

## **Social Dimensions of Meditation**

Ever since scientific study and research began on meditation (in early 1970's), many physiological, psychological and social benefits of meditation have been revealed.

Physiological studies have revealed that meditation produces a very deep relaxation in the body although the mind remains alert during meditation. This deep relaxation in the body, helps the body to repair its wear and tear. Therefore, many ailments of the body are not allowed to aggravate but are checked, thus improving the overall health-condition of the body. Although meditation is not a substitute for medication, meditation definitely helps as a catalyst to improve the efficacy of medicine. Therefore, definitely there will be a lot of improvement in the health of the body. Improvement of the health of the body definitely helps the practitioner to feel mentally better.

As far as psychological benefits of meditation are concerned, the first system to get effected by meditation is the brain and the nervous system.

Mental activities are considerably reduced during meditation owing to the repetition of the mantra. This brings down pressure on the brain and nervous system considerably. As a result, the brain and nervous system get relaxed. When this system gets relaxed, many tensions, pressures and stresses which are operating on the nervous system are released and flushed out, thus improving the physiological functioning of the nervous system and brain. Better functioning of the brain and nervous system is found to improve the state of mind of the practitioner. The mind is the one which is closely linked to the brain and nervous system. The practitioner gradually starts showing less anger and irritability, more tolerance, increased acceptability of other's views, more adaptability and flexibility, increased self-confidence and self control, better self management, increased calmness of mind or less agitated mind. When there is such improvement of mental faculties in the practitioner, the practitioner definitely exhibits improved social behaviour.

Meditation very gradually reduces the degree of the fundamental negative traits and tendencies like pride and prejudices, excessive desire, anger, selfishness, arrogance

(egoism), infatuation and jealousy in the practitioner. Hence the practitioner starts showing improved social behaviour. The improved behaviour of a person has a bearing on his thinking and attitude towards his family, friends, society and the world at large. Thus, he gradually becomes a better citizen of the society.

This change in the behaviour, thinking and attitude of a person makes him more humane and socially a more responsible person. He may or may not contribute to the betterment of society greatly, but by becoming a positive person, definitely he will not be a drag or parasite on society. This itself will be his contribution for a better social order and for betterment of the world. Therefore, meditation has a great social application being relevant at all times. If one person becomes better or good, definitely some bad is reduced in the world. Therefore, meditation can be used as a TOOL to change the society towards betterment, and also to bring back lost human values.

**\* Better quality of thinking (higher thinking) alone can give rise to a better and civilized society. \***