

Osho Kundalini Meditation

Where Active Stress Reduction and Mindfulness Meet

Why is this Meditation still Cutting Edge after 35+ years?

Osho Kundalini Meditation uses gentle shaking, moving and dancing to unblock your energy and deeply relax your body. Effortlessly, you will then enter a phase of silence, rest and deep meditation. I remember having been exposed to this meditation the first time around 1976. I was then a medical student, under a lot of performance pressure, and feeling badly "stressed out" in general. After trying a number of self relaxation techniques and analytic group therapy with no lasting results, I found this meditation to "hit the spot" for my type of personal issues. It was active and mindful at the same time. You could do it anytime alone, but it was more powerful in a group setting. What I liked from the start about Osho's "active" methods was that they were including the body as an entry way to relaxation. That was at a time when even Yoga was a new and strange thing. The draw for me, then and now, is that Osho has brilliantly combined modern methods from the West (Neo-Reichian body psychotherapy) with the ancient body-based spiritual traditions (Yoga, Tantra, Sufism) from the East.

Shaking and Dancing for Emotional Health

Now, I know that the **shaking** fulfills a number of stress reducing and trauma releasing functions. Its balance of "charging" up the body for extra energy, and releasing bottled-up emotions ("discharging") at the same time, has a deeply balancing effect on mind and body. From Trauma science we now know from video studies that animals shake and tremble for hours after escaping from an attack by a predator. The **dancing** phase has a similar effect, as anyone knows who has spent a wild night at a really good disco, or has been doing aerobics or African Dance. You just feel spent and energized - at the same time - and often less depressed or anxious the next day! Besides the obvious de-stressing and muscle-relaxing effects of dance, there is evidence that dance and active movement has a powerful effect on the brain. It shifts to the production of substances (endorphins) that generate your good mood, synchronizes brain hemispheres (for internal balance), and your rhythmic motions adjust your heart-beat variability to a synchronized pattern of "entrainment" (believe me, even if the word is hard to pronounce, you will want that because it makes you feel good and in the flow!).

From Feeling "Caught in your Stuff" to Seeing the "Big Picture"

The next phase of **sitting still & watching** is a version of the now-popular practice of mindfulness meditation. There has been much talk about the neuroscience of mindfulness, lately. What I see in my practice, is its power of connecting the more primitive parts of our brain that are essential for survival (= brain stem) and basic emotions (= limbic system), with the more higher order human levels of existence (= pre-frontal cortex) that have to do with "conscious choice" and "aware action". For that, you need to be aware of awareness itself, that means you have to be able to master your emotions and your drives in order to see the big picture. The shift from "blind emotion" to the "big picture" that you can experience in mindfulness will enable you to lead a more conscious, empowered and grounded life. The last phase of **deep rest & let go** allows you to "disappear" and let go of your ego. In this phase you can melt, feel held by mother earth, let go even deeper, and connect with yourself. You may also feel connected with the bigger field around you and that **All is One**.

© Kuno Bachbauer, Dr. med. (Austria) LMFT (D.C.)

