

Meditation brings greater clarity for many

■ The University has courses in meditation, which can sharpen mental acumen

By Arlene Juan
for the Emerald

Meditation has become increasingly popular as a self-control, self-awareness and personal growth technique. Terms such as guru, samadhi, Zen, mind expansion, psychedelic experience and transcendental consciousness are associated with this "inward art."

“If you can pick a set time and place to meditate each day, it will enhance the sense of sacredness. But if you are unable to sit regularly, you can still benefit. Take a walk or eat a meal with full attention.”

Sandy Adler
meditation instructor,
University of Oregon

Sandy Adler, a University meditation instructor said "meditation is a discipline, a method, a process, a way of using mind and heart.

"It strengthens the power to use all our inner resources — memory, the senses, rhythm — and draws perceptions together in a total experience."

A 1992 University psychology study "The Effects of Meditation on College Students" suggests that meditation, combined with physi-

cal exercise and other personal strategies, can be used as a preventive measure to combat stress and depression.

"It has been an effective method in keeping my mind and body in balance," said Athena Yemaya, a new meditation participant. "My stress level has decreased, and I feel that it has helped me improve academically."

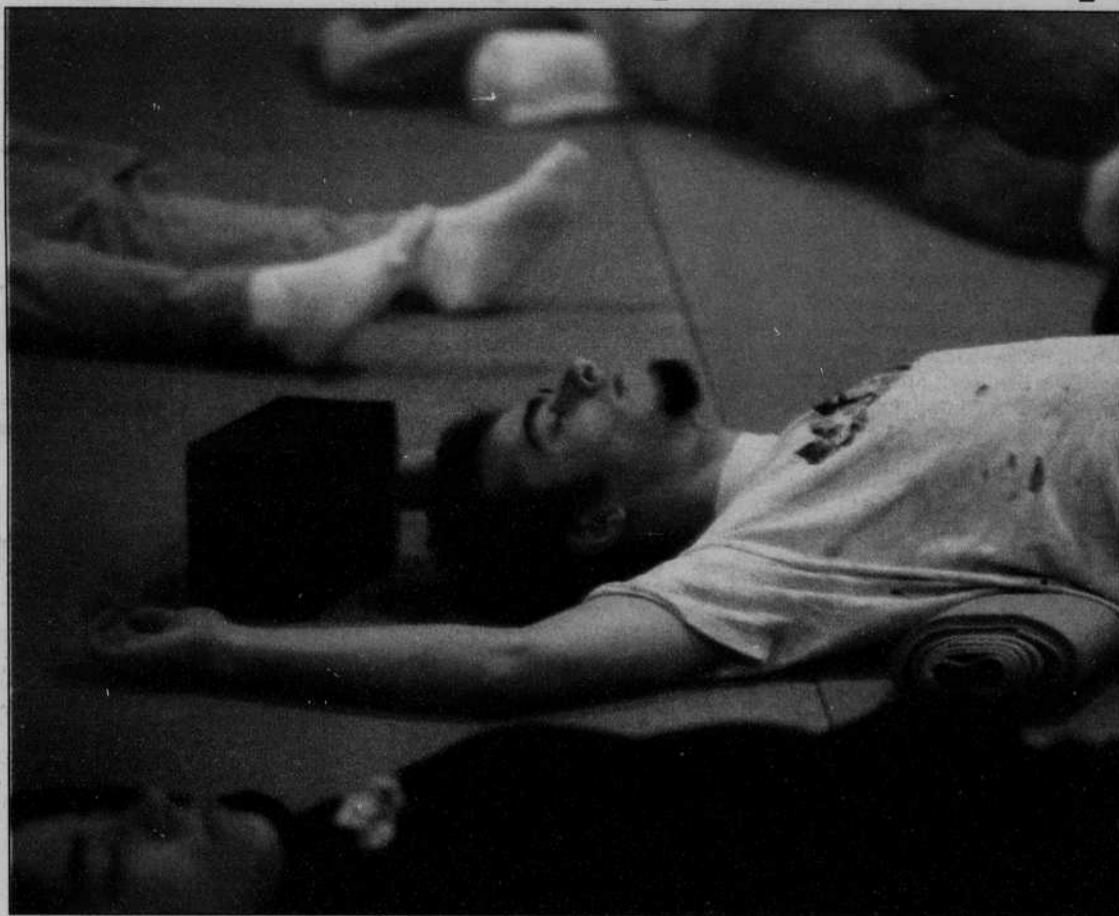
Adler also instructs at Friends Meeting Place at 22nd and Onyx and said in learning to meditate it is primarily important to become familiar with what meditation is and its key elements. She said the three windows to meditation are: Concentration, awareness and "lovingkindness."

Concentration is steadiness of the mind; the mental skill exercised when focused. In meditation, one focuses on a chosen object such as the breath, a visualization or a phrase and then practices it repeatedly while letting go of distractions.

With awareness, Adler said it is important to draw close to emotions in a skillful way and make conscious choices about how to respond.

"Lovingkindness" refers to simply loving the self, which is the gateway to loving others, Adler said.

To begin, sit comfortably with the back erect. Close the eyes and take a few deep breaths, feeling the breath as it enters the nostrils and fills the chest and abdomen; then release it. Allow the breath to become natural without forcing it or controlling it. Attention rests on one breath at a time. If the mind wanders, don't be concerned. Notice whatever has captured the at-



Cooper Boydston, a regular user of Yoga and a veteran of Sandy Adler's meditation class, lies down and relaxes while soft music and the soothing voice of Adler are heard in the background.

Chrystal McConnell Emerald

ention, then let go of the thought or feeling, and return to the awareness of the breath.

"I recommend sitting for a 20-minute session if you are just getting started and increasing the time gradually until you are meditating for 30 or 45 minutes," Adler said.

"If you can pick a set time and place to meditate each day, it will

enhance the sense of sacredness. But if you are unable to sit regularly, you can still benefit. Take a walk or eat a meal with full attention," she said.

"Break the momentum of rushing and busy-ness in your day by stopping to meditate for just a few minutes; you'll rediscover a deeper sense of yourself and what is most important to you."

Sarah Meyers, also a new participant, said meditation helps calm her tension caused by constant planning.

"As we relate to such emotions with 'lovingkindness,' we begin to release the worry, restlessness and remorse that take us away from the present moment both in meditation and in our daily lives," Meyers said.

Herbal remedy can be just what the doctor ordered

■ Natural remedies provide good protection against colds, but students should use them with caution

By Kendall Larsen
for the Emerald

With the coughing, sneezing and runny noses that seem to sprout up everywhere on campus, students

may turn toward natural, herbal remedies to protect themselves. While some of these natural treatments are easy to administer, others require the help of a trained physician.

One of the most well-known herbal remedies is echinacea. Jan Gagnon, a naturopathic physician specializing in homeopathy, said that this herb stimulates the im-

mune system by increasing the activity of white blood cells.

"You want to start [taking] it at the beginning of a cold," Gagnon advised. The usual suggested dose of echinacea is one to three pills daily, taken with water.

Gagnon also said that garlic, astragalus and golden seal could be helpful treatments for colds, but emphasized the importance of

seeking medical advice before attempting home treatments.

Daniel Hardt, another naturopathic physician in Eugene, said people need to realize that they are not sick because they have herbal deficiencies, but because they have nutrient deficiencies. Most people do not receive the nutrients they need from the food they eat because of the way food is processed, he said. Hardt suggested taking a daily multi-vitamin "rather than thinking we can get all the nutrients we need by having a green salad with our pizza."

Hardt also recommended taking two or three flax-seed-oil capsules a day. These pills provide some of the essential fatty acids that the body needs.

Slippery elm, horehound and lobelia are all good for coughs and lung infections, Hardt said. Lobelia can also help people who wish to quit smoking, as it will cause nausea when tobacco is introduced to the body.

People should not depend on herbs or use them too often, Hardt stressed.

"You want to remember that herbs are medicine — naturally occurring medicine. You don't want to use herbs on and on and on."

Liz Dickey, also a naturopathic physician, was hesitant to suggest any treatment for people to try on their own. She said that although natural medicine can work well in helping people regain their

health, it is much more effective when administered by a qualified person.

"Each person is unique and requires a unique prescription," Dickey said. For self-care, Dickey suggested that students "eat well, get enough sleep, exercise and have some fun! People are healthier when they're happier."

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Liz Dickey
naturopathic physician

Gagnon also advised that those who are already sick should watch what they eat. Milk and dairy should be avoided, as should sugar, which feeds bacteria.

Students who attempt to treat themselves with herbs should do so with caution, Hardt also said, because not every herb on the health-food-store shelf is beneficial. He advised that anyone buying a bottle of herbal pills looks for the words "standardized extract" on the back of the bottle.

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