

The Stressless Brain

Madhur-Nain Webster

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The Stressless Brain is inviting and empowering in its introductions to meditation.

Madhur-Nain Webster's compelling blueprint for health, *The Stressless Brain*, proposes yoga and meditation as steps to a depressurized life.

Stress is omnipresent in today's world, but it hasn't always been that way: that information alone may come as a surprise to many in this anxiety-fueled society. Balancing personal experiences, knowledge drawn from Webster's professional practice as a therapist, and scientific research, the book takes a thorough, clear approach to the practice of meditation. Webster shows that change is possible for anyone in her text, which forwards practical tools for living well through meditation and yoga.

Several dozen specific meditations are covered, including the "Inner Conflict Resolver" and "Anxiety Release Meditation." Instructions are thorough and easy to follow, covering posture, eye focus, mantras, breathing patterns, and timing. Summaries highlight situations for which each meditation would prove most effective. A delineation between stress and anxiety is particularly helpful, as is the text's examination of the societal elements of stress. Webster's perspective brims with insight and accuracy, placing meditation in the context of other psychotherapy tools, including cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). The pace is perfectly modulated, and light, airy sketches of each pose make it easy to picture and physically duplicate the instructions.

The book's chosen yoga form, Kundalini yoga, and meditation focus on chanting, breath, and postures. The text introduces these practices, arguing for their ability to impact people regardless of their religious backgrounds, and showing how the practices can be adapted to align with different beliefs. The Kundalini notion of god—presented here as an acronym that stands for *generate, organize, and deliver or destroy*—emphasizes individuals' power to create, bring order, and impact the world around them, for good or bad.

Meticulous in laying the groundwork for such meditation, the book establishes the purpose and effectiveness of digging deep at the pervasive problem of chronic stress. Key terms and ideas, like chakras, that are central to meditation and yoga but are not necessarily thoroughly understood by Western thinkers, are also covered. The result is a well-reasoned work that imparts life-transforming knowledge beyond its instructions on practices. Readers will not only understand what to do, they will understand why those actions are crucial. Life-giving, ashram-based ways of thinking and being come to the fore in this work, whose tone is warm and uplifting, dispelling topical fear and intimidation.

Making the seemingly impossible—elimination of stress—seem possible, *The Stressless Brain* is inviting and empowering in its introductions to meditation.

MELISSA WUSKE (November 6, 2018)

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