

Meditation for Recovery

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Detroit Recovery Project

Abstract

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This article describes a model for Meditation training for Recovery Coaches in the Detroit Recovery Project (DRP) who are part of the delivery system of peer support services that are offered to participants in recovery for alcohol and drug addiction. The training was designed to be culturally relevant to participants and had a twofold purpose. First to teach and support the Coaches in a meditation practice that would reduce their stress levels, and second to train them in the delivery of a meditation technique that they could use to teach and practice with their peers in recovery.

This article describes the training model and the effect it had on the Recovery Coaches who participated in a thirty-two hour meditation training called Meditation For Recovery. It also offers insight into how the Coaches integrated the training into their work with peers and how they continued to use it themselves.

A unique feature of this training model is that it was designed as a peer recovery support service as well as a culturally relevant practice for the predominantly African American population that DRP serves. The assumption is that because Recovery Coaches, who are also in recovery are offering the service, and because the meditation practice was designed to be culturally relevant, the predominantly African American targeted population, a population that is typically underserved when it comes to inclusion in learning the practices of Meditation, would be more inclined to embrace the practice as a relevant self-care tool.

The training was well received as is evidenced by self-reports of participants.

Further research is needed to determine the significance of cultural relevance in the delivery of meditation practices to African Americans and other ethnicities. A follow up to determine the continued use of meditation as a self-care tool once the training ended would be instructive.

Introduction

The Detroit Recovery Project (DRP) is a private non-profit corporation dedicated to supporting individuals in recovery. Its stated purpose is to strengthen, rebuild, and empower individuals, families, and communities affected by drug and alcohol addiction, and other underserved populations who are experiencing co-occurring mental illness, and substance use disorders. DRP supports individuals in identifying and dissolving barriers to achieving a healthy and productive drug-free lifestyle. This is accomplished by ensuring access to integrated networks of effective and culturally relevant holistic health services.

The DRP provides innovative, peer-to peer support services to individuals exiting substance abuse treatment, individuals in long-term recovery, their families and significant others. Through recovery support and recovery management, participants are empowered to find and develop their inner strengths, learn to take pride in themselves, and release the burden of guilt from past destructive behaviors. They learn to take charge of their lives and create a future of self-respect that allows them to thrive and enjoy life's abundance.

Recovery Support is provided through Mentorship opportunities, Daily Support Groups, 12-Step Meetings, Learning Circles, and Meditation/Spirituality.

Social Support is provided through offering various Safe & Sober Activities (Poetry Jams, Karaoke, Annual Marches and Rally's). Additionally, the DRP has formed both bowling and basketball leagues.

Weekly Recovery Management Workshops are offered at the DRP Welcome Center as well as the Department of Health & Wellness Promotion. By being active in DRP & other Recovery events, the individual is actively participating in his/her own relapse prevention.

Literature Review

It is widely accepted that alcohol and drug abuse are maladaptive responses to stress. A prominent stress management intervention described in the literature is the use of meditation as a support for people in recovery. Meditation has been shown to be effective for managing various stress-related conditions such as anxiety, depression, and trauma, as well as other health related conditions that are stress induced, including certain dysfunctional health behaviors such as excessive consumption of food, alcohol, nicotine, and drug use. (Woods-Gisombé, and Gaylord, 2014).

A growing body of research suggests that meditation techniques are also effective interventions to prevent relapse, reduce impulsiveness, support healthy self-regulation, and to enhance non-judgmental attitudes. (Himelstein, 2011),

(Bowen, et. al., 2009), (Bowen, Witkiewitz, Chawala, and Grow, 2011).

One study found that recovering intravenous drug users felt meditation was one of the best therapy tools to help them overcome their addiction. (Manheimer & Anderson, 2003). Researchers who examined incarcerated substance abusers featured in a documentary film, *The Dharma Brothers*, (Phillips, 2007) found that those who were taught how to meditate had lower levels of relapse and more positive outcomes after release than those who only received conventional recovery treatments. (Bowen, S., Witkiewitz, K., Dillworth, T.M., Chawla, N., Simpson, T.L., Ostafin, B.D., Larimer, M.E.,...Marlatt, A.G., 2006).

Research suggests that meditation also helps with alcoholism and drug addiction when it is incorporated into a practice that includes physical exercise. For instance, yoga sessions that include meditation have been shown to be an effective part of addiction recovery. (Khanna & Greeson, 2013).

Meditation is recognized as a strategy that enhances self-compassion, and decreases worry, rumination, and forgetfulness. It enhances the efficacy and the overall well-being of practitioners. It is known to enhance the ability to remain focused on events that are occurring in the present moment, reduce distracting thoughts, and stimulate the Relaxation Response (Benson, 2001).

The current emphasis in health care is trending toward more emphasis on patient-centered approaches and coordinated care teams that promote wellness, support self-care, provide preventive care and effective disease management. As the health care professions move toward wellness and prevention based care, it is important to identify strategies and therapies that are both clinically effective and cost effective. Preliminary research indicates that mind body interventions, such as meditation and yoga are practices that are well suited to be utilized as adjunctive health care interventions that empower patients to be more involved in their own health care. Stahl, Dossett, LaJoie, Denninger, Mehta, Goldman Fricchione, and Benson, 2015)

Many alcohol and drug treatment programs have included meditation in their overall treatment plan, not as a substitute for other therapies, but as an additional support. Part of the value of meditation is that it can be practiced throughout a person's lifetime even after the initial recovery period is complete. This makes meditation a valuable tool that can be used to manage stress and empowers those in recovery to remain sober throughout their lives.

Individual and community-level approaches to health interventions have been shown to influence optimal well-being, self, efficacy, coping, and resilience to minimize physiological stress reactivity and unhealthy behaviors such as smoking, alcohol, and drug abuse that increase the risk for chronic health conditions. (Woods-Gisombé & Black, 2010). As such, DRP wants to include Meditation instruction and practice as a peer-to-peer service it can offer staff and

clients to reduce stress, to support recovery, recovery management, and relapse prevention.

Meditation For Recovery

At the request of DRP's CEO, himself a meditator, DRP introduced a model for Meditation training for Recovery Coaches who are part of the delivery system of peer support services that are offered to participants in recovery. The training was designed to be culturally relevant to participants and had a twofold purpose. First to teach and then support the Coaches in a practice that would reduce their stress levels, and second to train them in the use of a meditation technique that they could use to teach and practice with their peers in recovery.

This article describes a training model and the effect it had on the Recovery Coaches who participated in a thirty-two hour meditation training called Meditation For Recovery. It also offers some insight into how the Coaches are integrating the training into their work with clients and how they continue to use it themselves.

A unique feature of this training model is that it was designed as a peer recovery support service as well as a culturally relevant practice for the predominantly African American population that DRP serves. The assumption is that because Recovery Coaches, who are also in recovery are offering the service, and because the meditation practice was designed to be culturally relevant, the predominantly African American targeted population, a population that is typically underserved when it comes to inclusion in learning the practices of Meditation, would be more inclined to embrace the practice.

While African Americans have been included in meditation research there are no research studies available that target the cultural relevance of Meditation as a health intervention for African Americans with the exception of the research done by Woods-Giscombé & Gaylord, 2014. According to their research, reducing stress-related health issues requires the design of meaningful, culturally sensitive programs that maximize participation and benefits to the targeted population. "Religion/spiritualism, commitment to family and community, and intuition and experience versus empiricism are core cultural values that must be considered in developing effective programs to address health issues in African American communities." (Woods-Giscombé and Gaylord, 2014)

Meditation is a practice that can be used to train the mind and body to reach a particular state of consciousness in order to experience mental clarity, serenity, and emotional as well as physical well-being. Meditation puts the body and mind in a state of deep relaxation and ease, giving an overall feeling of peace and tranquility. As the mind relaxes brain waves move from a higher to a lower frequency giving more time between thoughts, which reduces impulsivity and gives more opportunity to skillfully choose the thoughts on which one focuses.

This slowing down process aids in choosing beneficial actions. Evidence indicates that this effect can be instrumental in supporting recovery and preventing relapse.

Training

Overall Goals Phase I and II:

Recovery Coaches will be taught:

- What meditation is
- Four meditation techniques
- How to practice the techniques
- Rationale for using the techniques
- Benefits of the techniques
- How to teach the techniques
- How to support those in recovery in utilizing and practicing the techniques

Objectives Phase I and II:

- Increase awareness through meditation
- Experience the benefits of meditation
- Support one another in the practice of meditation
- Teach clients in recovery meditation practices

The training was set up in two eight-week modules. Coaches met for two hours of instruction in meditation techniques for a total of 32 hours. The first eight weeks were devoted to teaching the Recovery Coaches how to meditate. There were eleven participants in Phase I of the training, all of whom were in recovery. The trainees in this module included three women, and eight men. Ten of the participants were African American, and one was European American, three were women, and eight were men. Nine were recovery coaches, one was an IT expert, and one was a mental health professional and supervisor of the Recovery Coaches. Four of them had engaged in a meditation practice before, and only one had established an ongoing sustained practice or received formal Meditation instruction prior to this training.

Phase I

The first eight sessions, two hours each, were devoted to learning and practicing various meditation techniques, including **The Ideal Day Meditation**, designed to empower meditators to recognize their ability to influence their own mood and sense of well being by shifting their consciousness to an internal focus; **Breath Meditation**, with a focused awareness on breath which stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system and evokes the Relaxation Response; **Guided Meditation**, which invites the use of imagination to evoke a sense of safety and calm; and a mindfulness technique adapted from Thich Nhat Hanh's **Four Pebble Meditation** which engaged them kinesthetically, cognitively, emotionally, and spiritually. They learned the appropriate use of each technique, and the

benefits of each meditation practice. Each session combined lecture, breath awareness, meditation practice, yoga asana, group interaction, journaling, and homework.

Coaches were asked to meditate between training sessions for a minimum of 5 minutes each day, and to keep a meditation journal. Each week they discussed their experiences of meditation, including their resistance to the practice, which is an important part of the learning process. Each session began and ended with the Serenity Prayer and included a five-minute meditation to start and a five-minute meditation to end. As they progressed through the training, one-minute was added to each meditation session so that by the end of the first eight weeks they were meditating for twelve minutes to begin and twelve minutes to end the sessions.

Phase II

The second eight sessions, two hours each, included seven participants from **Phase I**. The breakdown by gender was one woman, and six men. All were African American. Schedule conflicts, health problems and work related priorities kept the other 4 from continuing the training. In order to receive a certificate of completion at the end of the training, each participant committed to attend every session and to do the homework assigned. They learned how to teach the meditation practices that were taught in **Phase I**.

Phase II included:

- Skills training
- Understanding of Stress and Trauma and how they differ, including the trauma of racial wounding and racial disparity, how that affects the nervous system, and how meditation can calm the nervous system
- Cultural relevance of Meditation for African Americans including religious and spiritual practices and conflicts that might arise
- Rationale for the use of a particular meditation technique/including its benefits
- Teaching experience
- Feedback sessions

Session one laid out the ground rules for participation in **Phase II**; regular attendance, completion of homework assignments, daily meditation practice of at least five minutes each day, and journaling. A video of people in recovery who practiced yoga and meditation was shown (Clennell, 2008), and was followed by a discussion of the video and its relevance to people in recovery. Sessions two, three, and four involved actual skills training in terms of voice modulation; pacing; choice of language; the importance of the use of language in setting the tone for participants to feel safe in the experience of meditation; how to deal with resistance, including the culturally relevant objection participants may have

because they think meditation will interfere with their religious beliefs; and how to monitor individuals within the group by observing non-verbal cues.

These three sessions also included lectures on stress, trauma, including the trauma of racial wounding due to the exposure to overt and/or aversive racism, cultural relevance of meditation practices, and the rationale for utilizing a particular meditation technique along with its benefits.

In sessions five, six, and seven, each Recovery Coach was given a script to follow for support as they taught the group a meditation practice. They then gave each other feedback based on what they thought one another's strengths were, and what they thought their growth opportunities were. At the end of the fifth session the Coaches were given a take home quiz and told to collaborate on their answers. In session six they were given time to work on their quizzes in the group and then, with the instructor's guidance, to review answers, ask questions, and clarify any misunderstandings they had. The final session was devoted to evaluating the program, sharing their testimonials, and clarifying any questions or concerns they had.

Testimonials

As part of their homework, participants were asked to write two paragraphs about how the meditation classes had helped them personally, and professionally. The texts were transcribed exactly as they were received, without editing, except to identify spelling errors. Six of the seven participants provided written testimonials. One participant offered a verbal testimonial that was not included in this article.

Table 1. Percentage of participant responses to meditation classes

Participant Outcomes	Percentage of Participants
Assisted with recovery	66.66%
Increased ability to focus attention	83.33%
Inner peace/Stress reduction	83.33%
Improved personal and professional practices	83.33%
Committed to practice meditation	50.00%

Below are their testimonials. Numbers are being used to protect confidentiality and to distinguish one testimonial from the next.

1

“Meditation has had a positive effect in my personal life, and in my professional life and I plan for meditation to be utilized by the introduction of it in the lives of the people I serve to assist with gaining more focus and awareness.

Meditation has had a great impact in my everyday life by allowing me to stay focus[ed] on the positive relief it brings to my awareness, it allows me to identify when stress is beginning and gives me the opportunity to reflect back to the meditation for peace and serenity. I also have implemented meditation before I go to class, I take a few minutes to sit still and focus on my breath and where I am at believing this tool will help me to get into an intuitive mind set before class and I hope it will assist in my exam taking.

Meditation has assisted me as well in my professional life by allowing the stress of the job to become minimal to where it gives me an outlet to reduce stress, by slowing the [brain] wavelengths for more time between thoughts giving me the opportunity to choose the right thoughts and the best actions to take. I have also introduced this meditation to my group members and kind of took a survey detailing what meditation was to what they thought it was and then offered it to the group with great reception. Finally, meditation is a positive tool that has been implemented in my personal and professional life, giving me a great tool for more awareness and decision making skills, with these skills I intend to share this technique of meditation with my group members in hopes of bringing greater awareness to their life and for their road to recovery.”

2

“Seven Minutes a day of Meditation has changed my life”

“My Experience”

Meditation has helped me create a sense of clarity and inner peace that calms me throughout my day. As a Recovery Coach, meditation is a great tool to use for myself and my recoveries’ [sic] I am astounded by how great I feel – mentally, physically, and emotionally. And all I’m doing is taking some time to “just chill.” The more I meditate, the more benefits I notice. I’ve gotten to the place it calms me [the] majority of the day and helps me focus and feel more in control of stress.

I think the reason it took me so long to implement the practice of meditating was because I created unrealistic expectations for myself. Maybe you can relate. I thought I would have to do it “right” every single day or somehow I would fail. So I didn’t even bother to give it a shot. Well, I actually tried a few times but I was distracted and couldn’t experience the “inner peace” that I was supposed to feel. So I gave up a few years ago. I’m glad I let go the judgment and just tried it. Thanks to Dr. Gail Parker and DRP I had a chance to recapture meditation again.

This time I was more open minded and in recovery from substance abuse as well. Dr. Parker I'm glad I didn't stop coming to the training. It took me to a new level in my recovery. I think it's important for people to reap the benefits that I'm enduring with meditation. I will teach my peers and recoveries' [sic] what was truly given to me. "The practice of meditation"

"How I Practice meditation"

I visualized a place that relaxed me and just went there in my mind for example: the beach, sitting in a tree, in a room with a lot of beautiful flowers. Sometimes imagined colors, sounds, and the peaceful environment. I exhaled the thoughts that entered my mind and let them dissipate into the universe. I could deal with them later. This was my time just to relax. After each meditation, I felt like I took an energizing nap. I felt more confident to deal with whatever was bothering my never-ending to-do list or me. I felt great!"

3

"Being a former substance abuser, who has not practiced in 17 years, following the 12 step modal [sic] has been very instrumental in my work as well as my personal life. During the course of our journey in meditation over the past several weeks I have gained a better understanding and deeper meaning of the 11th step. 'We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.' Through meditation, the help of my instructor, and my peers I am a little closer to uncovering the I [Am] inside of myself as well as help others along the path to finding theirs.

Since beginning this course I have been able to manage my stress better, decrease my anxiety level significantly and manage my thoughts a little better. As a result I am able to slow the pace down a little more often decreasing stress, anxiety, increasing my health benefits and doing wonders for my state of mind. My experience has been both rewarding in so many ways and relaxing to my mind, body and spirit."

4

"As I complete the 8 [16] week meditation-training program I welcome the opportunity to take a moment to reflect on what benefits I got from the activity. Before this course was provided to us, I had been drawn to meditation practice in a very limited way. I had been introduced to the teachings of the Buddha through personal exploration and had read about Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy as a consequence of my thinking that these concepts and techniques could help in the recovery of clients I worked with. Unfortunately, my personal involvement in meditation practice was limited and uninformed. I was not regularly practicing meditation for myself and I did not have a guide in establishing a regular practice.

So the first things and probably the most important things, that I have gained is access to a guide to help me increase my knowledge of what meditation is and how to practice, also I have been able to establish a regular practice. I have been very consistent with my daily meditation routine and have been able to meditate 90% of the days since we began this instruction. Dr. Parker has been a wonderful guide for me, and our group, and each of us has been able to lead a guided meditation session. The experience was [a] definite confidence builder for us all.

On a more personal level, my being regular with my practice seems to have decreased my stress level and increased my general peace of mind. It seems that I am less likely to be distracted by negative thoughts, people, or situations.

In our meditation we practice letting go of distractions and this seems to have carried over into regular consciousness.

Somehow, I feel that the meditation work has strengthened my cognitive abilities. I seem to be more alert and my memory seems to have improved. So all in all this experience has been excellent and has improved my sense of wellness.”

5

“Hello Dr. parker greetings from you’re [sic] number one student I’m so happy that I took you’re [sic] course I have become a better human being and as I told you before I have practiced self awareness for some years and it really help[s] me understand who I have become but meditation is showing me who I can be it is powerful to be able to add on where I know there is emptiness it has added another dimension to my recovery

I have an example of the power of this class in my life last Monday during my drug court class I didn’t think I could be effective and entertaining enough for the group of teens I instruct I felt myself shrinking in the middle of the session but than [sic] I said oh yeah that’s right I have supreme confidence in my ability and my confidence went through the roof and I went on to teach a[n] incredible class awareness allowed me to see I was not the me that was shrinking and meditation allowed me to see who I really was in that moment what a powerful combination I see so many great things in my future as a result of these teachings my gratitude speaks Dr. Parker and thanks for spreading this powerful message of love and self fulfillment”

6

“Since i’ve [sic] been enrolled in the meditation group I [sic] have learned to slow my thoughts down and relax more. I have been able to develop the ability to respond to my emotions better, and not react as much. Because of my

involvement with the meditation group and training period I am able to take time daily to reflect, relax and focus more on my behavior as well as my thoughts and feelings more positively and peacefully. I'm really and truly honored to have had this opportunity.

Now that I've learned the skills of meditation I will be able to help others to develop coping skills for stress and minimizing anxiety. Because the population of persons that I serve have co- occurring and trauma issues, the meditation skills I [sic] have can be of great value to assist my recoveries [sic] overcome their challenges with relaxation, stress and negative thinking. My mission is not only to help them improve their lives, but most importantly heal from the hurt."

Follow up

A meeting was held one month following the training to discuss how Recovery Coaches were utilizing their training and what support they need going forward to continue offering meditation practices to their peers. Five of the Coaches were in attendance along with the Andre Johnson, CEO of Detroit Recovery, who championed this program, and Dr. Gail Parker, the developer and instructor of the training. Two of the coaches have been working with the meditation practices in their support groups. One of the Coaches observed that when recoverees meditated for seven minutes prior to the start of the support group they were more focused and calmer throughout the group experience than they had been prior to the introduction of meditation to the group. Another of the Coaches stated it was his practice to end his support groups with meditation. He observed that while recoverees said they liked meditation, they seemed too emotionally charged at the end of the group to derive maximum benefit. He plans to introduce meditation practices at the beginning of his groups to see what, if any, difference it makes.

It was recommended that the tools of meditation be used in one-on-one sessions with clients as well as in group settings.

Coaches agreed that they could benefit from ongoing support for their own meditation practice and decided to form their own meditation support group to meet once a week for one hour, with each coach a taking turn at leading the group meditation, and then leading a discussion on what seems to be effective in using Meditation with the recoverees.

Discussion

Based on the feedback from the seven Recovery Coaches who completed the thirty-two hour meditation training, Meditation had a positive effect both personally and professionally. Meditation appears to have been effective for managing stress and creating an overall sense of well-being, increased self-

confidence, mental clarity, mental focus, and reduction of anxiety. Based on feedback associated with the training itself, more attention needs to be paid during the training to offering specific suggestions for how coaches can utilize the meditation techniques in their work with recoverees.

The technique that seemed to resonate most with Recovery Coaches was **The Ideal Day Meditation**, and the **Breath Meditation**. The attraction to Breath Meditation is consistent with research on meditation and yoga for trauma. (Van der Kolk, 2014). All of the Coaches enjoyed and asked for more training in the practice of yoga asana and breath practices along with the meditation practices.

Participants in the Meditation Certification program were all African American. A unique feature of this training is that it addressed issues that affect the African American community, connecting it to familiar spiritual ideology and cultural practices, supplementing it with reading materials written by African American meditators, and was taught by an African American instructor. This focus created an emotionally safe environment that allowed for conversation associated with unhealed racial wounding that is a significant stressor in the African American community and not specifically addressed in predominantly European-American environments that offer meditation practices.

This training can become a model for teaching culturally relevant meditation practices to Recovery Coaches engaged in delivering meditation to peers in recovery as an additional tool for stress reduction, recovery support, and as a potential tool for relapse prevention.

Meditation For Recovery Feedback Form

Faculty name(s):

Date(s):

Session(s) :

Please respond to the following statements by using the 4-point scale to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement. Please circle the number that best applies.

1= strongly disagree 2= disagree 3= agree 4 = strongly agree

1. The presentation objectives were clearly stated and met	1	2	3	4
2. The presentations were well organized	1	2	3	4
3. The information was/will be relevant to me	1	2	3	4
4. The presenter (s) provided adequate time for questions and discussion	1	2	3	4
5. The presenter helped me think about ways I might apply this information to my personal and professional life	1	2	3	4
6. The presentation increased my awareness and knowledge of this topic	1	2	3	4
7. The presentations were congruent to the overall objectives of this program	1	2	3	4
8. The presentation will allow me to work better with others	1	2	3	4
9. The learning materials are or will be useful for me as information references	1	2	3	4
10. The learning materials were appropriate for the overall objectives of this program	1	2	3	4
11. How would you rate this presentation	1	2	3	4
12. I was comfortable with the materials and the presentation	1	2	3	4

Relative to this training, I would like to receive further instruction in.....

- Understanding all forms of yoga, I know we practiced and focused solely on meditative yoga, by the way I do feel it's the most important but now that Pandora's box is open I would like to know all there is to know.
- Yoga for overall well-being.
- I would like to learn more about meditation the training has helped me in more ways than I could imagine. It helped me to become more patient and tolerant with business and personal life. Thank you.

- Some yoga practice as a supplement to meditation practice.
- The history and some who have gone on to use these techniques successfully that has proven or is documented for public assessment.
- I really have been able to improve my personal growth as a result and really would like to explore more including yoga.

Thank you for your additional comments. Please use the back of this sheet if necessary.

- I want to be really good at introducing this practice with my recoverees and people in my community.
- Great job Dr. wish you well in all your endeavors.
- As I give this away I would like to keep learning more and then share those things.

Table 2. Summary of Evaluations

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average
1. The presentation objectives were clearly stated and met	0	0	0	7	7
2. The presentations were well organized	0	0	0	7	7
3. The information was/will be relevant to me	0	0	2	5	4.14
4. The presenter provided adequate time for questions and discussions	0	0	0	7	7
5. The presenter helped me think about ways I might apply this information to my personal and professional life	0	0	2	7	4.14
6. The presentations increased my awareness and knowledge of this topic	0	0	0	7	7
7. The presentations were congruent to the overall objectives of this program	0	0	1	6	5.2
8. The presentation will allow me to work better with others	0	0	3	4	3.57
9. The learning materials are or will be useful for me as information references	0	0	2	5	4.14
10. The learning materials were appropriate for the overall objectives of this program	0	0	1	6	5.2
11. How would you rate this presentation	0	0	0	7	7
12. I was comfortable with the materials and the presentation	0	0	0	7	7

Meditation for Recovery Quiz

1. Meditation is the study of the mind.
 - a) T
 - b) F
2. When we meditate our minds stop thinking.
 - a) T
 - b) F
3. Meditation takes us out of our intuitive mind and into our analytical mind.
 - a) T
 - b) F
4. Meditation requires:
 - a) Attention
 - b) Awareness
 - c) Focus
 - d) Willingness to do it
 - e) All of the above
5. You are not supposed to have thoughts when you meditate.
 - a) T
 - b) F
6. When you have thoughts during meditation it means you are doing something wrong.
 - a) T
 - b) F
7. The different types of stress are:
 - a) Acute
 - b) Episodic
 - c) Chronic
 - d) All of the above

8. Certain kinds of stress are good for you.

- a) T
- b) F

9. The three R's of stress reduction are:

- a) Relax
- b) Relate
- c) Reflect
- d) Remove
- e) All of the above

10. Meditation enables us to move from higher frequency brain waves to lower frequency brain waves.

- a) T
- b) F

11. Which category of brain wave is the one where meditation begins?

- a) Delta
- b) Alpha
- c) Gamma
- d) Beta
- e) Theta

12. Our focus in meditation is on:

- a) Thoughts
- b) All the list of things I forgot to do before I started meditating
- c) Breath
- d) The argument I had with my co-worker
- e) Visualization

13. It is okay to meditate with your eyes open.

- a) T
- b) F

14. It is okay to meditate slumped in your chair.

- a) T
- b) F

15. You should always come out of meditation as quickly as possible.

- a) T
- b) F

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About the Author

Gail Parker, Ph.D., C-IAYT, E-RYT 500, holds a doctorate in counseling psychology from Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. She is a faculty member in the Beaumont School of Yoga Therapy in the department of Integrative Medicine at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Michigan, where she teaches aspiring yoga therapists mind/body strategies for stress reduction and for managing emotional trauma. Her broad expertise in behavioral health and wellness includes forty years as a practicing psychologist. Dr. Parker is a life long meditator and practitioner of yoga and is well known for her pioneering efforts to utilize and blend psychology, yoga, and meditation as effective self-care strategies that can enhance emotional balance, and contribute to overall health and well being. She has a special interest in utilizing and teaching Restorative Yoga and meditation as self-care practices for addressing ethnic and race based traumatic stress.

Dr. Parker was a faculty member in the ground breaking Co-Curricular Yoga Therapy Program at Wayne State University School of Medicine, teaching Yoga Therapy to first and second year medical students as part of their academic curriculum from 2012-2014. She was an adjunct faculty member from 1994-2004 in the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, teaching Effective Managerial Coaching and Counseling to executives where she was also an Executive Coach customizing and conducting leadership development programs through the Department of Executive Education.

Dr. Parker has appeared as a psychologist expert on local and nationally syndicated talk shows, including 7 appearances on the *Oprah Show*, and she was featured as a health and wellness expert on the benefits of yoga and meditation, in a nationally syndicated PBS health talk show series called *Feel Grand*, hosted by Emmy Award winning actress, Jane Seymour.

In 2006 Dr. Parker appeared in the inaugural edition and three subsequent editions of *Who's Who in Black Detroit*, a publication celebrating African American achievements. In 2011 she was honored by the Michigan Chronicle as a *Woman of Excellence* and is featured in volume one of *Vital Signs*, a Real Times Media tribute to African American achievements in the health care industry. She serves on the Michigan Department of Civil Rights Race4Equity task force, whose mission is to address and eliminate health care disparities in Southeast Michigan.

She authors a blog called Taking Yoga Off Your Mat™, offering tools for applying what you learn about yourself through the practice of yoga to enhance your life.

She is married and the mother of one son.

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