

THE HEALTH Q

INTELLIGENT BODY MIND SOLUTIONS FOR HEALTH AND WELLNESS

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Contents

- ◆ *Editorial: Permanence of impermanence*, pg.1
- ◆ Do you feel insecure?, pg. 1
- ◆ Decision-making—What is your style?; Five mental faculties meditation develops, pg. 2
- ◆ How an old hobby helped me in grieving process?, pg. 3
- ◆ Mantra repetition helps to relax; Revitalize your body; Food for thought on April 5, 12 pm, pg. 4
- ◆ **Subscription inquires & Mission Statement**, pg. 2
- ◆ **SPRING-SUMMER PROGRAM IS NOW ONLINE AT www.TheHQ.ca. Details are on pg. 4.**

APRIL



DO YOU FEEL INSECURE?

The feeling of insecurity is much more pervasive for humans, because we identify with material objects and they, by nature, are subject to change, decay and death. The only way to deal with this psychological sense of powerlessness and constant insecurity is to remember the permanence of impermanence. Every time, you are hit with a sense of insecurity, remember the following:

- Step outside and look at a tree: how leaves are about to sprout again after going through the phase of turning yellow, falling to the ground, disappearing into soil and becoming the nutrients to feed the same tree which bore them earlier.
- Look at the waves of an ocean, their rising and falling: they form, disappear and then rise again. The cycle continues.
- Look at your own body; today it is here and someday it won't be. Physical bodies change & die. Meditate on the fate of your physical body everyday. Thinking about death is not morbid; it is one way of understanding life. Life is not separate from death. Embracing death can open new vistas of living afresh with passion and zeal. Spend few moments of remembering your own death everyday; it will refocus your life in the priorities.
- Think of your thoughts and emotions; how they have changed, grown, or shriveled with years—to give rise to the wisdom you have today.

Though sense of insecurity is frightening, yet it also ensures growth, renewal and progression. It is the one which gives us hope and cause for optimism because it shows that life is full of infinite possibilities. So, embrace this uncertainty and insecurity and run with it. A life without insecurity would be just like a stone—predictable but dead. [HQ]

PERMANENCE OF IMPERMANENCE—THAT IS LIFE

—by Parmjit Singh, PhD

How many times are we haunted by a sense of insecurity or uncertainty? Questions such as 'what would happen if such and such happened' and 'how am I going to deal with it' rattle us no end. Often these feelings strike us when chips are down and they suck us into an unending vortex of catastrophic imagery and thinking. The ifs and buts sometimes keep people sleepless during nights. Whether you like it or not, that is modern life—full of uncertainties and fears. Or at least, that is what we believe in.

On the flip side, if you look closely at life, you will realize it is neither positive nor negative, neither certain nor uncertain. It has its own flow, own mystery and it is our mental labeling or desires that make it positive or negative. Mind loves comparative ambience; it likes to categorize things into positive and negative experiences.

We live in a self-created mental bubble, a mental space populated by thought-pollution, emotional predispositions, delusions, greed, anger, hatred and love. Mind draws upon this material while steering our life and finding solutions for our daily and existential pains. Therefore, whatever we tend to believe, all these negative

perceptions and emotions keep on bleeding into our daily actions and behaviors. We never seem to find a permanent solution to our existential dilemmas. It happens because we keep on recycling the same mental junk in our life—sometimes in the form of problems and other times in the form of solutions. That is how our life goes, shuttling from one fear to another.

The real solution is to look into the real nature of mind and how the problems and fears are formed. If we try to touch the ground state of consciousness on which mind appears as the encrustation or specks of worldliness, you will be able to access the permanent state of security—that impermanence is the only constant in real life, and all the insecurities and fears are like mental noise flitting in and out of the ground state of our consciousness.

And the more mental noise you have in your mind, the less you will be in touch with that permanence and consequently more insecure and fearful you will be. [HQ]

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MISSION STATEMENT

'The Health Q' envisions to present factual in-
formation for the promotion of wholesome
mental, physical and emotional/spiritual living.
Synthesizing diverse sources spanning from
scientifically valid physical/mental/emotional
therapeutic techniques with latest research in
mind-body medicine/sciences, cognitive & posi-
tive psychology, sport psychology, yoga, medita-
tion, health sciences and other evidence-based
integrative/alternative therapies, we intend to
make 'The Health Q' an authentic vehicle for dis-
semination of reliable information for practical
and healthy living.

**'The Health Q' is not a replacement of a
medical advice or treatment.**

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Picture by Marinela Sotoncic

DECISION-MAKING—WHAT IS YOUR STYLE?

—by Gurdarshan Jyot, PhD

- ◆ you can't make up your mind.
- ◆ **Balancing** – You weigh all the factors,
and then go ahead.

Of course, the ideal method is the
last choice—balancing. You can apply this
method of decision-making with a very
simple tool. Simply take a sheet of paper
and draw a line down the middle. On one
side, put all the pros and on the other, put
the cons. You can then refine it and assign
each entry a "weight" according to impor-
tance of +0 to +10 points for the pro side
and -0 to -10 points for the cons, and add
them up. You'll quickly see the benefits of
either side, and your decision will then al-
most make itself.

Once you have added all the
likely combinations and permutations and
made a provisional decision, keep it aside
for a night; sleep on your decision. Recent
research shows that it is always better to let
your unconscious mind and gut feeling in-
fluence the decision, because our rational
mind does not know everything and in the
end, you might miss the big picture. Your
gut feeling and the unconscious mind can
compensate for this. [HQ]

How many decisions do
we make every day? It
is something most of us
rarely think about. But in fact, life is a col-
lection of all the small and big decisions we
ever made.

How well you make your deci-
sions can greatly affect your life. It is the
ability to make good decisions at appro-
priate times that make you a successful
person. Good decision-making helps you
to avoid mistakes and achieve your goals.
You can also live out your dreams when
you are able to make sound decisions and
act upon them.

Experts believe that each of us
tend to have a certain style of decision-
making. These are:

- ◆ **Impulsive** - Go for the first choice pre-
sented to you.
- ◆ **Fatalistic** -It is fate, whatsoever is
meant to happen will happen.
- ◆ **Compliant** -Go along with someone's
opinion.
- ◆ **Delaying** – You need more time to
think.
- ◆ **Agonizing** – you feel overwhelmed so

FIVE MENTAL FACULTIES MEDITATION DEVELOPS

— by Parmjit Singh, PhD

In their book *Ti-
betan Wisdom
for Western
Life*, Arpaia & Bagpay (1999)
contend that persistent
practice of meditation de-
velops five primary men-
tal qualities: steadiness &
pliancy, clarity & warmth
& spaciousness. If you look
closely at these five quali-
ties, first four exist in pairs
and each quality in each
pair is diametrically op-
posite to each other. E.g.
steadiness stands for firm-

ness while pliancy is for
flexibility. Clarity is about
pure mental reasoning us-
ing rational thinking while
warmth is for openness and
acceptance.

This is the beauty
of the meditative practice;
it helps us develop a broad
spectrum of mental facul-
ties making us ready for the
myriad challenges thrown
by life. The fifth quality
comes as an offshoot to all
these four qualities; it un-
clutters our mental and

emotional space so that we
have more legroom to look
for creative solutions to
life's problems. Even half-
an-hour spent a day can
help you develop these facul-
ties. Instructions for med-
itation can be found at our
website, www.TheHQ.ca.
[HQ]

Arpaia, J. & Bap-
gay, L. (1999). *Tibetan wis-
dom for western life*. Hill-
sboro, OR: Beyond Words
Publishing, Inc.



HOW AN OLD HOBBY HELPED ME IN MY GRIEVING PROCESS?

— by Angela Thomas, R.N. & MBA (student)

www.TheHQ.ca

Just recently, I pulled out my father's telescope which had been packed away in the basement for eight years. When my father was alive, he spent a good deal of time engrossed in his lifelong hobby of astronomy. I grew up spending many nights stargazing with my father, learning about the treasures that exist in space.

Over time, my father's hobby became my hobby. My father's dedication and love, in addition to my new found passion for astronomy, led to the construction of my own telescope, built by my father using a lens from an old overhead projector. My father labeled this telescope 'Angela's Eye'. When I was eighteen, my father passed away. With that I put away the telescopes and my hobby.

After many years of going through the grieving process and building acceptance for loss of my father, I recently felt an urge to resurrect my hobby of astronomy and see the night sky through my 'father's eye'. I dug out his telescope and refurbished it. I bought various books related to astronomy and also

recently joined a club in which I can go out, stargaze and learn from various amateur astronomers.

Do you also have an old hobby that you have put away? Was it your own hobby or the one you shared with a loved one? Although I have re-connected with a hobby, I feel that reintroducing my love for astronomy has not only facilitated healthy closure to the loss of my father, but also allowed me to value and appreciate what I learnt from my father while he existed in the first half of my life's journey. Every time I use his telescope, I feel a close and healthy connection to my dad.

Aside from my reflection on reintroducing a very meaningful hobby, I have recently engaged myself in another new hobby. I had always had a love for learning through reading but presently, between full-time work, part-time school and marathon training, reading had taken the back seat.

Due to the time constraint, I took up listening to books on tape. I purchased an MP3 player and joined an internet place, Audible.com, where

I can download various books. On my three hours training runs, I can listen to a book. On my bi-weekly commute to Toronto for school, again, I can listen to my book. Now I do not feel as if I have lost my hobby for learning through reading, rather I have discovered a new manner of pursuing the old hobby. Whatever your hobby be, sometimes it is good to reflect on what makes that hobby special and meaningful to you.

Personally, my hobbies have helped me to achieve a psychological closure to my father's death eight years ago. Rather than shying away from facing the loss, these hobbies initiated the healing process and empowered me to take the loss in my stride.

If you have any interest in these sorts of hobbies, the following websites can get you started on this journey: www.audible.com & www.khanscope.com [HQ]

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

April 5, 2006 @ Hamilton Public Library
FREE. 12-1pm, Wednesday

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Free Info session: May 17, 7 PM

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YWCA Membership not required for our programs. Open for both men and women.

Call 905.524.3463 to get more information about these and other programs. Or visit our website www.TheHQ.ca

MANTRA

REPETITION HELPS

IN ELICITING RELAXATION RESPONSE

—by Parmjit Singh, PhD

Mantra recitation (a repetitive silent or vocal recitation of a particular word or a string of words) is an important tradition in contemplative practices. Not only has this practice shown to be effective in clearing sinuses during the winter months, but also is found to be useful in a variety of physical and psychological circumstances. A recent study published in the *Journal of Advanced Nursing* attests to this old wisdom that mantra repetition is helpful in eliciting relaxation response and disrupts the seamless chatter of thoughts. Participants were put under a 5 week 'mind-body-spiritual' technique of silently repeating the mantra. At the end of the experiment, scientists reported that majority of the participants found this program of mantra repetition to be helpful in a variety of situations.

On a more personal note, 'OM' recitation in our groups being run at YWCA, reports similar anecdotal feedback to mantra repetition. As a part of our program 'The Healing Voyage', participants are instructed to recite 'OM' for 10-15 minutes in a group setting. At the end of the session, most of the participants report relaxation and slowed-down thought process, in addition to pleasant sense of wakeful alertness. [HQ]

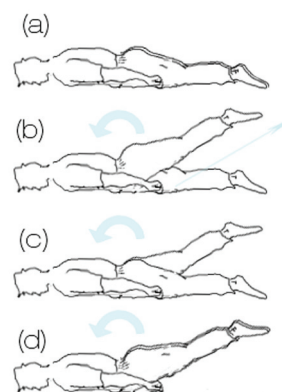
REVITALIZE YOUR BODY

—by Parmjit Singh, PhD

Yoga is known for vitalizing body and eliminating various ailments. The Locust posture can help do you so. This posture can be practiced in two forms: Half-Locust and Full Locust.

Half-Locust: Lie down with your nose and forehead touching the floor (a). Place your fists beside your thighs. Make a full inhalation. Retain the breath and while pushing the fists into ground, raise your left outstretched leg up (b). Hold it for few moments and exhale while bringing it back to the floor. On the next inhalation (c) repeat the same thing with your right leg. The awareness is held in the pelvis and lower vertebrae. Do it slowly.

Full-Locust: In full locust (d), we raise both our outstretched legs simultaneously off the ground and hold it in that position for few moments. Counting in your mind may also help in holding to the posture. Inhale a full breath, retain and while digging your fists into floor, push both your legs in the air as high as possible. Full-locust requires great exertion in comparison to the half-locust. Therefore, it will be



© Illustration by Bhupinder Singh

advisable that you practice Half-Locust first and switch to Full-Locust only when confident.

Benefits: This posture is a powerful antidote to constipation. Regular practice, it is claimed, can even eliminate the most stubborn case of constipation. It should be noted that constipation can lead to physical and emotional disturbances. In addition to this benefit, Locust posture has powerful salutary effects on back muscles and massages internal glands and cleanses and rejuvenates the kidneys. [HQ]

A new South-Asian Lifecare center is opening soon in Mississauga, the first in the GTA. If you are interested in knowing more about this facility, call Wendy Low at 416-455-2775.

Come to the Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton room on April 5, 12 p.m. to enjoy an hour of FREE 'Food for Thought'.

A joint effort by The Health-Q Consulting & Hamilton Public Library. Call 905.524.3463 or visit our website at www.TheHQ.ca for more details.