

## Do You Have Habits You Wish You Could Change?

By S.S. HarDarshan K. Khalsa, MA

Most of us are addicted to something. It could be shopping, cigarettes, alcohol, sex, drugs, or food. What classifies an addiction? An addiction is something we do unconsciously, that does not contribute to our greater good. Often we use our addictions as a coping mechanism when we feel stressed. While the habit may make us feel better in the short term, it usually creates more problems eventually. For instance, a diabetic may turn to high carb “comfort food” when under stress, but in the long run, this sugar binge may create some serious problems. Addiction has been described as a “spiritual illness”, or spiritual longing, as we reach for something that will help us to feel whole, or to numb our pain.

What can we do to increase self awareness of stress, calm anxiety, lift depression, and curb cravings? Kundalini Yoga and Meditation has been used successfully to accomplish all of these. In fact, the 3HO SuperHealth program that originated in Tucson, Arizona, had an unprecedented success rate for drug and alcohol rehabilitation, and relied heavily on the practice of Kundalini Yoga and Meditation. SuperHealth was recently contracted by the government of India to help with an addiction healing program.

As a teacher of Kundalini Yoga and Meditation for the past 22 years, I have witnessed countless students become free of addictions to alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana. This is what one of my students had to report regarding her success in healing her addiction to cigarettes and alcohol: “I would quit, and then start again. At first, I began to see a big difference when I practiced just a little bit of long deep breathing. As I progressed in my practice, Breath of Fire helped me to clean my lungs to the point where I just didn’t want to smoke. I know now that the consistent practice of Kundalini Yoga and Meditation has a cumulative effect that helped me get to the point of being completely nicotine and alcohol free”. SS- Denver, CO

It’s not necessary to have any experience with yoga or meditation to do this practice. Kundalini yoga is practiced by people of all ages and levels of physical health.

Here is a simple meditation that has powerful effects in releasing the hold of addiction. I recommend practicing it for 40 consecutive days, as it takes 40 days to make or break a habit.

*Sit straight in an easy cross legged pose. Make a cup of your hands with both palms facing up, the right hand resting on top of the left, the fingers crossing over each other. Put this open cup at the level of the heart. Elbows are relaxed at the sides. Your eyes are slightly open and look down toward the hands.*

*Inhale deeply in a long steady stroke through the nose. Exhale in a focused stream through rounded lips. Let your habit, addiction, or desire enter your mind as you breathe in, and exhale it out as if you are spitting it out into your hands. Feel the breath hit your hands.*

*After 11 – 31 minutes, exhale completely and suspend the breath out as you lock in the navel point. Concentrate on each vertebrae of the spine until you can feel it all the way to the base, as stiff as a rod. The inhale powerfully, exhale completely, and repeat the concentration. Repeat this final breath 3 -5 times. Then relax completely.*

This is just one of the meditations that can be used in healing addictions. For individualized guidance in using the powerful tools of Kundalini Yoga and Meditation, contact HarDarshan at **919.929.7278**, or **hardarshankhalsa@hotmail.com**. HarDarshan is a certified instructor with the Kundalini Research Institute, and holds a Master's Degree in Transpersonal Counseling Psychology. You may visit her website at **www.sacredlistener.com**.