

Sahaja Yoga Meditation

The enduring legacy of Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi

For well over 30 years, from the early 1970s to the 2000s, Shri Mataji traveled voluntarily and tirelessly, at a pace that very few could follow, to establish the foundations of a global movement now present in 95 countries. Sahaja Yoga, the meditation and self-development method evolved by Shri Mataji, is an unprecedented innovation in the realm of spirituality. Its practitioners come from all age groups, nationalities, and cultural and religious backgrounds.

Though it has been confused with other new age techniques, Sahaja Yoga has several distinguishing features:

- The experience of self-realization, which is the starting point of the practice, has been referred to in numerous spiritual traditions and occurs effortlessly as part of a meditative process. The method developed by Shri Mataji makes this once complex and elusive process accessible to everyone.
- The experience of self-realization can be perceived tangibly by practitioners. It is not the result of a mental construct or an adherence to a system of beliefs. It is a living and soothing actualization, which leads to a state of heightened awareness.
- The practice is available to all and can be repeated and shared. The state of meditation known as thoughtless awareness is a state of consciousness scientifically proven to improve overall wellbeing by stimulating the natural healing capacity of the autonomous nervous system. The practitioner learns how to direct the flow of energy to increase or restore equilibrium and inner peace.
- The practice is highly adaptable and responsive to the needs of each individual. Within a matter of weeks, a person can learn the technique and improve the condition of his or her inner energy centres. This happens at the individual's chosen pace and rhythm.
- Sahaja Yoga is taught free of charge around the world. It is the birthright of all and as such can not be paid for, nor can the value of the experience – which is an evolutionary breakthrough in individual consciousness – be monetized.
- Sahaja Yoga meditation differs from other forms of relaxation and meditation in that it has verifiable therapeutic effects. It has been successfully used in the treatment of high blood pressure, asthma, ADHD, and menopause-related disorders.

BACKGROUND

- Sahaja Yoga meditation, from the words *sahaj* meaning in-born and spontaneous and *yoga* meaning union, was founded by H.H. Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi in the early 1970s.
- Practiced initially by a handful of people in India and England, Sahaja Yoga gradually spread and is now established in over 95 countries, where meditation programs are offered on a regular basis.
- Founded on the premise that achieving a higher state of awareness through self-realization is everyone's birthright, Sahaja Yoga is always taught free of charge and run by volunteers.
- Practitioners of Sahaja Yoga meditation come from all walks of life, with diverse socio-economic, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds.

OBJECTIVES OF SAHAJA YOGA MEDITATION

- It is founded on the belief that the path to peace and harmony in the world begins with each individual actualizing and establishing a higher and more collective sense of awareness and subtle self-knowledge.
- It provides a simple, practical and free method for people to achieve a lasting state of inner peace, balance and harmony through the transformative experience of self-realization and meditation (defined as a state of profound peace which occurs when the mind is calm, without thoughts, yet completely alert).
- It helps practitioners enhance their overall wellbeing and reduce illness and addiction.
- It empowers individuals to become a source and force for balanced integration in their homes, workplace and communities.
- It provides practical and effective methods for reducing stress and anger, and for overcoming emotional problems such as depression and lack of self-esteem.
- It breaks down cultural and racial barriers, creating networks for crosscultural connections in the social and artistic spheres.
- It encourages respect for the Earth through increased awareness of one's self and the environment.

BENEFITS OF SAHAJA YOGA MEDITATION

Physical, mental and emotional improvements are the most obvious manifestations of the practice of Sahaja Yoga meditation.

In the area of stress relief, the practice of Sahaja Yoga meditation:

- Raises the individual's tolerance level of difficult situations and enables him or her to find natural solutions to alleviate stress.
- Enhances clear-headedness and balance.
- Neutralizes the effects of aggression, frustration and anger, both externally and internally
- Improves sleep patterns
- Neutralizes addictions
- Removes cravings and need for support that are the hallmarks of long-term addictive habits
- Improves communication skills, leading to enriched relationships in all areas
- Improves concentration and focus which improves study and workplace skills
- Provides all-round enhancement of self-esteem, self-confidence and inner security
- Overcomes divisive patterns which can lead to disharmony between individuals, cultures and nations

