updates and free information on health and healing - [www.AliveandHealthy.com](http://www.AliveandHealthy.com).

Please share this eBook

## About the Author

### **Blair Lewis, PA-C**

Blair has been a student of meditation for over 30 years and has practiced ayurvedic and homeopathic medicine for over 20 years. His holistic practice consists of classical homeopathy, ayurveda, neuromuscular therapy and craniosacral therapy. He is a licensed Physician's Assistant specializing in the preventive medicine and the holistic treatment of chronic disease from a wellness perspective. His training in ayurveda continues in the Himalayan region of Uttar Pradesh and with the Himalayan Institute in the United States. A direct student of Swami Rama and Pandit Rajmani Tigunait, Blair has been teaching meditation for many years. He is one of the co-founders of the **Blue Sky Educational Foundation** in Wisconsin and the founder of the **Alive and Healthy Foundation**. Both Foundations are non-profit, tax-exempt organizations dedicated to humanitarian services.

A graduate of both the National Center for Homeopathy and the International Foundation for Homeopathy, Blair is the co-author of *Homeopathic Remedies for Health Professionals and Laypeople*. A graduate of Indiana University and the Physician Assistant Program at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation, he has also studied in Europe, Greece, India and the United States. Blair received his training in osteopathic manipulation at Michigan State University. An enthusiastic teacher, Blair lectures nationally and abroad.

Currently, Blair is writing more books, teaching seminars and still providing holistic health consultation with patients world-wide. If you would like to contact Blair, you can write him at **HealthCoach@AliveandHealthy.com**.