

The Power of Meditation and Its Uses

For centuries, meditation has been used as a healing mechanism and appreciated for its art. It has evolved and proved time and time again to be a fundamental part of life. Meditation is an essential part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and its benefits and healing powers should be used often.

I only know a couple things about meditation, but I have recently become more interested in it, as well as other holistic and non-western medicine/practices. The time in my life when I used meditation the most is during my sophomore year of high school when I was super serious about volleyball. I would play this track on my iPod that made me relax and visualize different aspects of the sport in my head. I would listen to this every night before I went to sleep, usually falling asleep during it. I cannot tell if it really had an impact on my playing, but when I was striving so hard to get better, I would do anything I could to reach my full potential. I recently have used meditation to calm my anxiety. It isn't serious, but I might stress over homework, work, the feeling of having a lack of time, or even relationships with my family or loved ones. I usually just lie in bed and relax and do some deep thinking.

Research Questions:

- Does meditation actually reduce stress, and why?
- Does meditation come in different forms, or is there only one way to meditate that is proven to work?

- How does meditation vary between cultures—what is its origin?
- Has meditation become too pop-culture, and has America misinterpreted its meaning/uses?
- Are there any cases where humans have been healed through meditation?
- Are there any accessories to meditation (tea, food, religion, etc) that are necessary or improve the success of meditation?
- Does meditation align you with the universe?

Research Methods: I plan too...

- I plan to find numerous useful articles online about the research of meditation and meditation in other cultures.
- Find books on the art of meditation—one I am looking into is The Healing Power of Meditation by Andy Fraser.
- Use databases to find more scientific information on meditation
- Find/watch documentaries on the art of meditation

Timeline:

- Week 8: Find the majority of the articles I want to use
- Week 9: Work on developing opposition and find sources for opposition, watch documentaries
- Week 10: Spring Break—start outlining and maybe writing my paper—get thoughts organized
- Week 11: Continues working on draft
- Week 12: Get close to finishing the draft and start working on presentations

- Week 13: Start the final draft—do any last minute research I might need to include in my paper.
- Week 14: Continue developing the final draft
- Week 15: Get close to finishing the final draft
- Week 16: Finish the final and hopefully turn it in.

My goal in writing this is to find out if meditation really works, and if it does, how to use it to its full potential. Do I have to go to yoga and drink gallons of green tea, or is it a simple art that I can utilize everyday to help me solve the complex situations life puts me into? I want to start living a life that is more aligned with the universe. I want my life to be filled with conscious decisions about the food I eat, the products I buy, and to be filled with happiness and not a lot of stress. The goal of this paper is to persuade myself and others that mediation is something that should be implemented into everyday life.

Annotated Bibliography

Bilican, F. Isil. "The Relationship Between Focused Attention Meditation Habits, Psychological Symptoms, and Quality of Life." *Journal of Religion and Health* 55.6 (2016): 1980-995. *Academic OneFile Plus*. Web. 26 Feb. 2016.

This article was about a study of meditation and how it affects overall quality of life. It goes through what two different types of meditation are and how they are used, how they performed the study, and what the psychological effects were as well as how they affected the overall quality of life.

This is a strong source for my paper because it is basically researching exactly what I am writing my paper on. It will offer good support as to whether or not meditation increases or decreases quality of life and if it is worthwhile to put into practice or not.

Eisler, Melissa. "11 Meditation Styles and Techniques Explained." *Mindful Minutes*. N.p., 22 Mar. 2016. Web. 26 Feb. 2017.

This article goes into the different types of meditation that there are and explains what each one is. Each meditation type has information on how it works and who should use meditation. The article also lists either a creator or known expert for each type of meditation.

I could easily use this article for information on meditation and the different types of meditation. This could help answer my research question about the different types of meditation and if there is only one specific way to meditate.

Gregoire, Carolyn. "The Daily Habit Of These Outrageously Successful People." *The Huffington Post*. TheHuffingtonPost.com, 05 July 2013. Web. 26 Feb. 2017.

This article lists numerous CEOs and successful celebrities that cite meditation as a key ingredient to their success. Some people mentioned in the article include Oprah, Bill Ford, and Ariana Huffington. Whether it is a simple "digital detox," meditation in the morning, or yoga classes, they have all brought up meditation techniques and list them as a reason for improving their quality of life.

I can use this as support that meditation improves quality of life. I can also use it as another perspective on meditation. Even if someone does not have a chronic disease, it can be useful and part of a successful and healthy lifestyle.

"History of Meditation - Mankind's Oldest Getaway." *Project Meditation*. N.p., 18 Oct. 2016. Web. 26 Feb. 2017.

This was a quick article that gave a quick history of meditation and how it made its way over seas to the west. It gives dates and references that serve as a good timeline for meditation.

I can use this in my paper to give some more background information on meditation and to give my audience an idea of how long this has been around. If it has been around for a long time and stuck, it might not just be a pop-culture trend. This good support against my opposition.

Jacobs, Sarah. "A Successful Entrepreneur Opened a New Meditation Studio in NYC to Cash in on a \$1 Billion Market." *Business Insider*. Business Insider, 18 Feb. 2017. Web. 26 Feb. 2017.

This article is about how meditation has turned into an industry rather and money-maker. It goes into detail about a new mediation studio that was opened by the former owner of Intermix, a clothing company that was sold to Gap for \$130 million dollars. The author writes about her experience about the studio.

I plan to use this article as an opposition to meditation. The article is a good perspective that focuses on the meditation industry, and how if not taken as a serious practice, meditation may not have many benefits. The class also cost the author money, which is an interesting perspective since meditation is supposed to reduce stress and spending money usually invokes stress.

Netburn, Deborah. "Can a Mouse Meditate? Why These Researchers Want to Find out." *Los Angeles Times*. Los Angeles Times, 20 Feb. 2017. Web. 26 Feb. 2017.

This article explains some research done at the University of Oregon, where scientists genetically engineered mice to have a protein in their brains that reacts to light. Basically, when exposed to light the mice' brain oscillates in the same way a human brain does when meditating. The research was done to see if meditation has a biological component so to speak, and they found that the 'meditating mice' were more relaxed than the normal mice.

This article is good support to show how meditation is important and really does work to relax minds and bodies, even in a small organism. It is also good insight to show how meditation works in the brain, as well as introduces a certain stimulation that could be used by those who do not want to participate in meditation. I also plan to use this article due to the fact they

mention this meditation stimulation could help people recover from stroke or PTSD more quickly.

Sequeira, Sonia, et al. "Meditation and neurodegenerative diseases." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, vol. 1307, no. 1, 2014, p. 112+. *Academic OneFile*, go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?p=AONE&sw=w&u=auraria_main&v=2.1&id=GALE%7CA355472443&it=r&asid=3f2141871c1944db3eb79cbe4d74d84a. Accessed 26 Feb. 2017.

This article goes into detail about neurodegenerative disease and meditation. The study is about how meditation helps to improve memory and may be good treatment for neurodegenerative diseases.

I can use this as support to say that meditation has healing powers and in some cases may be a better option the western medicine approach, especially when western medicine does not offer a solid cure for a disease. Meditation is also cheap, if not free, and can provide numerous benefits that western medicine may not provide, as elucidated in the article.

"Why Meditate?" *The Chopra Center*. N.p., 05 Sept. 2014. Web. 26 Feb. 2017.

This article is from The Chopra Center, founded by Deepack Chopra, who is a popular advocate for holistic and non-western medicine. The article lists numerous benefits of meditation and explains why and how each benefit comes from meditation.

This is strong support on why meditation is beneficial and useful in everyday life. I can use this to support my general thesis, as well as give my audience an even better sense as to why meditation is important and part of a healthy lifestyle.