

RELAXATION AND MEDITATION BIBLIOGRAPHY

Benson, H., and Klipper, M.Z. (1976). *The relaxation response*. New York: Avon.

One of the first popular guides to relaxation. Methods are derived from research on advanced yogis and Eastern techniques. Often referred to by other works.

Benson, H., and Proctor, W. (1985). *Beyond the relaxation response*. New York: Berkeley.

Follow-up to the earlier book, with emphasis on the power of belief and mental states in achieving peace of mind.

*Borysenko, J. (2007, revised). *Minding the body, mending the mind*. Da Capo Press.

A director of the Harvard Mind/Body Clinic explains the basics of relaxation, meditation, and "cognitive traps" that keep us stuck in stressful patterns. Clearly and simply written; one of the best guides to stress reduction and personal growth. Particularly helpful for those suffering from chronic pain.

Chodron, P. (2002). *The places that scare you: a guide to fearlessness in difficult times*. Boston: Shambhala.

"So beautifully written that the reading is a pleasure Chodron's voice is gently humorous, always kind, and seemingly infinitely wise."—Los Angeles Times. She is an American Buddhist who has become quite popular due in part to her ability to make Eastern concepts accessible to the Western mind. Her perspective is grounded in the mundane experience of the "normal neurotic" and is resonant with the psychological insights of the Western approach. She has written a number of popular books, including: *When Things Fall Apart*, and *Start Where You Are*.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York: Harper & Row.

Summarizing research over the last 20 years, the author describes the common factors, across cultures, classes, and behaviors, of optimum experiences, wherein all consciousness is focused into an effortless joy, and self-consciousness is forgotten. Not a how-to book, but full of potential for the thoughtful reader.

_____, (1998). *Finding Flow: The psychology of engagement with everyday life*. Basic Book.

The author applies his research and insights to "everyday life."
He has written a number of other books on similar topics.

Goldstein, J. and Kornfield, J. (1987). *Seeking the heart of wisdom: The path of insight meditation*. Boston: Shambhala.

Both psychotherapists and meditation teachers, the authors beautifully and intelligently give practical guidance to insight meditation, as well as an introduction to Buddhist teaching.

Goleman, D. (1988). *The meditative mind: the varieties of meditative experience*. Los Angeles: Tarcher.

Elaborates the fundamentals of the primary Eastern and Western meditative paths (Hindu Bhakti, Jewish Kabala, Christian Hesychasm, Sufism, Transcendental Meditation, Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga, Indian Tantra and Kundalini Yoga, Tibetan Buddhism, Zen, Gurdjieff's Fourth Way, Krishnamurti's Choiceless Awareness). Evaluates these regarding their use of either "insight" or "concentration" techniques, which he explains.

Hanh, T.N. (1976). *The miracle of mindfulness! A manual on meditation*. Boston: Beacon Press.

A simply and beautifully written guide to the Buddhist practice of "insight" meditation, the basis of many relaxation techniques.

*Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990). *Full catastrophe living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness*. New York: Bantam.

"An unusual—and unusually profound—self-help technique manual that teaches the application of ancient meditative techniques to modern living"—Kirkus Reviews. Describes the program of the Stress Reduction Clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center. Extremely well-reviewed. Preface by Thich Nhat Hanh and foreword by Joan Borysenko (see above).

*_____, (1994). *Wherever you go there you are: Mindfulness meditation in everyday life*. New York: Hyperion.

A lucid explanation of meditation for the western mind, and a practical manual for integrating it into daily living.

Mason, L.J. (2001, revised edition). *Guide to stress reduction*. Berkeley: Celestial Arts.

Specifically designed as a personal guide, this approach takes the reader through practice in all forms of relaxation: breathing techniques, progressive relaxation, visualization, meditation, cognitive desensitization, physical exercise, and biofeedback. Includes chapters on nutrition and teaching stress reduction.

*McCullough, C.J., and Mann, R.W. (1985). *Managing your anxiety: regaining control when you feel stressed, helpless, and alone*. Los Angeles: Tarcher.

A comprehensive, self-help program designed for those experiencing chronic anxiety, but valuable to anyone wanting to live a less anxious life. Using behavioral techniques, psychodynamic and cognitive theory, and meditation techniques, this approach helps the reader to understand the development of his/her anxiety, and provides concrete ways to become a calmer, freer person.

Ornstein, R. and Sobel, D. (1989). *Healthy pleasures*. New York: Addison-Wesley.

Debunks many of the current fads of health, and gives realistic interpretations of the actual data available. Also gives realistic advice on physical and mental health, with an emphasis on sensual pleasure. Reassuring, encouraging, and pleasurable to read.

Watts, A. (1951). *The wisdom of insecurity: a message for an age of anxiety*. New York: Pantheon.

A wise and philosophical little book that challenges our strivings for security (which Watts asserts does not exist), and names this clutching for peace as the actual cause of our suffering and self-alienation.

*—Highly recommended.