



Frank Nichols, LCSW

**Prosperous
Meditation**
Issue #8
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Empathetic and Professional Service

Prosperous Meditation: Meditation in the Workplace

Why Corporate Meditation?

Meditation can improve or increase creativity, productivity, problem solving, team communication and relationships, ability to focus and concentrate and more! Work stress is considered one of the most debilitating factors in the work environment today. Unhealthy stress contributes to increased health care costs and sick time, increased mistakes and accidents and a work environment that is negative and drives away good employees. Meditation is a easy and (if practiced) way to reduce work stress. Given the above, meditation can therefore improve job performance, increase sales or profitability and can contribute to a more positive work environment.

Why Does Meditation Work?

There are a number of physiological and psychological reasons why meditation is so powerful involving the brain, hormones, the circulatory system and the access to certain mental states. To put it simply, meditation is extremely calming and centering. When one is calm and centered one is not stressed and therefore happier. Individuals are better able to be in the here and now and can access inner resources that they are not able to when they are off center.

What To Begin To Do Now

There are many meditation techniques that can directly improve an individual's experience at work. Today I will highlight three:

White Light Meditation or How to Clear

Sit comfortably in a chair with eyes closed and back reasonably straight. Extend arms and hands out, palms up on the rest on chair-arms or comfortably on cushion of chair. Observe breathing as it becomes deeper and more even. Imagine an amber (orange-yellow) bar of light from the bottom of the spine deep into the ground. Imagine, envision or pretend (visualization is fine but not necessary) that a white light is coming down from above. It begins to surround you and fill the room. The white light freely goes through your body and mingles with the cells of your body bringing a sense of peace. Extend your hands above your head and in front of your body, tips of finger tips slightly touching and "push" the light down with hands like a scan in front of the body. If the hands stop or a resistance or blockage is felt, send the blockage extra white light to the area melting it like an ice cube would melt on a hot frying pan. Proceed as before until all blockages are clear. When you reach the your lap imagine the white light going down your legs and feet into the ground creating a connection between earth and sky flowing with white light. Notice that you are now in a meditative state and enjoy this for awhile.

This meditation clears any stress that is held in the body and can be combined with an "open meditation" or other meditation techniques. This meditation is ideal as it takes only several minutes, generates a centered calm meditative state and rids stress. Admittedly if you are in a cubical and your co-workers don't know about white light or clearing you may want to wait till behind close doors or at home. Never the less this meditation is certainly industrial strength and should be practiced for five minutes every day.

Walking Meditation

While the "White Light" Meditation may cause conversation in the office (unless you get everyone involved!) going for a walk is during a work-break is a discreet and wonderful way to meditate and reduce stress. The steps are simple. Stand and observe your





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breath allowing it become full and relaxed. Begin to walk perhaps at a more deliberate and slower pace than you usually do. Keep your observation centered on your body. How does it feel? Are there areas of stress or anxiety? Allow these to dissipate. You certainly may observe the scenes along you walk but in a way that keeps you centered, in the present and somewhat detached, taking in whatever is in view in that second not what you just past. The difference between a walking meditation and a relaxing walk is that when meditating the feet wander but the mind does not.

Use of "The Question"

"The Question" involves a Buddhist practice that is perfectly adaptable and effective within the work setting as well as general life situations. "The Question" can be used in a number of ways, today we will discuss how it can be used as a way to draw inner resources and direct them towards a worry, a concern or problem. At a later date I will devote an entire newsletter to the use of "The Question" for larger issues including it's use as a powerful affirmation.

The following are steps to utilize the "questioning spirit":

1) Raise the question 2) Repeat the question 3) Ask the question 4) Settle the question

The first two steps involve developing a declarative sentence that reflects the worry or concern into a question. Then repeat the question and refine it to best fit what you are addressing. The act of verbalizing a worry or concern is very powerful in itself as it gives sense and structure; a shapeless unknown fear feels far worse than the one where we know what we are up against. Step three, "ask the question can mean a number of things; one can ask the question during meditation, one can ask the question prior to falling asleep, one can focus on the question gently (not obsessively) during the day. How you ask the question should be determined by your own practice; use what is best for you. Asking the question will draw to you conscious and unconscious resources that will work on the problem. Settling the question can occur in the form of an answer which is fine, in the form of other questions being raised or you may find you lose interest in this question. This is fine as it means it has lost it's energy or imperativeness for you, it has answered itself in some way as it is no longer a current concern.

Here is an example of "The Question" utilized in a business setting. I worked with a client who we will call "Joe Salesman". Joe worked selling financial instruments but the business which he had once been so successful at had turned very bad. Joe suffered from depression and anxiety, he felt trapped in his job and was contemplating leaving the field entirely. Joe worked on "The Question", raising a number of questions until he refined it to this: "What do I do when business is bad or even goes bust?" Now this is a quite serious question that many in business do face. Despite the seriousness of the situation Joe no longer felt helpless. He contemplated the question and came up with a number of answers. First he went back to his roots and began "cold-calling", then "coincidentally" a colleague left and Joe took over his cliental. Finally, he decided to stay in the field but left his old firm which had been failing to a new firm where he exceeded his previous success.

Frank Nichols, LCSW is a Social Worker, Speaker and Consultant who in addition to individual and couples counseling combines psychotherapy with meditative practices. Groups are available, corporate workshops as well as meditation coaching. Please see his web-site www.prosperousmeditation.com

Frank practices in Northport and Forest Hills, New York.

For consultation Call (631) 896-6352 fnicholslcsw@gmail.com (copy & paste)

