

Introduction

Meditation, mediation, medication - the words sound different; in writing there is only a tiny variation.

This newsletter scratches the surface of meditation. By drawing on my resources and the internet, this very high level overview aims to help increase your awareness about a much written about and studied area.

The inspiration for this month's email comes from a number of sources:

>> During a recent email exchange, a colleague and I had a light-hearted chat about: "mediation, not to be confused with meditation". And we then wondered whether meditation might be just the thing needed as an alternative to mediation :-)

>> In my June newsletter about reflection, I referred to a BRW article that commented on relaxation and lowering brainwaves to help stimulate creativity. In my May newsletter, one of the tips for helping with 'thinking beyond' was to meditate.

>> Clients have expressed interest in how meditation can help them at work.

What is meditation?

Meditation is a simple process which creates a state of deep relaxation. It is a method of mental training that involves clearing the "mind clutter" that constantly tries to invade our mind. "With repeated effort the process of meditation takes on its own energy. The result is peace, serenity, calmness; eventually opening yourself to new insights." (1)

The benefits of meditation

- * helps to disengage from life's and work's activities
- * reduces mind chatter
- * rests the mind
- * helps you obtain great insights
- * helps you see things more clearly
- * increases mental alertness

- * enhances work performance
- * increases your effectiveness
- * improves relations at work

- * increases self-actualization (realising more of one's inner potential)
- * is a powerful tool for changing your life

- * fosters improved health
- * relieves stress, fatigue, anxiety, depression and associated body responses
- * generates feelings of wellbeing
- * increases serotonin levels
- * nourishes the soul
- * helps free oneself from the grip of destructive emotions and face challenges with greater equanimity (2)

"Nothing can give you a higher return on your investment of time in terms of clarity of mind, a sense of well-being and peace, and access to your own brand of authenticity than can meditation (3)

"According to Chin-Ning Chu, in her 1998 book, *Work Less, Do More*: both Harvard Business School and the leading European business school, INSEAD, have concluded from research that the two most effective new business tools for twenty-first century executives are meditation and intuition." (4)

Helps develop leadership - many leadership and management development courses in Australia and around the world include meditation e.g. Henry Mintzberg's International Masters Program in Practicing Management (5).

"Scientists study it. Doctors recommend it. Millions of people — many of whom don't even own crystals — practice it every day. Why? Because meditation works" (6)

Learning how to meditate

You only need as little as 15 minutes a day. It is easy to learn - from books, courses, the internet, friends, CDs, tapes, DVDs - there are many easily accessible resources.

For example, Mim Beim, an Australian naturopath, suggests that "meditation is the most important skill you can learn". To support this, she provides a range of easy, practical meditation and relaxation techniques. (7)

References

- (1) <http://www.learningmeditation.com/>
- (2) "Keep Taking The Meditation" - Sydney Morning Herald, Good Weekend Magazine, 30 August 2003
- (3) Your Authentic Self - Be Yourself At Work" by Ric Giardina
- (4) I first heard this on a leadership course in 1999. A search on Google for 'meditation and INSEAD' produces quotes similar to the one in this email.
- (5) See http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/01_19/b3731085.htm for an article about Henry Mintzberg's International Masters Program in Practicing Management.
- (6) "Just Say Om" - Time Magazine, 4 August 2003
- (7) Natural Therapies to Boost the Mood and Mind – by Mim Beim, 2003

About This Article

My aim is to provide you with information to assist you at work, with your own development, and in developing your staff. The theme for 2004 is 'Building Collaborative Workplaces'. Each month I concentrate on an area based on topics raised by my clients. Material is drawn from journals, books, articles and shared experiences.

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