



MINDFULNESS OR MEDITATION

Meditation and Mindfulness are terms that are often interchanged and used to perhaps mean the same thing. Many people think that Meditation and Mindfulness are the same practice and, whilst they have some similarities, they are in fact different.



TORUS
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What Is Meditation?

Meditation can be described as the practice of training the brain to return to stable attention on one point of interest on demand. This can lead to an altered state of consciousness most commonly associated with feelings of deep relaxation and of deeper connection to the self.

With the use of a settling sound or mantra, an experienced meditator may be able to transcend stable attention on a point of interest and enter a deeper state of relaxation and connection to the soul; International Spiritual Teacher, Deepak Chopra calls this pure consciousness.

Meditation is not the maintaining of stable attention on one point of interest continuously. It is the practice of returning to that point of interest as soon as the person notices attention has wandered and doing so without judgement or self-criticism.

Stable attention is the ability to choose to focus on one thing and to allow other things that may be in your awareness to fade into the background so that you can sustain your attention where you want it to be.

For the most part, our attention can be described as unstable. Imagine washing the dishes and having the radio on with your favourite song playing. You may think that your attention is on the task of washing up and that the music is in the background. However, what is actually happening is that your attention is switching from one to the other so quickly that it can feel like you are giving attention to both at the same time.

When meditating, we can choose to focus on a mantra or settling sound, other sounds in the background such as your heating switching on, birds singing outside, a car passing are all in the peripheral awareness, but if you pick out a loud bird call you have lost your stable attention and switched (somewhat briefly) to a new point of interest. Whereas, if you are aware of the noises around you but you notice them as 'morning noises' without singling any of them out individually, you have maintained your stable attention.

What Is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness can be described as the practice of maintaining awareness of thoughts, sensations and the surrounding environment without judgement. We are not concerned about the past or future, we are experiencing the present moment without judgement. To be mindful is to be aware of what you are doing in the current moment, to be aware of what is going on around you, to be in the present as it is happening fully aware.

The goal of mindfulness is to acknowledge thoughts and feelings and to accept and observe them rather than laying any judgement on yourself for having them. It is about attaining a state of understanding around your consciousness and identity, which can bring about a state of being more rational and at greater peace with yourself.

What Is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness has been incorporated into many therapies for stress, anxiety and pain management. Mindfulness can be practiced as meditation itself; Mindfulness Meditation, whereby you would sit and focus on your thoughts, allowing them to come into mind, observe them but don't judge them or push away any negative thoughts or feelings. By observing thoughts and allowing them to come, it is possible to cultivate a better understanding of yourself and to move forward. You can practice mindfulness when meditating, it can also be practiced during movement, during conscious breath-work, you can even experience mindful eating and walking.

So both meditation and mindfulness can have similar benefits and it can almost be said that mindfulness is present when we meditate. However, the difference can be seen in the way they each impact the brain. Brainwaves measured by an EEG show different things happen when we are practicing mindfulness or meditation.

When practicing certain types of meditation, for example Vedic meditation, we see brainwave patterns that relate to Automatic self-transcending. The mind transcends the meditation process itself effortlessly as there is no attempt to control or sustain the process. When practicing mind-fulness, we see brainwave patterns that relate to Open Monitoring, which are seen when we are doing memory tasks or having an internal focus. Automatic self-transcending sees a more restful mind and increased inner wakefulness whereas Open Monitoring sees rejuvenation, growth and healing.

Both meditation and mindfulness take practice, the benefits can be seen on both the mind and the body.

Why not try out our meditation classes on the Torus Wellbeing EAP Portal?

Further Information

For further information and a thorough assessment, contact the Torus wellbeing book an appointment email: info@toruswellbeingclinic.co.uk



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