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## Meditation: Mental Peace or Preparation of Death?

**Tanisha Baliyan**

Student,  
MA English,  
Vivekanand Mahila College,  
IGNOU New Delhi, India

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### **Abstract:**

*This exposition embarks on an enlightening exploration into the depths of meditation to unravel its profound nature and purpose. By skilfully intertwining Western and Indian philosophical perspectives, it transcends the boundaries of conventional understanding. Beyond its widely recognised role in fostering mental peace, this study boldly investigates meditation's transformative potential as a profound preparation for the inescapable journey of death. Through a synthesis of diverse viewpoints, the paper aspires to illuminate the intricate dimensions of meditation, offering readers an exquisite tapestry of refined comprehension. With its discerning analysis and thought-provoking insights, it beckons readers to contemplate meditation's immense significance and its awe-inspiring capacity for profound personal transformation.*

**Keywords:** Meditation, Indian Perspective, Western Perspective, Mental Peace, Preparation of Death.

### **Introduction:**

In the intricate tapestry of human existence, meditation stands as a thread weaving through centuries, cultures, and consciousness. This research paper, entitled "Meditation: Mental Peace or Preparation for Death?" explores into a philosophical exploration of the dual roles that meditation traditionally embodies. The first role paints meditation as a sanctuary for the weary mind, a space where mental tumult finds solace and order. Scientific data have often pointed to meditation as a haven for alleviating stress and cultivating mental harmony. On the other hand, ancient wisdom posits meditation as a sacred ritual in preparing oneself for the final voyage beyond mortal confines. We find such precepts in the Tibetan Book of the Dead and Egyptian rituals. This paper seeks to juxtapose these two dimensions and analyse whether they are inherently interlinked or disparate paradigms within the meditative sphere. Through critical analysis of historical

texts, spiritual doctrines, and modern psychology, this paper aims to navigate the philosophical waters surrounding meditation. The exploration endeavours to offer not only an academic insight but also an introspective lens through which the very essence of human existence can be contemplated. In bridging the realms of mental peace and the metaphysical preparation for death, this research contributes a thoughtful perspective to the enduring enigma of meditation.

### **Understanding Meditation:**

In the mind's garden realm, meditation stands as a seasoned gardener, tending to the diverse flora of thoughts, emotions, and sensations. The purpose of which is as complex as the unfolding petals of a flower, each bloom exposing a distinct characteristic of its beauty. Imagine meditation as a gentle breeze that whispers through the leaves of the trees, stirring the branches of your thoughts. It is like the calm surface of a serene lake, where your mind's reflections become clear and undisturbed. In this tranquillity, the stormy waves of stress find solace, gradually smoothing into calm ripples.

Meditation is your lantern in the cave of self-discovery, casting its soft glow on the walls that bear the paintings of your past and the shadows of your aspirations. Meditation is the mirror that helps you reflect the face you bear in front of the world while helping you dig into the depths of the face you keep hidden within.

In the realm of meditation, time dances in a different rhythm. It is not about escaping the present but about embracing it wholeheartedly. It is like catching fireflies of mindfulness that illuminate the darkness of unconscious habits, leading you to a clearing where the constellations of your aspirations gleam brightly.

As the canvas of your mind gets painted with the hues of emotions, meditation is the artist's brush that allows you to paint without judgment. It transforms frustration into the texture of clouds passing through the sky and turns anxiety into a river that flows gently toward the sea of calm.

Just as a sculptor chisels away at the stone to reveal the masterpiece within, meditation chips away the layers of distraction, revealing the essence of your being, it is a journey inward, where the boundaries between self and surroundings blur, and you find yourself becoming one with the symphony of existence.

In the grand tapestry of life, meditation is not solely the thread of mental peace or the preparation for life's final curtain. Instead, it is a thread that weaves every aspect, connecting serenity, self-discovery, focus, and even a glimpse into the beyond. The quiet echo reminds you to savour the present moment, explore the corridors of your consciousness, and dance with the melody of existence before the final bow.

### **Meditation for Mental Peace:**

Western philosophical perspective: As we travel on a meditational journey through a seemingly never-ending expanse of Western philosophy, we reach deep into the heartland of Stoicism and existentialism. Therefore, it sends us to the world to find peace through the wisdom of these cultures' past.

Stoical reason helps us manage the helm of our ship during the storm; it gives us strength in the troubled waters. The calling of this awakening is toward patience and embracing tenaciousness inside of our inner selves. Meditation might not be entirely explicit in Stoicism; however, they are alike on some level. Thus, they encourage us similarly to anchor ourselves in everyday reality or material time. Being attentive is a fundamental of the spirit in Meditation; it illustrates how we can bear up under the weight of life's heavy burdens and find sources of inner strength that sustain us in troubled times. This enables it to incorporate its experiences and live calmly through the tumultuous waves of life.

The wisdom of Marcus Aurelius, the foremost Stoic philosopher and emperor, showed that mediation was transformational. He maintains that one acquires inner calm using contemplation, non-attachment, and inner balance, which constitute entrance to inner peace. Embracing them infuses us with a profound tranquillity and inner peace that enables us to confront life's storms bravely and courageously.

An existentialist's search for realism comes naturally with the meditative quest. But it appeals to us to walk within – dive into the core of our feelings, beliefs and ideas. This reflective journey leads us to explore the meaning of life or the purpose of life viewed through inner depths. Embracing fate in Nietzsche's Amor Fati strikes a chord in meditative virtues. This compels us to go through all aspects of our lives, including rigid and daunting phases, viewing them as stepping stones towards personal development and realization. It concretizes an abject surrender and knowledge of meaning that frees us from bitterness and regret.

For Descartes, thinking brings about a change in one's being as a way of reaching peace within oneself. Despite that he did not mention Meditation, his review suggests the option of doubt and introspection. These allow us to comprehend our thoughts more deeply, untie the internal knot of problematic elements within these thoughts, and attain reasonable control over our emotions. We shall eventually achieve mental peace with a serene, sublime calmness by embarking on this inner journey.

Eventually, as we incorporate these philosophical and mystical components, we shall all become seekers of peace, pilgrims of the heart, and owners of an inner sanctuary or sacrum. So gifted by ancient wisdom and modern introspection shall we meet with difficulties—finding refuge here within our hearts.



Indian philosophical perspective: Meditation can be likened to a multifaceted gem, each reflecting the wisdom of three ancient philosophical schools: Yoga, Buddhism, and Advaita Vedanta. As multiple rivets converge into one vast sea, such schools explore deeper into where the practice might lead its disciples towards internal peace and stillness.

As explained by the venerable Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, yoga is the art of crossing over the tumultuous waves of the mind to find peace on the other side. It involves one's total focal attention and calmness that stops the endless waves of the human mind in which peace blossoms. Meditation in Yogic Tradition is a doorway for self-discovery, a mirror revealing one's thoughts and emotions without discrimination/judgment. Through overcoming the roots of psychological disturbances, the layers of our conscious being unfold a new horizon of self-appreciation, inner peace and integration, revealing the connection between everything around us.

However, in Buddhism, several meditative techniques could provide a tranquil mind. If we metaphorically liken mindfulness meditation—the centrepiece of Buddhist thinking – to a lantern shining on the present time. Therefore, it teaches us how to focus on the here and now, thus releasing us from the burdens of past regrets or future anxieties. In this regard, meditation in Buddhism advocates for reflection on transience, freeing us from attachments and desires that trigger emotional upheaval. This culminates in a perpetual condition of equilibrium and calmness.

The power of unity and inner harmony is what meditation reveals in Advaita Vedanta – a non-dualistic Hindu philosophy. We become undivided from suffering by surpassing our misleading self and uniting with universal awareness. Practitioners remain undaunted by the currents of life's existence, navigating them with unshakeable serenity and dispassionate composure. By examining ourselves and reflecting inwardly, we can wake up to our intrinsic nature, beyond the fluctuations of the mind, finding an oasis of peace.

Meditation is also seen in a different light by Jainism, another deep Indian philosophical/religious tradition. The focus is on individual restraints, nonviolence and spiritual liberation. People practice Samayika to achieve great calmness and inner peace. Boundless Compassion, Empathy and Nonviolence in Meditation create an inner balance. This pushes forward the search for spiritual freedom achieved through Self-realisation, which results in the mind's space. The meditation of Jainism is instrumental for self-inquiry and awareness. It promotes equanimity and dispassion in individuals, enabling them to clearly witness thoughts, emotions and sensations. Mindfulness shapes thinking, speech and behaviour, resulting in inner balance and tranquillity.

Meditation is a thread which connects this philosophy, and it has transformative power, purifies the mind, awakens compassion, and enables self-realization and alignment within individuals in harmony with nonviolence and virtuous behaviour. During meditation, realms of depth and mental peace are revealed; this light is on our way to enlightenment. Just as separate aspects of

the same stone create an image, every institution enlightens us on the peaceful craft of meditation.

### **Meditation as Preparation for Death:**

Contemplating death in Western philosophy: This subsection is like a lighthouse that directs us through the intricate maze of thought about 'death' in Western philosophical reflections regarding the unavoidable embracing of death. Unpacking meditation in this sense, it serves us as a symbolic boat ferrying us to the coastlines of acceptance and a greater understanding of the vitality of life.

Thus, Epicurus, an ancient Greek sage or a wise steersman, sailed this ship across tumultuous seas of horrors connected to the issue of death. He may not have been an explicit meditation guru, but his insight functions like the North Star, shining light on the route towards serenity. In meditation, this veil of rational fear associated with death is lifted by a gentle wind. We release our self-imposed chains with every meditative breath while cultivating serenity. It also turns us into passionate lovers of life's humble pleasures that envelop us with peace and cheerfulness. Through this deep immersion of being truly in the moment, we are better prepared for further venture, having relished in the beauty of life.

On the journey to themselves, the lands of meditation blend into harmony with virtues of kindness, friendship and thankfulness. Therefore, we are the sailors who venture forth on these vast waters of life and display virtues passed down as a legacy of the just. The epicure insight steers our ship towards the deep waters of calmness and peace, where profound peace of mind and a serene acceptance of the unavoidable journey lie at the end.

Arthur Schopenhauer is a philosopher who lived in the 19th century. He was always thinking about life and how people live it. In his eyes, meditation was the answer to everything. It's a simple practice but takes you to heights you never thought you could reach. The main things he wanted people to achieve through meditation are serenity, acceptance of their ego-driven desires, and the suffering that comes with them.

Once this level is achieved, nothing will hold you back from being happy. It's hard to get out of the cycle of always wanting more and being upset when what we want doesn't go our way, but meditation helps us find a way out. With this thinking, we can free ourselves from anything that keeps us down. Your past regrets or future anxieties do not hold you down; instead, you appreciate the moment.

Martin Heidegger was an existential philosopher who came after Arthur. His views on meditation were different but still had some similarities to Schopenhauer's. One of those similarities is seeing it as a profound portal. The only difference is he sees it as a mirror rather than a lantern-like his predecessor did.

In our reflection, we can see reality in its rawest form and root ourselves in it, putting away

any masks we put up for others or ourselves. When we're alone with meditation, there is no room for lies and deceit, only truth.

Besides stress relief and mental clarity, meditation is also a valuable tool to find the meaning of our existence. By acknowledging how short life can be, we become more in touch with our true selves. But humans have this urge that they need to rationalize everything. Which limits who we are. Through meditation, we experience moments where we dissolve with the world around us. These out-of-body experiences give us a broader perspective and an unwavering readiness to connect with our purpose.

Wrapping it all up, Heidegger's part series reveals that while death will always be scary for us all, meditation could help ease its burden on our shoulders. Not only does it allow us to manage stress and relax, but it also gives us the ability to live authentically and find what makes the present unique.

Indian philosophy and the cycle of life and death: Indian philosophical thought is expansive; there is one concept it can all agree on. Death. It takes the form of a ceaseless river throughout the whole cycle of existence. However, a vessel was created to sail these waters, and that's meditation. It's supposed to carry us through the turbulence of our mortality and steer our course towards liberation.

This vessel has been given a captain, too, Advaita Vedanta. Captaining this vessel means understanding what ultimate reality is and what the true self stands for. We must realise many things in this world to know ourselves honestly. Meditation does just that by letting us dissolve our ego with the ocean of consciousness. In it, we find ourselves fading away from existence's many boundaries, allowing us to see who we are. This perspective transcends death because in it lies our timeless nature and acceptance.

On our ship, Buddhism is like a skilled craftsman. They use meditation practices as tools. Using techniques like Vipassana, they craft an awareness of impermanence and how attachment is futile—diligently observing the never-ending flow of existence with mindfulness as their compass. They adjust to the certainty that we'll all eventually die and do it with unwavering calmness. With the shadow of mortality on their mind, their self-reflection turns into a mirror that shows them the certainty we all have to face. Redirecting their efforts away from liberation, they set out on their purposeful journey towards death. Wrapped in inner wisdom, they go about it in tranquillity.

Yoga is the base for our metaphorical boat. It also merges physical, mental, and spiritual practices. Through Raja Yoga, people can dissolve themselves and achieve harmony in Samadhi by fully uniting with the world. The stars guiding them come from concentration and meditation. With those two skills, they can focus better and gain calmness for almost anything in life. Even something as big as death will have no hold on them because of their new found fortitude. Life isn't permanent,



so there's no reason to fear what comes after it. Yoga sparks self-awareness in people, helps them build their mental strength, and gifts enlightenment and serenity.

Advaita Vedanta, Buddhism, and Yoga essentially work like guides on our ship. Each has unique quirks and methods to help us prepare for the incredible journey of life beyond death. With each other, they give us strength to face whatever comes at us with level-headedness and elegance, pushing us to embrace the monumental transformation that's waiting. The path to freedom can be lit using these traditions, and like the facets, they encourage us to move forward into eternity with boldness, knowledge, and unwavering determination.

### **Conclusion:**

This powerful exposé brings to life all the strands of Western and Eastern philosophy, illuminating with vivid clarity the woven fabric of meditation's dance. In that fabric, meditation is depicted as a mystic journeying. This religious quest takes the soul onto calm paths of reflection, with the stars of self-introspection and a sense of mortal destiny as guides. But it is a secretly whispered story that holds the immense capability to nurture serenity, restore balance and usher in a profound change within. Further down the line, it emerges as a cosmic navigation tool that provides depthful revelations on the elusive journey beyond the veil of life. Through this, we adopt the array of the jewels of meditation; we are provided with a wide-angle view of the magical world of transformation that meditation provides for us spread out over the broad landscape of our existence.

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