

Yoga Nidra/Guided Meditation

Introduction:



We, humans, are an extremely stressed-out race on this planet. No other living being can boast of such an elite strained existence as we can. We have become tightly wound up springs with no time to unwind. But all hope is not lost, Thankfully, Men and women have discovered ways to unwind themselves to make sure they stay sane and their life remains meaningful and stress-free. Yoga Nidra or Guided Meditation is one such technique that can help unwind young and old and transform them back from the artificial human that they have become to the happy, loving human that they were supposed to be. Many have been saved by Yoga Nidra and yet many on this planet are still oblivious of its benefits. Yoga Nidra as a guided meditation has been practiced for centuries. To the uninitiated, yoga nidra or guided meditation is a meditative technique wherein a practitioner follows his Guru's instructions to help go deeper into a deep state of relaxation and heightened awareness. In today's modern world, Guru's have been replaced by trained instructors who can induce such a state live or through an audio recording. The session starts with progressive body relaxation moving on to some visualizations with breathing control and positive affirmations. These are all aimed at distressing the individual and allowing him/her to go deeper into a meditative trance without worries and/or distractions. This type of meditative technique can be used by beginners or advanced practitioners as it is a

structured approach to meditation eliminating the struggles of keeping ourselves continually focused to go deeper into meditation.

The Benefits of Guided Meditation:



Yoga Nidra offers a myriad of benefits that go beyond mere relaxation. For some, it brings joy, for others it is instrumental in improving mental well-being, or enhancing physical health. The National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, USA, has done considerable research on meditation and lists a great number of benefits. Its positive effects have been widely recognized as relieving stress, anxiety, depression to pain reduction, helping with insomnia and post-traumatic stress disorder to name a few. The science behind it is that it de-stresses by reducing cortisol levels and stimulates the release of endorphins, the body's natural mood enhancers. As a result, individuals experience a sense of calmness and increased resilience to daily stressors.

Furthermore, guided meditation **improves focus and concentration**. This helps to enhance cognitive abilities and productivity. By training the mind to stay focused in the present, practitioners become better equipped to deal with the challenges of modern life.

Another notable benefit of yoga nidra is its **positive impact on our emotional well-being**. When we practice yoga nidra regularly it helps to cultivate self-awareness, allowing individuals to observe their thoughts and emotions without judgment. Thus

a practitioner is able to observe without judgment life, death, money, poverty, hard work, laziness, clarity, confusion, etc without judgment. This nonjudgmental reflection helps to provide great insight into our own lives and life in general and helps us mature spiritually. Moreover, it fosters emotional intelligence and empowers individuals to respond to situations with greater empathy and compassion.

Groups who may benefit from yog nidra:

For Runners and high-performance athletes:



Yog nidra is a boon for long-distance runners or high-performing athletes. When

practiced after a long run or intense workout, it provides the necessary relaxation in the shortest period possible. You can progressively relax the entire body and on completion of the session can go about your day-to-day work refreshed.

Students, reducing anxiety before Exams:



Kay was preparing for her masters of Law, final examination. She had been a great student throughout her life but had anxiety issues before exams. On the day of the examination, she had an anxiety episode and felt she had forgotten everything. This was 30 minutes before the exam. She called me up and I persuaded her to go through a short yog nidra session. To cut a long story short, she topped her class in that particular exam. So, yog nidra is extremely helpful for people suffering from anxiety. It helps them become calm so that they can deliver their best performance.

Late risers, getting up early:



Many people are unable to get up early. The daily stresses of their work and home environment are so much so that they feel completely exhausted. Yog nidra before going to bed increases relaxation, and promotes deep sleep, so they can get up early the next morning easily.

Incorporating Yog Nidra in your daily routine: Now that you know the myriad benefits of yog nidra, let me tell you that incorporating yog nidra as a part of your daily routine is both easy and rewarding. First, find a yog nidra instructor. You can either go for live sessions or a recorded session depending on your preference. Live sessions are always better but can be expensive. Set aside a designated time and space for your practice. Start with short sessions once daily. Then gradually increase the duration and frequency as you progress. The best time to start is before going to bed but mornings can be a good time as well. Remember, Consistency is the key.

Conclusion

Yog Nidra is a great tool for achieving inner peace, physical and mental well-being. Incorporating yog nidra in your daily lives can help experience profound transformations for all, including long-distance runners or high-performing athletes, exam-phobic students, or just late risers.