



Scientific Research has Proven the Value of a Regular Meditation Practice

Neuroscientist Sara Lazar of Mass General Hospital and Harvard Medical School found that people who practiced meditation for an average of 27 minutes a day had more gray matter in the part of the brain linked to decision-making and working memory: the frontal cortex. While most people see their cortexes shrink as they age, 50-year-old meditators in the study had the same amount of gray matter as those half their age.

In a 2012 study, researchers compared brain images from 50 adults who meditate and 50 adults who don't meditate. Results suggested that people who practiced meditation for many years have more folds in the outer layer of the brain. This process (called gyrification) may increase the brain's ability to process information.

A 2013 review of three studies suggests that meditation may slow, stall, or even reverse changes that take place in the brain due to normal aging.

Results from a 2012 NCCIH-funded study suggest that meditation can affect activity in the amygdala (a part of the brain involved in processing emotions), and that different types of meditation can affect the amygdala differently even when the person is not meditating.

According to research done by psychologists Matthew A. Killingsworth and Daniel T. Gilbert of Harvard University, people spend 46.9 percent of their waking hours thinking about something other than what they're doing, and this mind-wandering typically makes them unhappy. An unhappy employee is a disengaged and less productive employee.

Meditation can help regulate the sympathetic nervous system, down-regulating the release of cortisol and adrenaline and the activation of the fight or flight response. By activating the parasympathetic nervous system, meditation can slow down heart rate, breathing rate, blood pressure and sweating and drastically reduce anxiety, tension, fatigue and depression.