

MEDITATION

One problem, one solution



SHARONA STILLERMAN

Do you believe that the mountain-high pile of troubles that besets the world now, has one root cause, and even more, that there is one, simple solution—a solution that could reduce the whole mountain to the size of a molehill? Something has gone missing in our man-made formulas for well-being. Something has slipped through the cracks, taking with it what is needed for the peaceful, happy existence we want for ourselves and the world. What is it that has gone missing? In my experience it is the loss of connection. Connection is what is missing. Disconnection is the problem;

connection is the solution. I am not talking about the connection between us. Although that has become problematic, it is not primary. Primary is the connection between myself and my inner world. Through the practice of Rajyoga meditation, as taught by the Brahma Kumaris, I discovered a 'me' that was permanently beyond all influences; a 'me' that danced in joy, peace, love, and power, always, whenever I connected with that 'me'. When we are disconnected from that part of ourselves — our spiritual identity—what is meaningful and important for life becomes less a practical experience and more an ideal, or an intellectual pursuit. When we remain disconnected in this way, we do not know, with the certainty of experience, the independent beauty that lies deep within. We research and talk a lot about such things, but it gets harder and harder to live accordingly. In this way we become careless



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and negligent of our own divinity. We disrespect our own goodness and godliness. So, it withers, like flowers in a garden that no one is tending to—eaten by

the bugs of ego or parched through a drought of true self-love. A recent sociological study says that our current state of social isolation – so

damaging to the human spirit—did not begin with the pandemic. Being disconnected from our innermost selves and disrespecting the godliness within

makes it very difficult to connect, or truly respect anyone else. It becomes a self-imposed isolation that is driving communities and even families further and

further apart. This internal negligence and disregard for the divinity of human nature has carried over to our relationships with Mother Nature as well. We act as if we are the only species on the planet and in our attempts to acquire, possess and control we have violated her basic laws. In return, we have the unprecedented state of environmental crises we are facing today. So, what to do? We have to once again align ourselves with the great truths that go beyond what our physical senses can grasp. We need to understand these times of challenge as an invitation to connect to ourselves in new ways, a connection that can make blossom the seeds of divinity within each of us, as children of God. We need to connect to God in new ways. God's love, devoid of any neediness, is altruistic and the ultimate in respect and feelings of belonging, and is like water to the parched soul-garden. We need to experience God's light of

love, peace and joy, so that we can come back to our pure state of natural well-being. Connecting is the first step. Second is the courage to come out of our comfort zones and transfer the beauty deep within into our everyday thinking, speaking and doing. We need to become givers, from the genuine abundance that is our Godly inheritance, and stop being takers. This will put a whole new vibration into the energy that keeps this planet spinning. This will move us all forward, out of humanity's long night of winter, and into the dawn of its new day. It is time to do something new; it is time to do something different. To realise the magic of love—love for ourselves, for God and then, for all our brothers and sisters—the whole world. This gives birth to hope. We truly are standing at a new beginning.

Sharona Stillerman coordinates the activities of the Brahma Kumaris in Israel.

SOLUTION

ONE WAY TO STOP OVERTHINKING



B.K. SHIVANI

Overthinking has become a habit with a large number of people. How do we change it? We know the answers: see the good in others, not their faults; remain happy; do not speak ill of anyone; accept others as they are. We need to practice just one of these to be free from overthinking. That is because they are all interconnected—start one practice and the others will naturally follow. For example, if we focus on the good

qualities of other people and ignore their shortcomings, our mind will remain clean. When we do not see and think about anyone's defects, the mind will not be coloured, or stained, by them. It is negative thoughts that cause overthinking. When we do not see other people's weaknesses, there will be no reason to be angry, critical or judgmental about them. Acceptance will become easy, and we will have good wishes for them. When everything is good and positive, there will be nothing to forgive or forget. All these corollary benefits accrue from focusing on the good in others. We can start with one practice that we find easy and the others will follow without any extra effort on our part. But how do we not see defects in others when they are clearly visible? The eyes



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see everything—the flaws of those we live and work with, and, through the phone and the television, the mistakes people across the world are

making. None of that, however, should taint the mind and pollute our thoughts and feelings. We can do an experiment

—choose one conspicuous weakness in one person. Suppose someone you work with is unreliable and dishonest. You know they

are like that but you have to work with them. It is one thing to know their defect and figure out a way to deal with them, but quite another to keep thinking about it —“What a dodgy character”, “He keeps lying...” It is the nature of the human mind that negative thoughts cause overthinking. When we dwell on someone's good qualities, the mind remains calm and there are few thoughts. But think about something you do not like in someone and there will be a long train of thoughts. That changes our perception and attitude towards them. The more we think about another's faults, the more negativity accumulates in the mind, and that depletes the soul's power. The negative thoughts and feelings are reinforced when they are expressed in speech

and behaviour. As the soul becomes weaker, overthinking and stress increase, irritation and jealousy are experienced more often. Imagine the harm we do to ourselves. The defect is someone else's, but by repeatedly thinking about it we poison our mind, behaviour and personality and become weaker. We are also not helping the other person by sending them unfriendly vibrations. The vibes will certainly not strengthen them, but instead make them weaker and prone to making more mistakes. Then we complain that the other person is getting worse, unaware of our role in bringing that about. The solution is to have positive thoughts and send like vibrations. If someone is habitually careless, we can create the thought that

they are responsible and accurate in their work, and see them with this positive attitude. The thought is not true at that point of time, but when sustained it will do wonders. First, it will protect us from negativity. Then it will send good vibes to the other person, giving them the energy and courage to get over their weakness. When people in a family or organisation create such supportive thoughts instead of focusing on others' defects, they really bless each other, and the energy of blessings can uplift people and transform situations. The choice is ours: do we want to see defects and become weaker, or think and see only good in order to empower the self and others? *B.K. Shivani is a well-known motivational speaker and Rajyoga teacher.*

THOUGHT PROCESS ANALYSIS

ARE YOU A MASTER OF YOUR MIND?



MIKE GEORGE

Most of us are now aware of the mind-body connection. Think 'tense thoughts' and you will feel it physically in places like your shoulder muscles or perhaps an ache in the head. Think 'worry thoughts', and your stomach will send you a message asking you to stop. Think 'fearful thoughts' and you will notice 'the pump' in your chest, otherwise known as your heart, start to work overtime. So, it's obvious that our minds need some attention. It is unfortunate for most of us that no one ever taught us how to think. The mind's first requirement is a benevolent master (that is you) to help it to

change the speed, quantity and the quality of thinking. **TEN PRACTICES TO MASTER YOUR MIND** Here are some ideas which may help you be a better master, guide and friend for your mind. Over the next ten weeks take one practice and... practise! **1 THINK SLOWLY** Sit quietly and watch your self using your mind to think. Watch your self thinking. Watch thoughts arising. Now see if you can transfer your attention to the small spaces between your thoughts. As you do you will notice the spaces expand and the speed of your thinking will slow down. You will also start to 'feel' a profound inner peace. **2 THINK BRIGHTLY** Just as you turn up or down the brightness on your TV screen, see if you can do that with what you create on the screen of your mind. Turn up the brightness one moment then, in the



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next moment, let the thought fade away. But watch it all the way to 'fade'! Notice your mind becoming quieter as it does. **3 THINK FOR THE BEST** It is almost impossible to halt the habit of thinking about the future. Besides, everyone else around us seems to be doing it almost all the time. So go with the flow of your think-

ing but practise turning any thoughts of a catastrophic future, in whatever context, into thoughts that are 'anastrophic'. That means catch your self thinking 'worry' thoughts and practise replacing them with ideas and images that envision the best possible outcome. Cancel the old/unwanted and replace with a new vision! Do not just 'want it', just 'think it'...

without desire! **4 THINK RELEVANT** When you 'think relevant' you are thinking only about what you need to think about at any moment in whatever situation you are in. In other words, practise noticing when you become distracted by anything outside or inside, in the past or about the future. Gently return

and start your mental focus on what is in front of you 'in this moment'... again. **5 THINK HAPPY** What is a happy thought? Take a moment to reflect. Is it you forcing your self to believe you are happy and then creating thoughts out of that belief? It is not a bad experiment. Some say that with such a practice, over time, the 'feelings' of happiness start to arise naturally and all thoughts become imbued with a natural... happiness! It is a practice that, if nothing else, will help you to become more aware of the quality of your thinking. You will also start to see the thoughts that you are using to make your self feel unhappy! Clue? Watch out for external and internal influences on your thinking. *This is Part 1 of the article, the other five coming next week in Part 2.* *Mike George is an author of 16 books on self-awareness, spiritual intelligence and personal undevelopment.*

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

We live in a world that feeds violence. For non-violence to exist, it must be fed by something very powerful. Violence can ignite an inner battle between my innate peace and the lower animal instincts fed by the world. Peace is a power greater than violence. When experienced, peace automatically slows me down and creates non-violent thoughts, words and actions. Today let me experience the power of peace and become truly non-violent.