

## Meditative Therapies in Clinical Psychology

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### ABSTRACT

Meditation has born in India (East) and ‘Therapies’ have been developed in the West. Meditation can help a person to come out of depression, anxiety and sufferings.

‘**Meditation (Dhyana)** is a multidimensional state of awareness where not a single iota of thought exists.’ For being in a state of meditation a person has to purify his or her body, thought and emotion; and become aware of his body, thought and emotion ,then one can be in a state of witnessing (sakshi) which is a core feature of meditation.

The present day individual is so much suppressed, repressed and perverted that without passing through therapies ‘which do cleaning’, it is difficult to be in a state of meditation.

**Osho** has developed ‘Meditative Therapies’ for purification of body, thought and emotion of the participants, so that they should become ready to be in a state of meditation. These therapies dissolve tensions of the participants. Participants are also able to cathart out all the repressed emotions. These therapies are easy and are very useful, interaction among the meditators are very less. The energy which is created during therapy session, help them to go very deep in meditation. These therapies are: ‘**The Mystic Rose Therapy**’, ‘**No-mind Therapy**’, ‘**Born Again Therapy**’, ‘**Dynamic Meditation**’ etc.

These meditative therapies have been used to treat many patients suffering from psychogenic headache, anxiety, depression, psychosexual dysfunctions and OCD etc.

**Keywords:** Meditation, Mystic Rose Therapy, No-mind Therapy, Born Again Therapy, Dynamic Meditation.

### INTRODUCTION

Meditation and its practices innate in India (East); have today been theorised and used as process of therapy in the West and has been found efficacious in treating conditions such as depression, anxiety, OCD and several other neurotic and stress induced conditions (Clifford and Wiser, 1984; McGee,2008; Smith,1975; Simpson et al,2007 Singh et al,2007). Meditation helps to improve the general sense of wellbeing and blissfulness in individuals by growing multidimensional awareness (sakshi); enhancing and rejuvenating; great silence, peace, sensitivity, compassion, love and intelligence.

During state of meditation, which is a multidimensional state of awareness, not a single iota of thought exists. Meditation is the science of being in the **present**, no past no future, no memory no imagination, being **here and now**. It is a state of beyond time and space. During Meditation three processes happen simultaneously – **thoughtlessness**, **egolessness (Anhankar shunyata)** and **timelessness**. It is a peaceful and blissful state. Meditation is not concentration. Meditation and concentration are diagrammatically opposite. In concentration the mind is focused on a point whereas in meditation multidimensional awareness remains. Concentration creates tension, whereas meditation is a state of complete relaxation. A person cannot be for twenty-four hours in concentration but he can be so in the state of meditation. Concentration is a mental phenomenon but meditation is a beyond mind state, a no-mind state. The mind works in such a contradictory way, it has such contradictory demands that it is bound to bring pain and misery. The mind divides the things. The mind can look at anything by dividing it. The mind is not

capable of having a global look, it is against its nature; analysis is its way. To understand an object, it is the best procedure, but not of understanding human being. For understanding human being synthesis is the way. If we want to make human being blissful, it is not possible until and unless he goes beyond his mind. Meditation transcends duality. As expressed by Osho; ‘no part of concentration should be in your watchfulness (witnessing), be watchful inclusive of all. Don’t exclude anything’ (Osho,1987; 1989).

For modern man and particularly mental patients, it is difficult to go directly into the state of meditation. A lot of suppressions, repressions and perversions are there. Until and unless he becomes free of all those rubbishes, it is difficult to be in the state of meditation.

That is why for being in a state of meditation a person has to **purify his body, thoughts and emotions; and become aware of his body, thoughts and emotion. Then witnessing (sakshi) happens. Witnessing (sakshi) is a core feature of meditation** (Osho, 1988). For purification of body a person has to cathart out all the blocks and not to allow new blocks by using them in creativity. Asana and pranayam and doing some creative work just for his happiness are for creative use of new blocks. A balance diet which does not bring excitation, lethargies and drunkenness; optimum exercise and optimum rest are essential for body purification. Pure thoughts bring one closer and more in understanding of oneself; one’s energy leading to sublimation and upward movement; expressing feelings of being relaxed and blissful. On other hand an impure thought creates anxiety, sadness, anger, remorse. Kamanayein (desires), wealth and fame are centres of impure thought; whereas the exploration of **truth** within

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self, appreciation of **the good** (shubh) and **beauty** of very existence of the universe are centres of pure thought. **By being close to nature and listening the sayings of awakened ones thoughts are purified.** For purification of emotion, one has **to grow friendliness, compassion, blissfulness and being obliged to existence for whatsoever one has** (Osho, 1980).

Fritz Pearl has said, “Anxiety is a gap between now and later. Remove the later and anxiety collapse” (Pearls, 1970). But how to remove the later? The method is meditation. Dreaming goes on in the mind because of desires and desires can have a repetitive force upon the mind only when a person is not aware. So, the more asleep a person is the more repetitive and mechanical his thoughts are. Awareness brings a state of desirelessness, thoughtlessness (Osho, 2010).

Osho developed a new series of “meditative therapies” during eighteen months before leaving his body. He developed these ‘Meditative Therapies’ for preparing the background among participants for meditation. As ancient methods of meditation did not consider the modern man, Osho has developed meditation methods for every modern man.

These meditative therapies are powerful enough to dissolve the tensions and repressed emotions of the meditators that don’t allow them to be able to sit silently. After passing through these therapies, they become silent and easily observe their thoughts. These therapies are easy and work very effectively. These therapies need less interactions among the meditators. Each meditator goes deeper in meditation with the help of the energy of the group. ‘**The Mystic Rose Therapy**’ (Osho, 1989), ‘**No-mind Therapy**’, ‘**Born Again Therapy**’ (Osho, 1989) are the main meditative therapies. Some other meditation methods which were developed by Osho in early seventies are also therapeutic: ‘**Dynamic Meditation**’ (Osho, 1988), **Nataraj meditation** (Osho, 1988). These meditative therapies have been used to treat many patients suffering from psychogenic headache (Krishnanand, 2011), anxiety, depression, psychosexual dysfunctions, OCD, non-cardiac chest pain (Krishnanand, 1999), functional aphonia (Choudhary K, 1992; 1996), claustrophobia (Krishnanand, 2013) and other stress induced conditions.

**Mystic Rose Meditative Therapy:** - “The symbol of the mystic rose is that if a man takes care of the seed he is born with; gives it the right soil, gives it the right atmosphere and the right vibrations, moves on a right path where the seed can start growing, then the ultimate growth is symbolized as the **mystic rose**—when your being blossoms and opens all its petals and releases its beautiful fragrance” (Osho,1988).

The mystic rose meditative therapy has three stages and takes 21 days: 1) **Laughing** stage 2) **Crying** stage. 3) **Witnessing** (watchfulness) stage.

1) **Laughing** stage: For seven days, meditators gather everyday at one place and laugh for three hours without any reason. Generally, they keep their eyes closed. However, some eye contact with their friends is useful to accelerate laughter. Person can let their body roll about in a

light, playful way, like a child. “Yaa-hoo” is a symbol which provokes hidden laughter.

At the end of the laughter stage, they sit silently, perfectly still, with eyes closed for a few minutes. By keeping their body relaxed they allow it to fall spontaneously. Digging for three hours for seven days one may find many layers of dust gathered on ones being. In seven days, much transformation comes to ones being. Laughter is an overflowing energy.

Osho says, “Laughter is a mystery. Laughter is the only ordinary experience when you are no longer a mind; it gives you glimpses of no-mind, meditation, of a transcendence of mind and time” (Osho,1988;1989).

“When one is laughing totally, a person releases energy which society does not allow him to release, ego (ahankar) disappears, the person starts functioning from heart centre, person may go even more deeper and touch the very centre of ones being; individual ego melt into existential (cosmic) ego. The person vibrates in one single tune and in harmony. It brings relaxation and great pleasure.” (Osho, 1987, 1993, 1997; Rajneesh, 1987).

2) **Crying** stage: For seven days, three hours everyday people begin by saying “**Yaa - Boo**” softly a few times, then just allow themselves to cry. The room should be slightly darkened to help to move into their sadness. One should close the eyes and move deeply into all the feelings that make one cry. One can sit or lie down. The person is told to cry really deeply, cleansing and unburdening the heart; feel that the dam of all your pent-up hurts and sufferings is breaking open – let the tears flood out. If a person feels sleepy or block, he is told to rock his body back and forth a little, or say “**yaa-boo**” again a few times. The person is told not to prevent tears. At the end sit perfectly still for a few minutes and then move into let-go

“Crying cleans the whole being of the individual. Crying allows to express all the repressed emotions. Thus, it is a natural safety valve (Osho, 1977)”. Tears is overflow of our emotions and has three dimensions: -a) that of **pain**, suffering, sadness. **B)** That of too happy, **too blissful.**3) A third dimension which is very rare, very few people have come to know it is **of innocence**. A person feels so overflowing innocent and fresh that tears come out of gratitude; just the feeling of so much grace towards the whole existence” (Osho,1987).

3) **Witnessing** stage: For the third week, a person has to sit in silence for whatever period of time he feels comfortable, and then dance to light and heartfelt music. A meditator may sit on a chair if he feels comfortable but his backbone should be straight, he keeps his eyes closed and breathing natural. The person is told to relax, be aware, and witnessing.

Osho (1988) used a term “**Become like a watcher on the hills, just witnessing whatever passes by**”.

The meditator is instructed to remain aloof (without identifying) with whatever going on and non-judgemental. Then some gentle music is played and they dance, allow the body to find its own movements, and continue watching, with an understanding and awareness of not getting lost in the music.

During all the three stages of the mystic rose meditative therapy, participants of group are told not to talk to each other entirely.

In a study, the experimenters made two groups of the participants. One group passed through “the Mystic Rose meditative therapy”. Their depression reduced significantly. Their quality of life also improved to a significant level. These improvements were not found in non-intervention group. (Sharma and Suri, 2014).

**The NO-Mind Meditative Therapy:** Osho (1988) says, “No-mind means intelligence. Mind means gibberish, and not intelligence, and when I am asking you for gibberish, I am simply asking you to throw mind and all its activity so you remain behind – pure, clean, transparent, and perceptive.”

This therapy is done for two hours every day. It is a seven-day course. It has three stages:

1. Gibberish or Conscious Craziness
2. Witnessing
3. Let- Go

**First Stage: Gibberish or Conscious Craziness** –People are told to say nonsense sounds –gibberish in a standing or sitting position but not to speak any language or use words that he or she knows. The meditator has to be total in throwing out all the rubbish he has accumulated during his life in different situations.

Osho (1989) says, “The mind thinks in terms of words. Gibberish helps to break up this pattern of continuous verbalization”.

There is no need to suppress. Gibberish cleans thoughts. Singing, crying, shouting, screaming, everything is allowed. People are told to allow their body whatever their body wants: jump, lie down, pace, sit, kick without touching others or interfering with them in any way. “**Gibberish is to get rid of active conscious mind**” Osho (1989).

**Second stage: Witnessing:** - people are told to sit absolutely still, silent, relaxed keeping the backbone erect on the floor or on the chair. They are told to remain **aware, being here and now**. They are instructed to gather energy and look inwards. Let the thoughts drift but remain a witness. They are told to watch the thoughts inclusive of everything (not concentration). They are instructed not to say to thoughts- this is good, this is not good, just keeping a distance. “**Silence is to get rid of inactive mind**” Osho (1989).

**Third stage: Let- Go:** - Participants are told to allow their body to fall spontaneously on the ground. They should remain aware and just be a witness. They will automatically come to their own centre of being.” **Let -Go is to enter into the transcendental**” Osho (1989).

No-Mind therapy (non-verbal expressive therapy) has been used for treatment of psychogenic headache (Choudhary, 1994; Krishnanand, 2004), in the treatment of ‘Internet Syndrome’ (Krishnanand, 2005), in the treatment of obsessive compulsive disorder (Choudhary, 2015; Krishnanand, 2012).

**Born Again Meditative Therapy:** Osho (1989) says, “People go on saying that childhood was paradise.

Everyone longs for it, but no one is doing anything for it. ‘Born Again Meditative Therapy’ gives this opportunity to regain it. I want to throw you back to the point where you started being ‘good’ against being natural. Decide that for these days you will be as ignorant as you were when you were born-just a child, a new baby”.

Born Again Meditative Therapy takes two weeks and everyday two hours.

**First Stage:** People are told to behave like a child in this stage.

Osho (1989) gives instruction to participants to “Be playful. Initially it will be difficult because you are so much structured, have strong defences around; put aside seriousness. You may be dancing, singing, jumping, crying, weeping - anything at all, in any posture. Nothing is prohibited except touching other people.”

**Second Stage:** People are told to sit silently, backbone erect, close the eyes, just be a witness to whatsoever is happening, passive watcher-no identification, no judgement.

After this therapy people becomes fresh, more innocent, and meditation becomes easier.

Some other **meditation methods** developed by Osho which are also therapeutic —

**One such meditation is the**

**Dynamic Meditation:** - Osho (1989) says, “Meditation is an energy phenomenon. All types of energy move in a dual polarity. For any energy to become dynamic, the anti-pole is needed. This polarity is very meaningful for meditation because mind is logical (it moves in a line, it chooses one of the opposites) and life is dialectical, life moves with the opposite, it zigzags from negative to positive, it uses the opposite. Dynamic Meditation is a contradiction. Dynamic means effort, much effort, absolute effort and meditation means silence, no effort, no activity. It may be called a dialectical meditation”.

Dynamic meditation has five stages. It takes one hour. The stages one, two and three take 10 minutes each but the fourth and fifth stages take 15 minutes each. Osho developed music for this meditation which continues for one hour. This special music not only guides time to participants but also helps to go deeper in meditation.

**First stage (Breathing):** -People are told to breathe out and breath in as fast as possible but it should be deeper and chaotic. Participants are instructed to keep their body loose and allow natural movements. This stage facilitates the energy to move up.

**Second stage (Catharsis):** - Participants are instructed to express without inhibition anything which comes out- shouting, screaming, dancing, singing, jumping, laughing, crying... If nothing comes out, then choose any of emotion and do acting. Real catharsis will start. One has to go totally mad consciously.

**Third stage(Shouting HOO...HOO):** - Participants are told to keep their body loose, raise both hands up, jump and in jumping position shout ‘Hoo-hoo...’ While shouting

'hoo-hoo... exhaling should be total and very deep. Osho says to be total while jumping and shouting 'hoo-hoo..'. He says, "even 99.9% won't do, you have to use 100% energy." While coming down one should try that his heels touch the ground.

**Fourth stage(STOP):** When stop sound comes, the participant has to stop totally, like a statue, no movement at all. Osho says, "don't take any convenient position, just stop and be a witness to everything going on." Any movement will dissipate energy.

**Fifth stage (Celebration):** - People are told to celebrate; dance with the music and carry aliveness whole day.

In a study on Osho Dynamic Meditation, it was found that Osho Dynamic Meditation is highly effective in decreasing depression, anxiety, thought problems, sleep problems, anger (even at trait level), occupational stress, and burn out and it also increases self-esteem and self-care (Vyas, 2007; Vyas, Locke and Stein, 2012). In other study on Osho Dynamic Meditation, Iqbal, Singh, Aleem and Bano (2014) found that anxiety of the people who participated in 21 days' meditation programme has reduced significantly. Iqbal, Singh and Aleem (2015) found in another study on Osho Dynamic Meditation that it reduces significantly the mental health problems of the participants.

#### **DANCING AS A MEDITATION**

Osho (1989) says, "Dance totally so that you begin to feel that you are the dance. The division must disappear; then it becomes meditation. If the division is there, then it is a good exercise, healthy, you will feel fresh, your anger, tension, sadness disappears but it is not meditation. Be totally in dance, because division can exist only if you are not total in it."

**NATARAJ MEDITATION:** - It takes one hour and has three stages. Osho developed one-hour duration music for this meditation which helps the participants go deeper within and be a witness.

**First Stage (Dancing):** - Participants are told to dance totally and spontaneously with eyes closed for **40 minutes**, allow the body to move as it likes but remain a witness. Dancing is able to express all negative energy of the participants, brings peace and bliss.

**Second stage (For 15 minutes):** -The participants should lie down. There should be no movement in any part of the body and eyes should remain closed.

**Third stage (For 5 minutes):** - Dancing in this stage is a celebration and expressing thankfulness to existence for this peace and bliss.

Dance on this special music expresses the disturbed negative energy of the participants in rhythmic way and brings relaxation and wellbeing. It helps the person to be a witness (sakshi).

This therapy has been used for treating depression, anxiety neurosis, conversion disorder and psychosomatic illnesses.

Some studies have been done on simple dance therapy which reveals its usefulness for the treatment of depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder etc

(Jeong, Hong, Lee, Park, Kim, and Suh ,2005; Meekume, Karkou and Nelson, 2015; Koch, 2019). Chen (2020) has reviewed the different studies done on dance therapy and has found its effectiveness in treating different disorders.

#### **DISCUSSION**

**Mostly an approach towards treatment or solving a problem is thought the narrowed view of seeing it only where the patient 'is'- so far as his consciousness is concerned.**

To solve an individual's problems or disorders a person (the patient) will have to **grow in relaxed awareness**. As the awareness of a person grows, the cloud of thoughts gathered around disappears and he can see the problems clearly and the problems will gradually disappear. Awareness means whatsoever a person is doing he is conscious of that. For example, if he is eating, he is aware of every step of eating, not that he is thinking something else while eating.

Sufferings are there because of desires which are contradictory and very conflicting and are projection of past experiences on to our future. The individual himself gives energy for the wheel of desires to move. Desirelessness happens if the individual's energy moves into unknown. Desire repeats itself.

The more desires are repeated, the more they become easy, convenient and automatic. While repeating a thing a person need not be aware. So, in unawareness a person keeps on repeating the same desires and related thoughts. The past experiences don't force a person, they only supply the easiest grooves, routine tracks and a person fall victim to convenience. Convenience is the temptation. It is inconvenient and troublesome to create a new track. The more a person is aware, in the fire of awareness old grooves, patterns gradually disappear and the person becomes desireless and goes in a state of thoughtlessness, becomes a witness (sakshi) which is a beyond mind state. In a state of total awareness which is multidimensional, a person is just a witness (sakshi), he lives moment to moment, here and now, in the present; all his sufferings disappear. Studies done on the Osho Meditative therapies by Sharma and Suri (2014), Krishnanand (1994, 2004, 2005, 2012, 2015); Vyas (2007), Vyas et al (2012), Iqbal, Singh, Aleem and Bano (2014), Iqbal, Singh and Aleem (2015) reveal the effectiveness of these therapies for the treatment of different mental disorders. The efficacies revealed by these studies for the treatment of different disorders are just the tip of the iceberg of usefulness of Osho Meditative therapies. Basically, these Meditative therapies are the devices to awake a person from deep slumber. Meditative Therapies developed by Osho destroy old grooves and patterns and help a person to be desireless, thoughtless, here and now, in the present, a witness (sakshi) and all human sufferings gradually disappears.

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