

Meditation

For people who don't like meditating



by Stephanie Slawek



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What this presentation is:

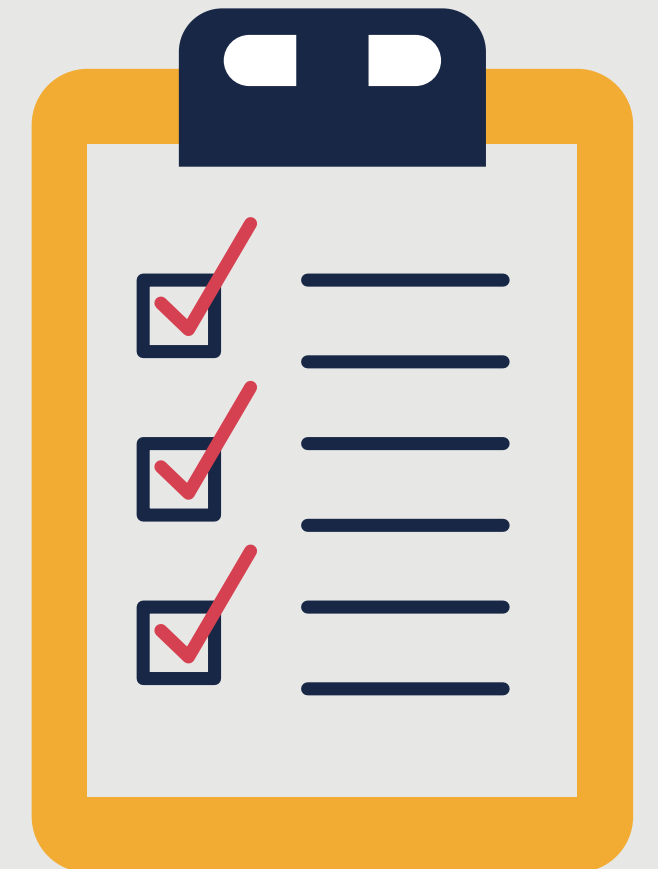
- a summary of current information and research
- my experience from almost 20 years of teaching yoga and meditation
- educational and experiential

What this presentation is not:

- medical advice
- a replacement for a one-on-one relationship with a qualified healthcare provider

Today we'll talk about:

- **The REAL reasons people don't like to meditate**
- **What is meditation, anyway?**
- **Why should YOU do it?**
- **The Easiest Meditation Technique, Ever**



Why do people resist/not like meditation?

- **It's boring**
- **Uncomfortable**
- **Can't sit still**
- **Can't quiet the mind**
- **Don't have time**



The REAL reasons people don't like to meditate (according to me):

1. They don't really understand what meditation is
2. They don't have a strong enough motivation to do it
3. They don't have a simple framework to make it work for them

What is Meditation?

From Merriam-Webster.com:

Meditate

intransitive verb

1 : to engage in contemplation or reflection

He meditated long and hard before announcing his decision.

2 : to engage in mental exercise (such as concentration on one's breathing or repetition of a mantra) for the purpose of reaching a heightened level of spiritual awareness

transitive verb

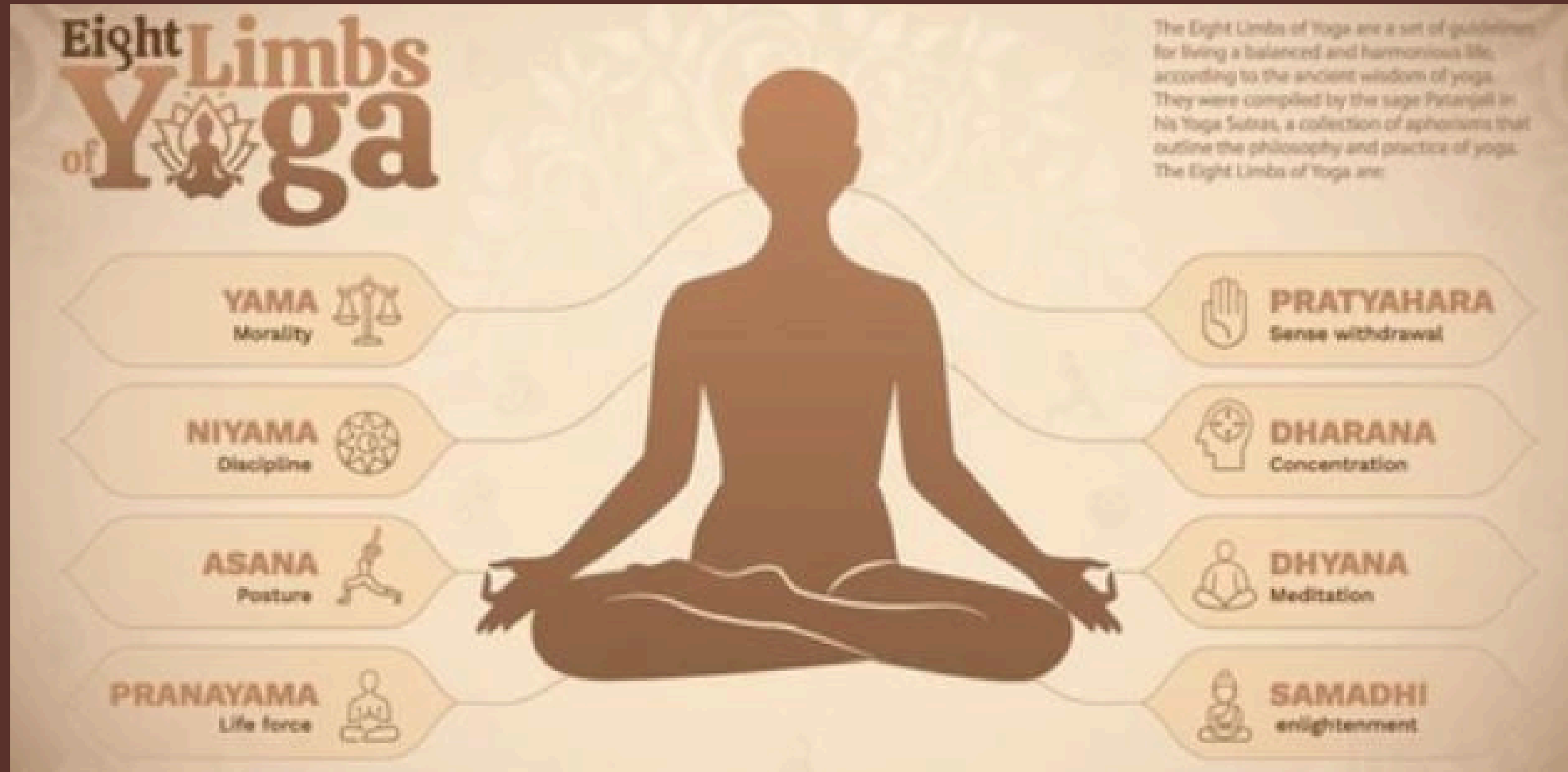
1 : to focus one's thoughts on : reflect on or ponder over

He was meditating his past achievements.

2 : to plan or project in the mind : intend, purpose

He was meditating revenge.

Dharana & Dhyana



Dharana = Concentration



Dhyana = Flow

The Science of Meditation



Why Meditate?

1. To decrease cortisol, strengthen the PNS and gain control over the body's stress response
2. To create positive changes in the brain



**But the more important question is, why do
YOU want to meditate?**

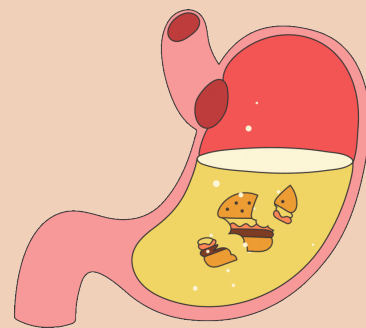
Regulation of the Autonomic Nervous System

Oo

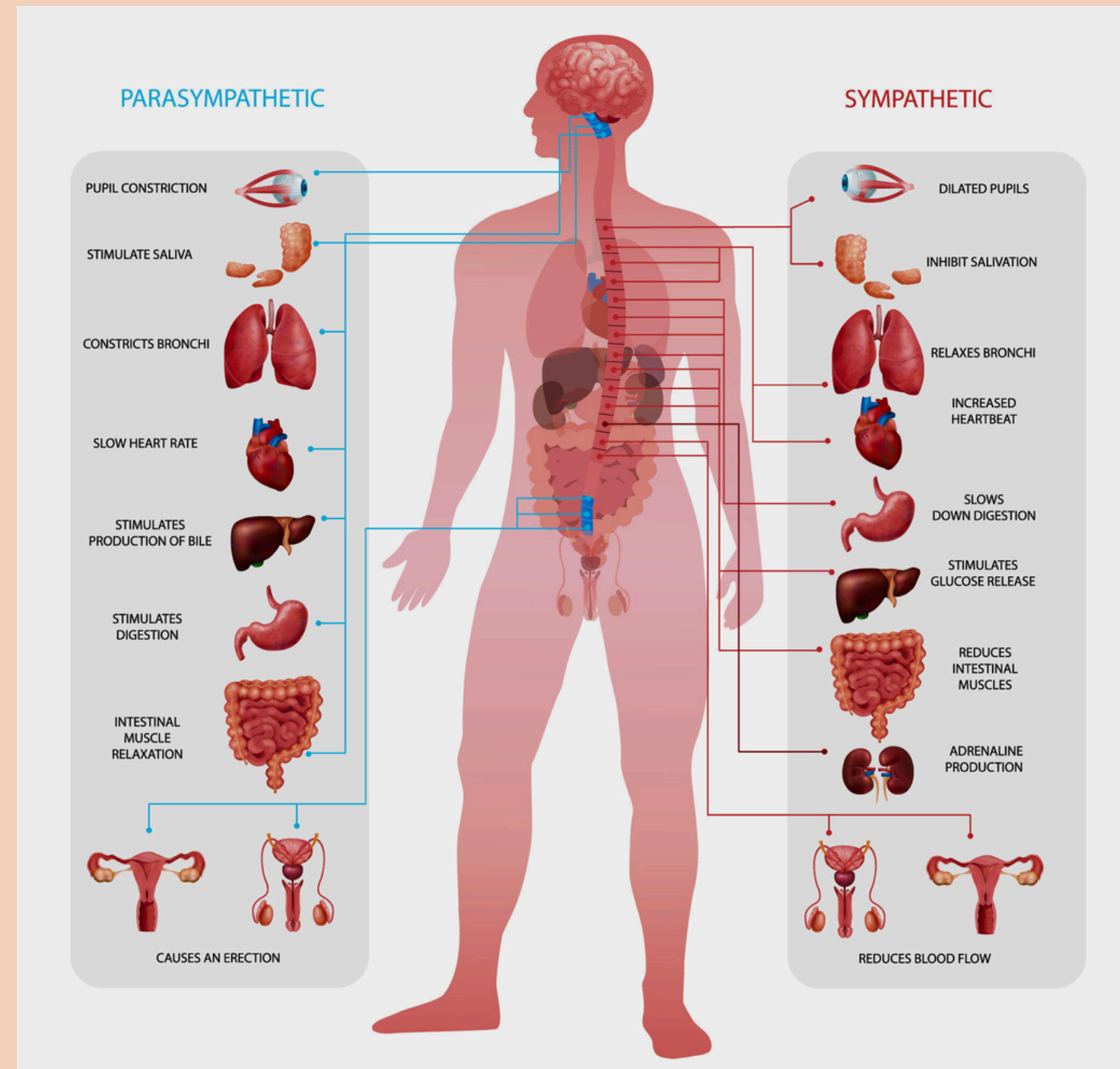


Rest

and



Digest



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Fight



or

Flight

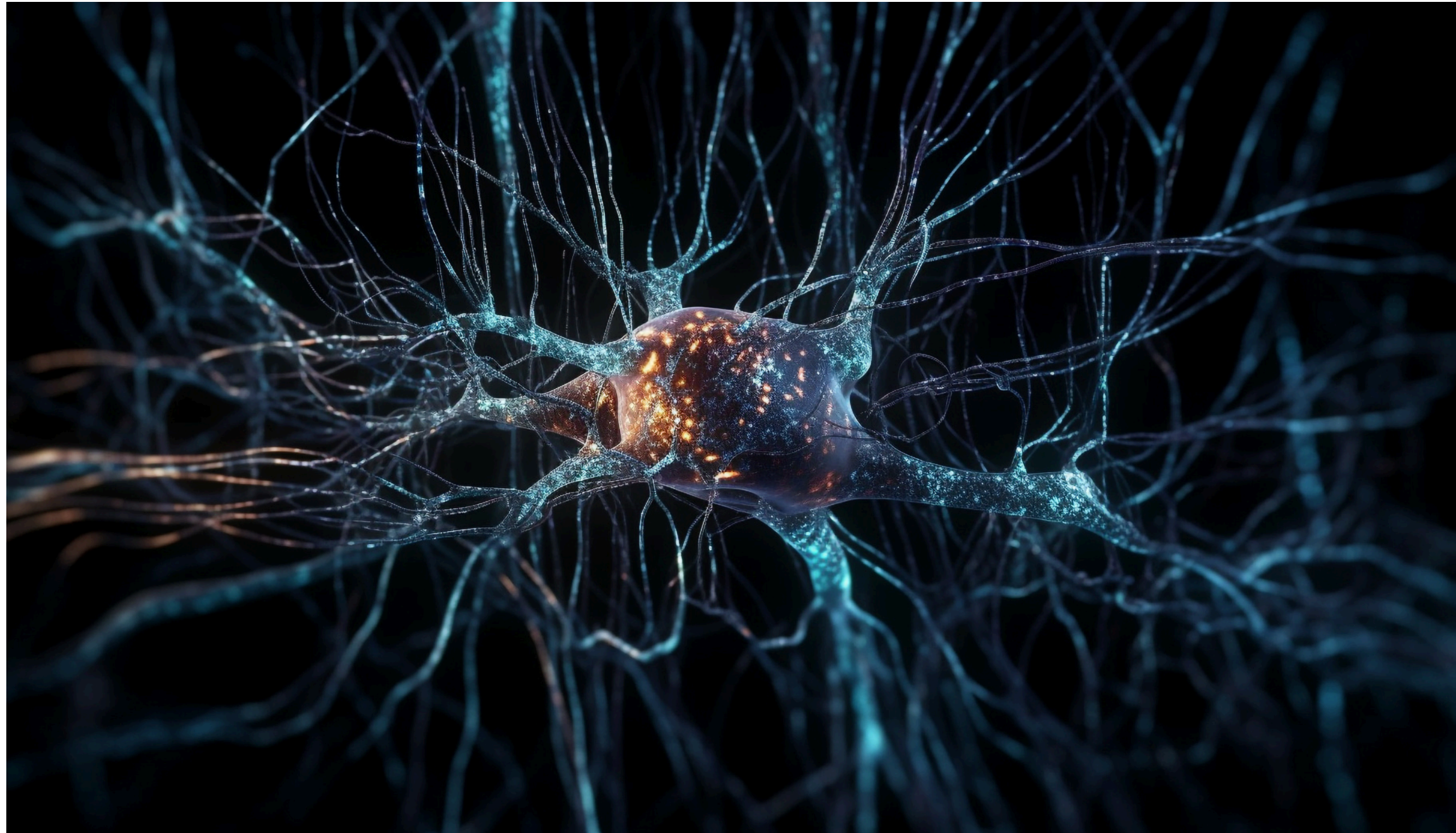


Effects of Stress:



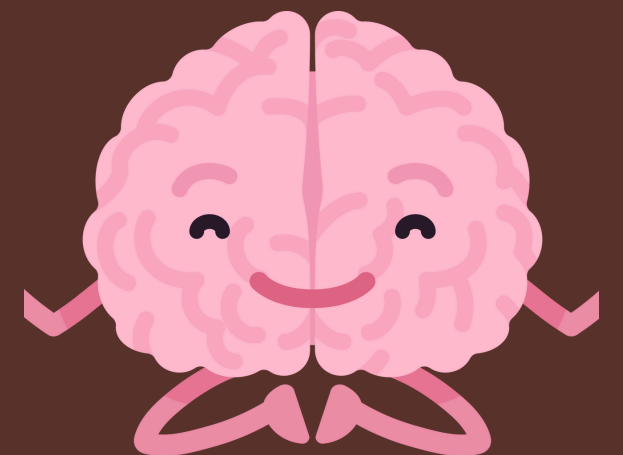
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Muscle tension/pain
- Chest pain
- Lower sex drive
- Sleep problems
- Digestive problems
- Grumpiness/irritability
- Lack of motivation
- Restlessness
- Weaker immune system
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Decreased willpower
- Brain degeneration

Meditation And Neuroplasticity



Meditation Can Positively Change the Brain's:

- **Structure** : increases the thickness of the cortex
- **Function**: improves cognitive functions
- **Chemistry**: shrinks the amygdala/reduces fight-or-flight response
- **Health** : reduces age-related brain degeneration

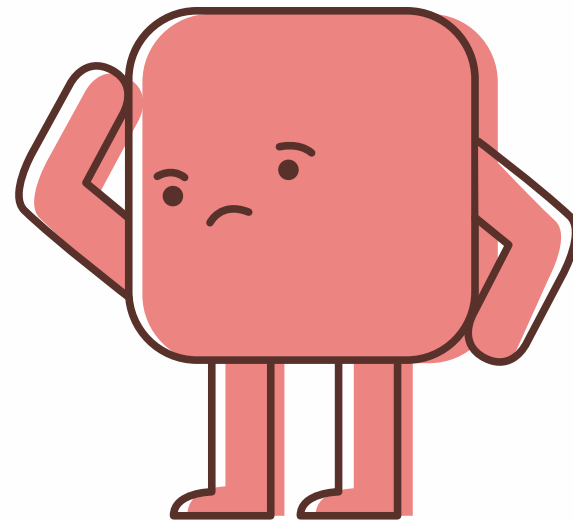


Conditions That Benefit From Meditation

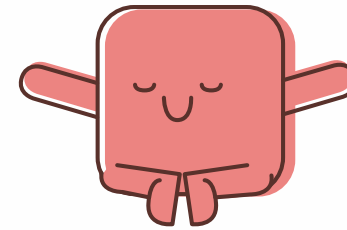


- angina pectoris
- cardiac arrhythmias
- allergic skin reactions
- anxiety
- mild and moderate depression
- bronchial asthma
- herpes simplex (cold sores)
- cough
- constipation
- diabetes mellitus
- duodenal ulcers
- dizziness
- fatigue
- hypertension
- infertility
- insomnia
- nausea and vomiting during pregnancy
- nervousness
- all forms of pain
- postoperative swelling
- PMS
- rheumatoid arthritis
- sexual dysfunction
- side effects of cancer

How would meditation help YOU?



The Relaxation Response



- Coined by Herbert Benson, M.D.
- Studied TM practitioners to gauge effects of meditation on blood pressure

Elements of the Relaxation Response:

1. **A quiet environment**
2. **A mental device**
3. **A passive attitude**
4. **A comfortable position**



Keep It Simple, Sweetheart!

XOXO

**Benson found that it actually only takes two things to
elicit the relaxation response:**

1. A mental device
2. A passive attitude

The Easiest Meditation Technique Ever



- Find a word or phrase that you find soothing or uplifting
- On each exhale, repeat that word or phrase
- Do it as long as you feel like it

DONE!

LET'S PRACTICE!

Final Thoughts: Developing a Practice

- Use an alarm
- Ways/times to meditate:
 - moving
 - driving
 - waiting in line
- Make it a Tiny Habit!
 - <https://tinyhabits.com/join/>

References

1. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC2724877/#S1>
2. <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0002576>
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4. 'How I rewired my brain in six weeks' - BBC News
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6. Satchidananda, S., & Patañjali. (2012). The yoga sūtras of Patañjali. Integral Yoga Publications.



Thank You!