

# The Art of Relaxation Mini Workshop

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome Wise Souls, I thank and congratulate all of you for being here today, because you have decided to care about how you feel. I'm Denise Jarvie the founder of Living Meditation and my mission is to make meditation attractive, accessible and easy while helping you to relax heal and create your authentic fulfilment.

You are wise because you care how you feel that is why you are here

I have a radical idea that Joy is our natural state of being and if we don't feel joy it is because we have chosen someone else's truth, concept or joy instead of our own AND IT IS THIS moving away from our inner wisdom that causes the most stress. So, I love to help you land in the now, relax into your life and start creating from your genuine desires.

## CHANGING

If there are things in your life that you don't like - start changing them, if you can't change them walk away, if you can't walk away change your perception. Whatever you do don't allow something or someone to be the excuse that makes you feel unloved or disempowered. When we complain it creates a victim mentality that in turn creates more stress.

So why do we do it, because we believe there is a payoff for our complaining, that if I suffer enough people will think better of me when good things come my way. But that just isn't true unless you think it is. We are so busy being entertained that we have forgotten how to create our lives. To pause and reflect and decide to expose ourselves to something or not. How many of you want to win Tattsлото, the majority of you, now ask yourself why you want to win. Is it to remove stress, stop doing something you don't like, give you choices, feel a sense of freedom. Well you can feel all t of those right now. My question to you is do you want to buy a better life, that will make you a consumer or will it help you to create the life you have always dreamt of, that makes you a creator. Which one feels more fulfilling, satisfying and freeing.

## **GET BETTER AT YOUR LIFE**

So, I believe we relax and meditate to get better at our lives, not run away from them. The first thing I am going to say is don't stress, you can do this and you don't have to stop all thought in your mind. Sometimes, well most of the time we take things literally because we have forgotten how to think for ourselves, this is not new Socrates said "Know thyself" back around 400 BC and even earlier the Vedic principles that became the foundation for Hinduism and Buddhism gave us a path towards inner knowing.

You can't stop the thoughts in your mind so don't try, but what we can do is shift our focus. First of all you don't have to believe or react to everything your mind says. Let the thoughts be there let them rise and fall and gently float on by like clouds. And just for this short time don't give them any attention. They are not who you are they are just thoughts in your head. And for the purpose of relaxation and meditation you need to shift your awareness away from them.

## **STRESS AND RELAXATION RESPONSE**

Stress is a natural physical response to events that disturb or threaten your sense of harmony. When you sense danger— your body's automatic nervous system reacts with the fight-or-flight response also known as the stress response. A cocktail of stress hormones such as adrenaline, are released from your endocrine system to enable you to flee or fight. The stress response is the body's way of protecting you and helps you stay focused, energetic and alert. This response is designed for a quick fix - once out of danger it assumes you will move back to a balanced way of being, where you can begin to heal. This relaxed demeanour is also known as the relaxation response. If you are in a constant state of stress, your body cannot heal, stress stops being helpful and starts causing major damage to your mood, health and quality of life. The part of your brain that governs the stress response does not know the difference between real or imagined danger, it simply responds to the reactions you are offering. It is easy to identify the stresses in the outside world, but not so easy to pinpoint the stresses of your inner world. Maybe you worry about the future, wish for or regret something from the past or maybe you feel disempowered, helpless or punish yourself.

Whether this stress is inward or outward the result will be the same. You cannot stop, change or end anything that has already been created, however you can choose to create something different and focus on your new creation. And the old will fall away from lack of attention. By practicing meditation, you activate the relaxation response and deliberately create a new path of least resistance.

## **WE HAVE FORGOTTEN HOW TO RELAX**

It is surprising how little we know about the art of relaxation. Relaxation is more than getting away from the grind of work paid or unpaid. It is more than the absence of stress. It is something fulfilling and satisfying -- a feeling of peace of mind. True relaxation requires becoming sensitive to our basic needs of peace, self-awareness, thoughtful reflection -- and the willingness to meet these needs rather than ignoring or dismissing them.

The continuing pressure of everyday life take a heavy toll on our physical and mental well-being. It is easy to get so preoccupied with living, thinking, organizing, existing, and working that we disregard our need for relaxation. Most of us have been brought up to be production-oriented and can feel guilty, or at least ill-at-ease, when we are not actively involved in accomplishing tasks or producing things. Even our vacations become whirlwind productions that leave us exhausted after concentrating too many experiences into a short period of time. We have forgotten how to relax.

About 20 years ago I began to explore meditation as a way to manage stress and find balance in my life. I thought meditation would be a tool to help me cope with life; instead, I gained a completely new perspective about living and creating. As I practiced meditation, my inner critic began to soften, allowing freedom of acceptance to flow into all areas of my life. Over time, it dawned on me, the balance and ease I sought was already within me. I just had to find a way to receive and realise it - meditation was that key for me. An opportunity arose about 20 years ago to facilitate the meditation class I had been attending. I tentatively took it, terrified but excited. It was such a joyous and illuminating experience, that I have been facilitating classes and learning about meditation ever since.

## EXERCISES

The easiest way to destress and activate your relaxation response is to deep breath. I love the meditation of four. Let's start with a breathing exercise I call **The 4 Focus Meditation**. This is a mindfulness technique to relieve stress in the moment.

- Sit quietly and close your eyes.
- Breathe in for a count of four then hold to the count of four,
- Breathe out for a count of four and pause for a count of four.
- Repeat four times,
- allow your shoulders to drop down and your jaw to relax.
- Breathe in and out,
- now take your focus to the outside world and open your eyes.

The vibration of four invokes a feeling of retreat, order, balance. Just like a square, all that is built upon it is evenly distributed. Four inspires you to clean up your foundations, your beliefs and your fears, not by getting rid of them, but creating something new. Focus upon what feels good and all your negative vibrations fall away from lack of attention and your highest path magically reveals itself.

### Body Scan

- Close your eyes.
- Do the 4 Focus Meditation
- Scan over your body
- Wherever you feel tension or tightness deliberately let it go until that area feels soft and relaxed.
- Keep doing this over your whole body until it feels at ease and calm.
- Focus on your breathing.
- Open your eyes.

### Your Word

- Close your eyes.
- Do the 4 Focus Meditation and body scan
- Choose one word that best describes your deepest value, affirm it, hold it dear, remember it, breathe life into it, and live it.
- Repeat this word in your mind for as long as you can.

- Then sit in silence for 3 minutes.
- Focus on your breathing.
- Open your eyes.

This word will be a guide and a support in your daily life. It will provide a foundation for choice and action bringing much clarity – keep this word as long as it inspires you and feels good. When it no longer does either of these a new word will emerge that connects to your deepest value. Feel the creative unfolding of life.

### **Manifestation**

- Close your eyes.
- Do the 4 Focus, body scan and your word meditations
- In front of you imagine something you desire or a task you want to accomplish.
- See yourself experiencing this desire or task.
- Imagine how you feel and what you feel when it has been accomplished.
- Try not to think about how they will happen or what you might need to do, to bring it in to your life as this will only limit your options.
- You are worthy of all that you desire
- You create your reality by what you focus upon. Are you making your heart sing or shrink?
- Feel the feeling of your accomplishments.
- Then focus on your breathing, bringing with you the new way of being that you just created for yourself.
- Open your eyes
- Relax your desires are on their way.

The Manifestation exercise lets you see what you want in your mind's eyes. You imagine your new house, your new car, your new lover. To manifest something, we need to do more than see it. We need to feel it. And then let go of the outcome. How many of us believe we will feel better when that thing we desire manifests, until then we are in a limbo land waiting not feeling good enough or fulfilled. If you can combine visualization with the sensation of getting what you want, you'll achieve better results.

## LIVING MEDITATION

**Mindfulness** will bring your focus to this present moment so you destress your life right now. **Transcendence** is self-inquiry it helps us to understand our motivations so we can move beyond them and not allow them to stress us out. When we come to that neutral space we can then **manifest** our dreams instead of our complaints and fears.

Your body already knows how to heal. All you need do is give it time and space to relax and reset. But we have lost confidence in our bodies, we don't trust that they will know what to do. If we have time by ourselves we panic and try to figure what we need to do to feel better. Conscious deep breathing helps us to relearn the art of rest and relaxation. It helps us to care and love ourselves. We become a loving parent to ourselves "It is like we say don't worry, I will take care of you, this is your time to rest and relax."

Today you all received a Card from my Flower of life Wisdom cards. I designed them to be used daily to remind us how to come back to your centre and relax, so just like the flower of life you can expand grow and create the life you desire.

## LIVING MEDITATION - HOW TO RELAX

### Reflect - Mindfulness

**1 Start from where you are** – whatever has brought you to this moment has passed, the only thing that matters is what you choose to think and do from this moment onwards. Every breath, every moment is an opportunity to begin again. Stress creates a path to relaxation and healing by helping you to refocus on what you love, instead of what you don't love.

**2 Discover what relaxation feel likes. This is your truth** There are many ways to relax and there are many truths. Try different ways to relax, feel what resonates with you and let everyone else live with what resonates with them. This is not a doing exercise it is how you feel TRY SOMETHING NEW AND DIFFERENT Keep in mind two important rules of thumb in deciding on

relaxation activities: Do not be afraid to try something new and different. Choose activities you really enjoy, not activities you think other people want you to pursue.

## Refine - Transcendence

**3 Care about how you feel. Know Yourself** – what makes your heart sing and what makes your heart shrink? Focus on your singing heart. Enter into relaxation activities with enthusiasm and personal commitment. Let yourself become completely involved in the relaxation activity chosen; do not hold back physically or mentally. Remember, finding effective techniques for personal relaxation is essential for everyone's physical and mental well-being. People often say to me they don't have time to relax and I will say to them well then nothing will change in your life and you will keep going on this path until your body, mind or spirit begins to break down, not because you have done something wrong but because your systems need to heal to repair. Can you imagine driving a car at 100 kms in 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> gear all the time. Yes, the car can do it but eventually something will give out, because it was not designed to do this long term.

**4 Up level** – everything changes now we can go with it or be dragged the choice is yours. How many of you have resisted change in your life and put yourself through pain to eventually just let go and then all you desire starts flowing into your life. It was always there but we have to place ourselves in a position where we can receive it. You might be more acquainted with other ways to explain this such as raising your vibration, upping the ante, rising to a challenge or awakening to your truth. The words don't really matter, I like to use up level as it still doesn't have conclusions and ideas attached to it yet. When it does I will up level the words to a new level. So up leveling means to be become more, to expand your horizons, your consciousness. To be more organized. Something I have learnt over the last few years is that is that discipline and structure create freedom. I spent so many years running away from structure because I want to be free that I created confusion and stress, I was resistant to what is. So up leveling may be as simple as making your bed everyday or learning to cook in a way that nourishes your body or changing some lifestyle practices.

# Renew - Manifestation

**5 Commit to relaxation. Trust Yourself** – still yourself, meditate or just give yourself some space. From this place your wise answers will arise. Hence the old saying “If you sleep on it, the answer will be there in the morning” All is working out for you – you know yourself the best.

**6 Practice to prepare for anything** – Practice relaxation by taking ten minutes to scan over your body and release any tension you feel. Then allow yourself to become soft and at ease. Adjust your perception, and adapt to this new way of being. Before long it will become your natural way of living. Learn to be more resilient and not take things so personally. If you worry about what others think about you, you care more about what they think and not what you think about yourself. The relationship with yourself is the basis for what you will attract and create in your life. You are worthy of a relaxed and fulfilled life. And if something goes astray or comes out of the blue go back to number 1 and Start from where you are.