

# Meditation

For people who don't like meditating



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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

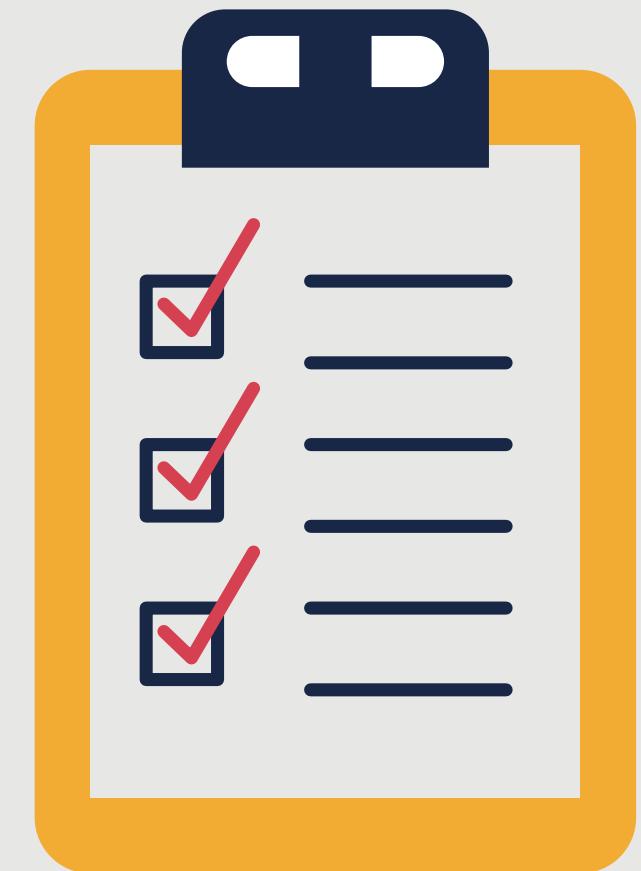
**What this presentation is not:**



- 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**

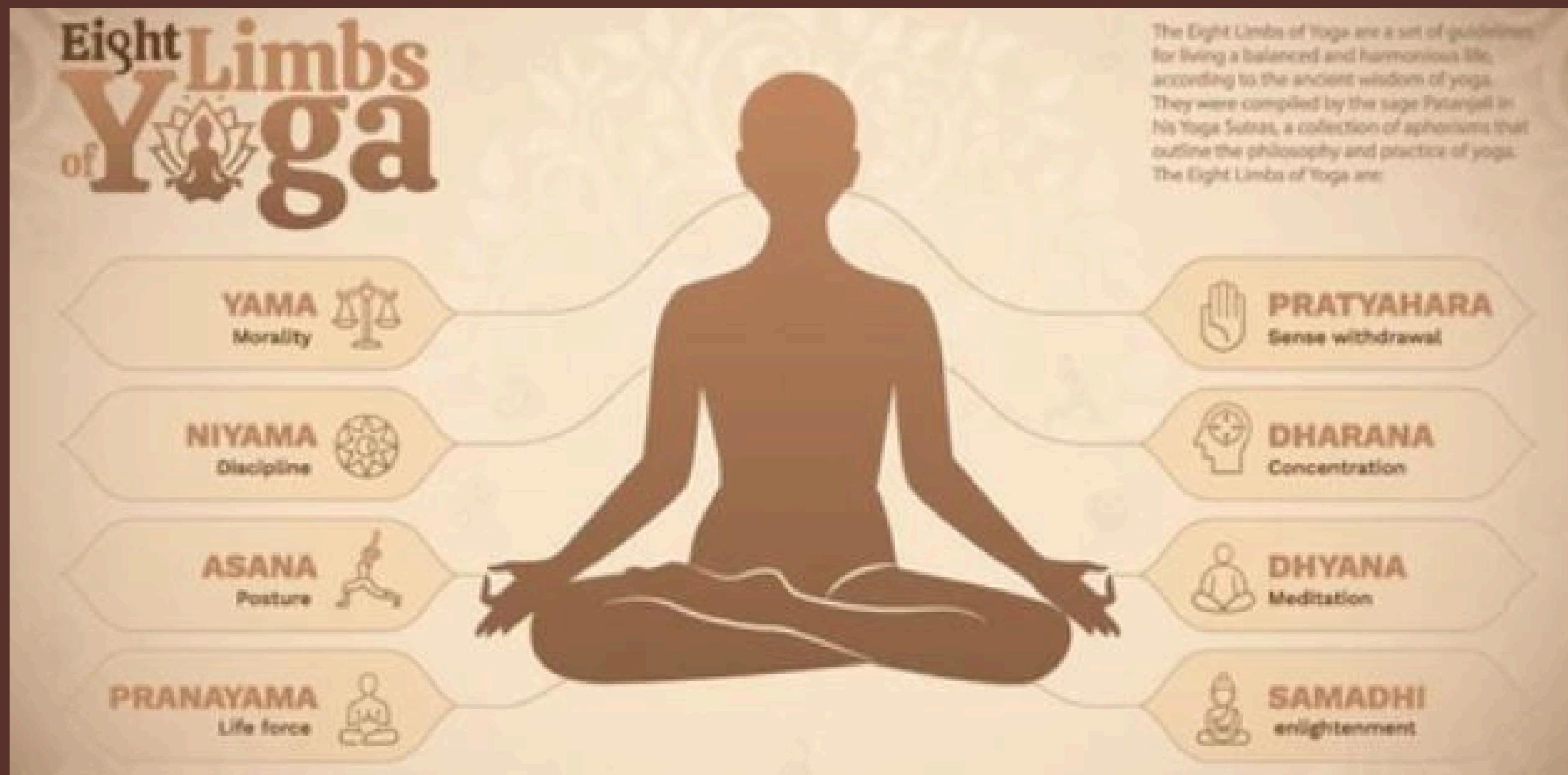
**1 : to focus one's thoughts on : reflect on or ponder over**

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?

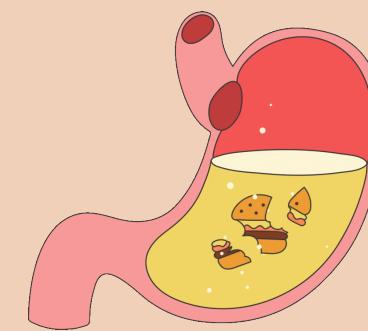
# Regulation of the Autonomic Nervous System

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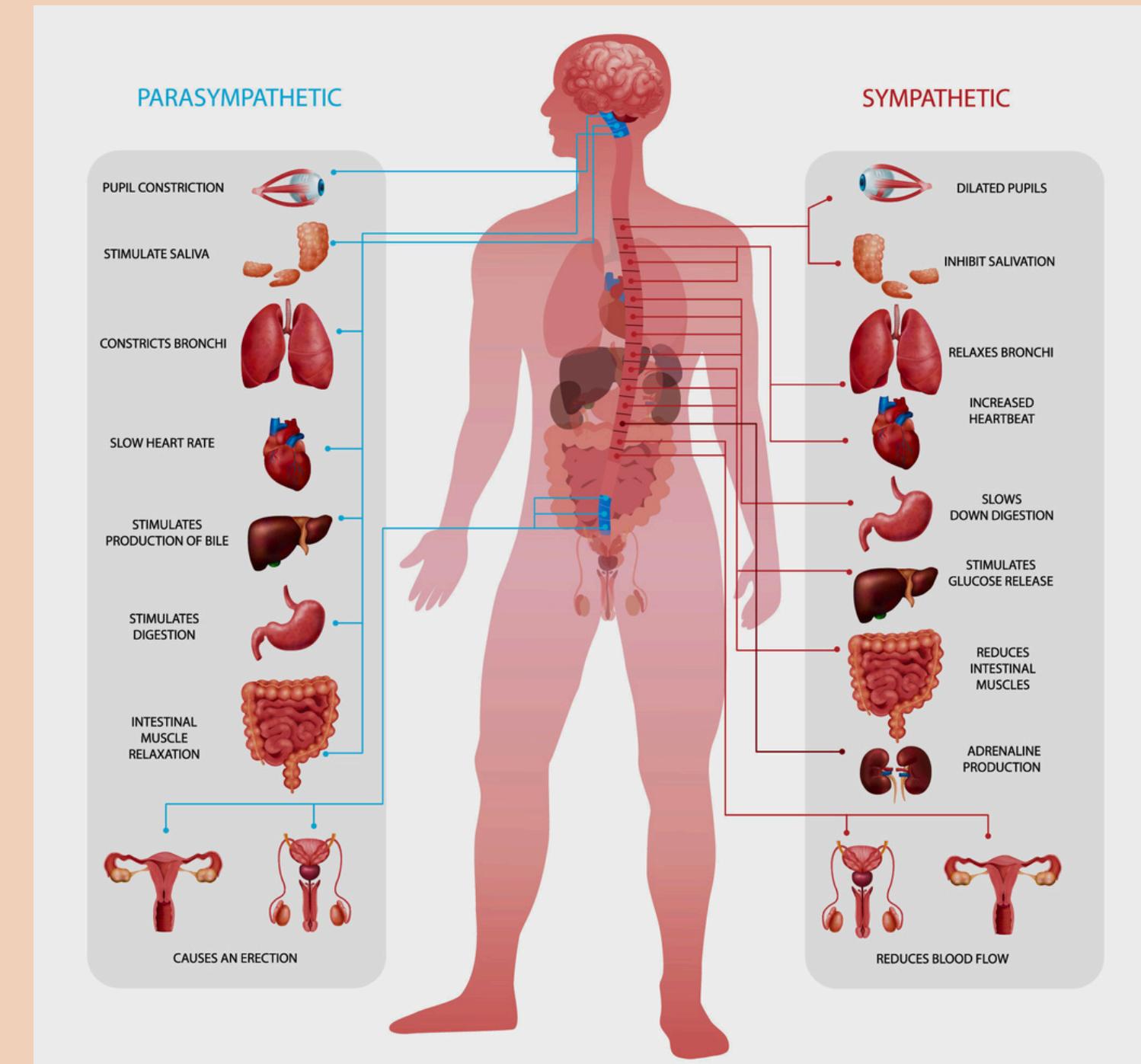


Rest

and



Digest



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Fight

or

Flight

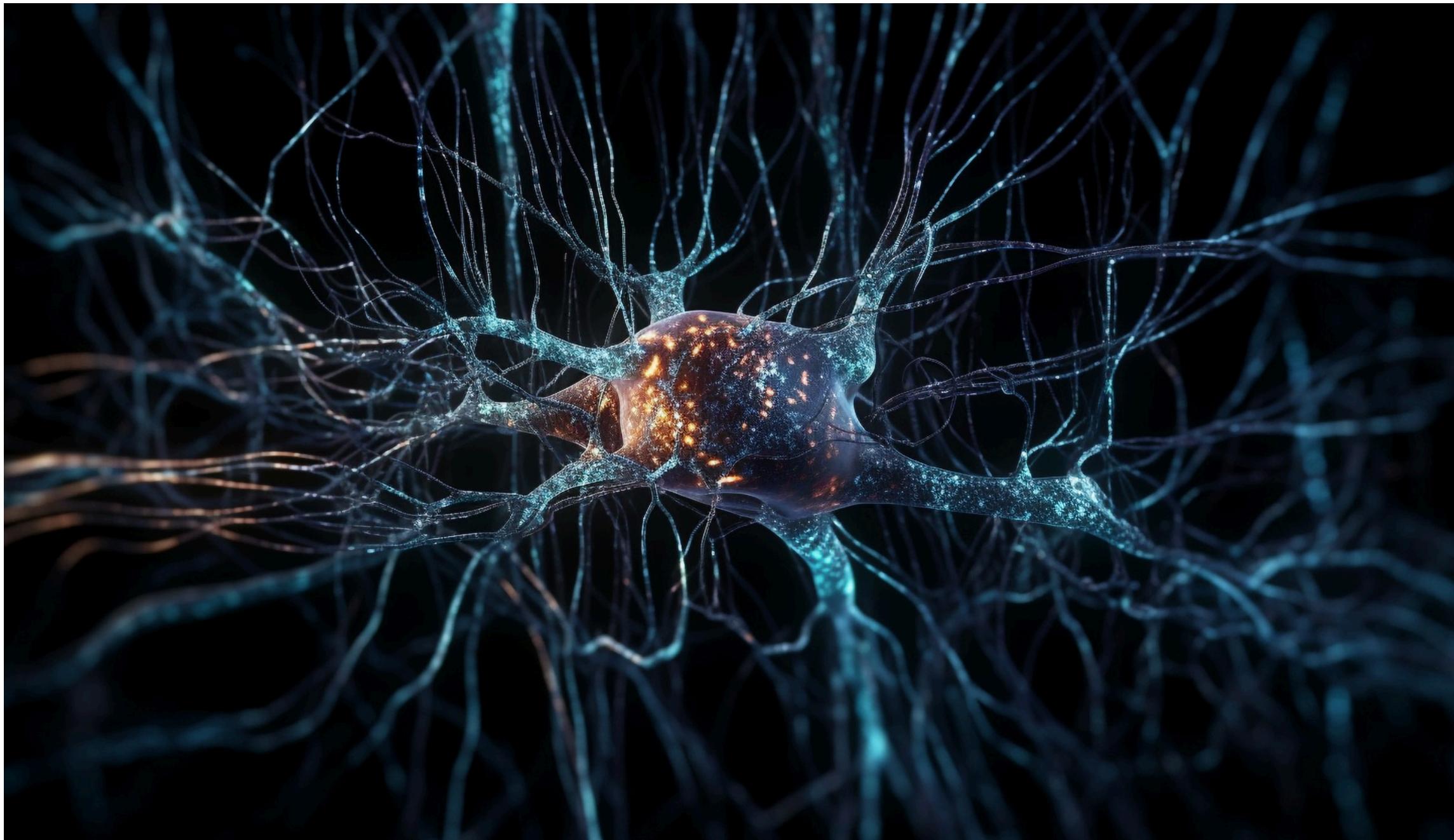


# Effects of Stress:



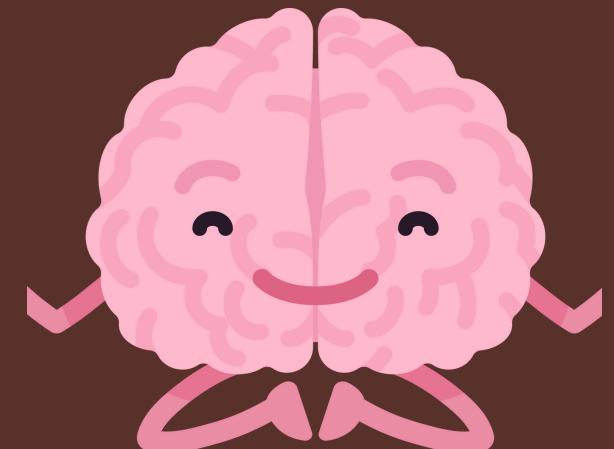
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Muscle tension/pain
- Chest pain
- Lower sex drive
- Sleep problems
- Digestive problems
- Grumpiness/irritability
- Lack of motivation
- Restlessness
- Weaker immune system
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Decreased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

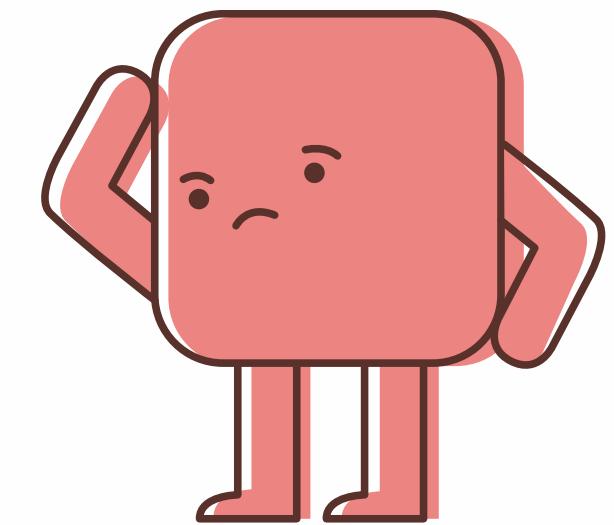


# Conditions That Benefit From Meditation

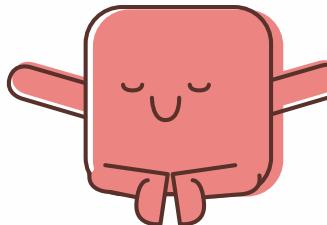
- angina pectoris
- cardiac arrhythmias
- allergic skin reactions
- anxiety
- mild and moderate depression
- bronchial asthma
- herpes simplex (cold sores)
- cough
- constipation
- diabetes mellitus
- duodenal ulcers
- dizziness
- fatigue
- hypertension
- infertility
- insomnia
- nausea and vomiting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



# How would meditation help YOU?



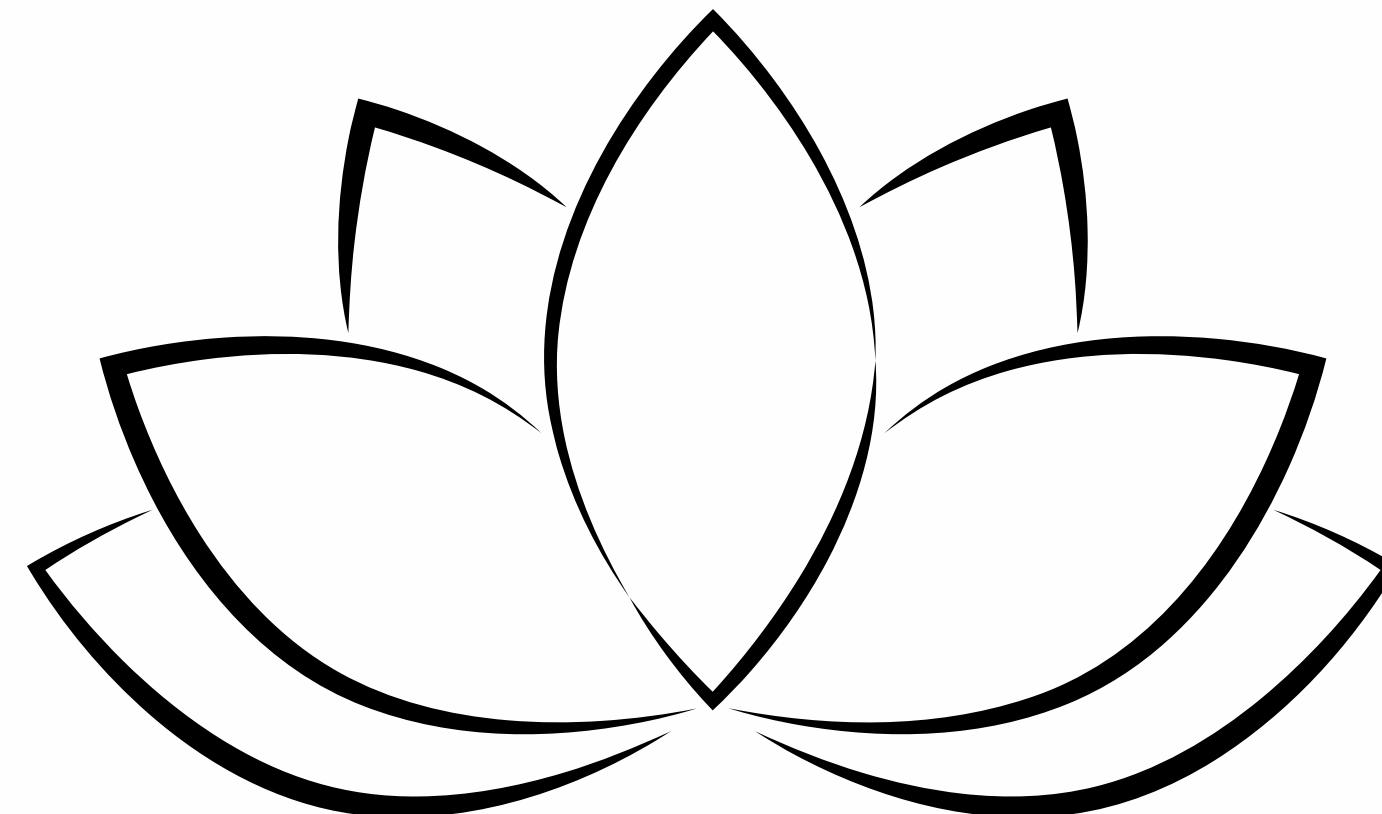
# The Relaxation Response



- 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://PMC2724877/#S1>
2. <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0002576>
3. <https://PMC3341916/#:~:text=The%20Centre%20for%20Disease%20Control%20and%20Prevention,primary%20care%20physicians%20are%20for%20stress%2Drelated%20complaints.>
4. ['How I rewired my brain in six weeks' - BBC News](#)
5. [Benson, H., & Klipper, M. Z. \(1975\). \*The relaxation response\*. New York, Avon.](#)
6. Satchidananda, S., & Patañjali. (2012). The yoga sūtras of Patañjali. Integral Yoga Publications.



Thank You!

