

# *The Hottest Old Tool Around*

Whenever the discussion turns to health and wellness systems there is a flurry of activity as we look for the best new fix. What if using tried and true tools to keep us healthy can have a dramatic effect and positive influence in our lives. Simply stated, meditation is the hottest and most accessible *old tool* around today.

In fact, using meditative practices can prepare you to see life in a whole new way. Truly meditating takes us away from problems and what is wrong with a project. Then redirecting our attention to what is right with a project gives us the energy to fix what isn't working. Ultimately this frees us to use a more focused *intention* to succeed, and from the stand point of our higher consciousness helps us to see tasks from a larger perspective.

Many corporations are using meditation as a way of creating greater focus and clarity in the workplace. Employees who meditate regularly come to work happier, with increased emotional stability, and better work relationships. In addition, in this increasingly collaborative approach towards work, it builds win-win attitudes within the company, higher productivity, and greater problem solving skills. Inherent in these spirit-filled leadership practices are healthier communities simultaneously committed to both people and profits which also increase productivity in the long run.

Some of the many ways one can meditate in Corporate America is to practice being present in the here and now. This form of meditation is called *mindfulness* or paying attention during your activities. This does not take more time; it actually uses less time, because the job is done more affectively the in the first place. Of course, providing employees opportunities to meditate outside of meetings enhances the process. Some ways to practice mindfulness or staying focused on the present in meetings are:

- Only meet when it is important to meet, establishing that everyone's time is valuable
- Calm your mind prior to meetings and presentations with basic breathing techniques (breathe into a loose diaphragm for greater affect)
- Use some gentle stretching to focus and relieve tension (Reach for the ceiling, and down to the floor, twist at the waist, stretch neck from side to side, chin to chest then all the way back)
- Begin meetings with a private centering moment before discussions
- Create a philosophy of gratitude for the opportunity to work together (This sets the stage for a willingness to be flexible and participate fully in the process)
- When a team member remembers a time when something didn't work, reframe by bringing them back to the here and now to create a different scenario

- Direct attention to an agenda of outcomes that must be met, staying within agreed upon time frames
- Maintain a posture of non-judgmental thinking by reframing any negative statement
- Visualize outcomes with words that are descriptive, results oriented, and clearly stated (Discuss to ensure each member sees the same picture)
- Clearly state the main thrust of the meeting in terms of action, ensuring all agree (If not, work the project problem adding more information until its clear)
- Get confirmation from all team members that outcomes can be met in the end (Many times employees feel something will not work, but they stay silent setting up a self-fulfilling prophecy--getting this into the open helps you put thing into prospective)

Get everyone onboard by painting a picture of results that succeed. Each team member must see and agree on the same picture, a picture of what the team expects to happen. When we visualize we put our intention on what we want to work on. A more specifically crafted intention will produce greater results. Remember whatever you *believe* is what your body and mind *will do*. That is why sports psychologists use visioning to make athletes stronger and more directed. So like any work you do with goal setting, when you are thinking of your intention make sure it is clear, specific, and achievable, then trust that it is being accomplished. As we focus on being fully present there is a centering power within the mind that we can tap to improve our state of living, working or create the perfect mindset to see the results we want, and get it. In this way, leadership can tap the hottest old tool around for great new results, creating a healthier more dynamic and productive workforce.

Shirley Ryan was led to create the book *Searching for the Waters of Antiquity* a meditation tool, and a unique integration of her extensive career experience and her skills of painting and meditation. She is also the founder and president of Working Together, a business specializing in managing life's changes in Mind, Body & Spirit through the coaching process. She has worked as a professional life coach since 1994. A complete list of articles on meditation can be found at her books website [www.searchingforthewatersofantiquity.com](http://www.searchingforthewatersofantiquity.com).

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