

Meditation: The Creative Solution

By Adair Heitmann

"Creativity", that's a word that you don't usually think of when you consider meditation. Generally we think of quiet and serene, or gurus and ashrams. Yet, I think to be creative is to handle life's challenges from an enlightened perspective. Creativity honors the unknown, it delights in and ignites spontaneous joy. For some women in recovery and discovery words like unknown or spontaneous joy may sound too threatening. You may be in a place of total and committed control just to stay on your path so that anything that seems out of control frightens you. Let me say that honoring the unknown, is not being out of control. It is connecting with a wellspring of inner divinity. Within the unknown are great mysteries, within the unknown freedom, comfort and solace exist. Within the unknown boundless solutions to life's problems reside.

Let's now de-mystify the word meditation. Per Webster's Dictionary meditation means "to engage in deep thought". Well, I think that gives meditation a bad rap. The practice of meditation is more than that. By practicing meditation your body can relax, unwind and heal, you can feel inner peace and yes, you may even experience bliss. It is this bliss part that many people have trouble with. They think that if they meditated once and did not feel what they think bliss feels like, then either they didn't meditate right or that meditation didn't work for them.

For some of you, just putting one

foot in front of the other right now is the best you can do, so let's put the Nirvana aspect of meditation aside for a moment. By taking a few moments during your day to stop, to sit, close your eyes, and breathe, possibly recite a mantra or a calming word, you will return to your path, more present and focused. You will be better able to deal with the task at hand.

Meditation works every time you practice it, and everyone



may have a different experience. What I say to my students and clients is to keep on practicing. Meditation really is a practice, not a technique. The process of meditation is actually quite simple and is not always mental. There are body-oriented meditation methods, spiritual based techniques as well as guided visualization, sound, and movement meditation. There are mantra, breath and chakra meditations, there are color and insight meditations. There are

meditation practices that require only sitting and breathing naturally and meditation practices that require elaborate ritual and concentration. We live in a time and an area where there is a smorgasbord of meditation methods available to all of us. All we have to do is sample them, and find the ones that we like and practice them.

One of the things I have learned about meditation, after practicing it myself for over 30 years, is that while all meditation works, some people are more suited to some styles of meditation than others. This is one of the reasons I created my Feed Your Soul® classes. I found I was able to help more people by teaching a variety of meditation methods within one class. This way there is generally one or two methods that resonate with each person, these are the techniques they then practice at home. This creative approach also has kept me pumped up and interested in teaching this class for over 10 years.

The bottom line is that meditation works, even if you think it doesn't. Yes, your mind will wander, that is natural. Yes, you will hear sounds from the street, yes, you will remember that you forgot to put the clothes in the dryer. What you will learn to do differently is to smile to yourself and simply be aware of the temporary distraction and go back to the practice of meditation. You will learn not to jump up and put clothes in the dryer. You will learn to be more serene and go with the

flow. The clothes will still be ready for you when your meditation is done.

Practicing the art meditation is actually very simple. What gets in the way with many people, is that they think they are not doing it right. Or they expect to reach Nirvana the first day they meditate. Sorry, I can't guarantee that. Some of you will and some of you won't! I can say that the practice of meditation can help you understand your anger, your fears, your past, present and future better. And you will laugh more. You will feel more connected to every living thing. You will view your life experiences with a different perspective.

Some people think that they have to stop all of their bad habits before they can start to meditate. Nothing is further from the truth. Meditation accepts you exactly where you are, without judgment, and it is always there for you.

Meditation is like a trusted friend, all you have to do is call and meditation will be there for you.

I could say that meditation is better than Botox. I could say it is better than booze. I could say that meditation can change your life. I could say that meditation can provide you with an unequaled springboard for creative solutions to life's issues. And everything I would say would be true. Yet, you are hearing it from me, not experiencing it yourself. Take a meditation class, find a new teacher for one-on-one instruction, get a book on meditation and practice it's exercises, just do it. It may just be the most creative thing you do all year.

Recently I relied on meditation before, during (with headphones) and after surgery. I am so grateful to have relied on it this way. It helped me heal better and faster. It also helped me see hope at the end of the tunnel. I practiced a relax-

ation meditation coupled with a guided visualization of my own imagining as to what Stage 1, 2, and 3 of healing would be for me. This meditation alone helped me through a most challenging and fearful time. It helped me see past my surgery, to the wellness and recovery on the other side. You may want to apply this same kind of creative and meditative wisdom to your own recovery and discovery path.

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