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Media Kit for Sarah McLean

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About Sarah

She's been featured in the NY Times, and Phoenix Woman magazine calls her "an inspirational and dynamic teacher." Sarah McLean has been speaking and writing about meditation and mind/body health since the early 90's.



She was the founding education director of Deepak Chopra's mind-body health center, directed Byron Katie's School for the Work, and assisted Seat of the Soul author, Gary Zukav, she was even a medic in the US Army trained to treat soldiers for post-traumatic stress disorder, and now she's the director of the Sedona Meditation Training & Retreat Company.

Sarah has explored world spiritual and cultural traditions: along with her 19-year meditation practice, she's was a 2-year resident in a Zen Buddhist monastery, lived in an ashram in India, taught English to Tibetan Buddhist nuns, bicycled along the silk route through Pakistan and the middle East, meditated in temples in Thailand and Japan, and trekked the golden triangle in Asia.

As the meditation instructor that anyone can feel comfortable with, she was recognized in 2008 by National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) as a trailblazer. She's a sought-after presenter on the subjects of stress-reduction, meditation, and self-awareness and she demystifies meditation and makes it accessible to anyone. A regular guest on morning TV, Sarah is often invited to lead self-discovery retreats at world-class spas such as Miraval Resort.

About the Sedona Meditation Training & Retreat Co.



Sedona Meditation Training & Retreat Company was formed by founding director Sarah McLean in 2006. She's been working in the personal transformation field for twenty years and has worked with the best, including eight years as the Chopra Center Education Director.

The Sedona Meditation Training & Retreat Co. has quickly gained notoriety for bringing meditation into the mainstream. It is the leading meditation training company in Arizona. The stress reduction programs, meditation classes, personal retreats, and private consultations in their beautiful Sedona, Arizona location and in various venues in Paradise Valley, Cave Creek, Phoenix and Scottsdale have been attended by thousands of students from all walks of life.

Many report that they've gained the tools they needed to create more fulfilling, more meaningful and more enjoyable lives. Some of the programs include:

- Meditation Instruction for Anyone
- Perfect Health Lifestyle Programs,
- Regaining Balance through Ayurveda,
- Self-Discovery Retreats.
- Yoga & Meditation Retreats
- Creativity Retreats
- Leadership Retreats & Programs
- Workplace Wellness Programs

Their programs also travel well – they'll meet clients where they work and play: They've been hired to bring programs to corporate settings, present at special group gatherings, create classes for universities, and put together special events at health spas and in private homes.

Q & A

1. What is meditation to you and how would you define it?

Meditation is a name given to the many techniques that have proven successful in turning your attention inward. Meditation techniques have been practiced for thousands of years. Originally people used it to deepen their understanding of the sacred and mystical forces of life. And for many, meditation continues to be a spiritual and religious practice. Variations of meditative practice are found in all the world's religions. But now it is becoming mainstream. And you don't have to change your beliefs to do it.

Meditation is not about forcing our mind to be quiet; rather it's a process to rediscover the quietness that is ever present. Behind the screen of our internal dialogue is the silence of pure awareness—a silence that is not disturbed by thoughts of the past or concerns of the future. If you turn your attention to the one who is reading this, you will notice there is a presence there, that is the real you. That awareness is you. With a regular practice of meditation you can cultivate this sense of inner peace and balance. It is a proven tool that allows each person to fully experience the life that they were meant to live. And, it is a way to create world peace, one person at a time.

The practice of meditation allows you to access a naturally-occurring rest state; and according to research it is actually different from sleep, the rest is much deeper, and at the same time, you are more alert. It is sometimes called the state of restful alertness. This helps to reduce stress and improve your sense of well being. But it is like exercise. You can't just know about it to get the benefits, you have to do it.

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2. Why do people meditate?

Many people meditate to experience inner peace, and to find meaning and purpose in their lives. And, for a growing number of people, perfectly healthy people, meditation is used as a means of stress reduction - it is good prevention.

You see the many advertisements for medication for digestion, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, depression, anxiety, insomnia, and sexual problems; it is no wonder that meditation is needed now more than ever.

Each one of these disorders are either caused by or made worse by stress - and more than 60% of all doctors' visits these days are due to stress related complaints. And often medication is prescribed. Medications don't treat the cause, only the symptoms. Meditation treats the cause. Stress.

Here are some other reasons why people meditate:

- to be clearer, improve their ability to focus and make better decisions.
- they feel that something is missing in life even though they have everything that they thought would make them happy.
- to increase their creativity in every aspect of their life.
- increase their level of relaxation.
- to decrease stress, lower blood pressure, reduce cholesterol, prevent strokes.
- to treat depression.
- they feel the need to reconnect with nature and silence.
- they want to escape a sense of suffering.
- they are dealing with physical or emotional disease and want to activate the healing response or prevent disease.
- as a response to the calling of their own souls.
- they are so stressed out by everyday life they know they could use a little calmness.
- in order to keep their intuition and senses sharp.
- out of curiosity, wonder, and a desire to explore.
- they want to improve their relationships.
- they want to activate the law of intention and attraction.

3. What is most unique about what you teach?

The programs we teach are perfect for any level of meditator, from those who have practiced some form of meditation on their own, and want to add to their practice, to those who have never even tried to meditate before. All of our programs are non denominational. There is no need to change your beliefs or your religion. All you need is the desire to find peace. Meditation itself is derived from the yoga tradition of India. Yoga means union-the union of environment, senses, body, mind, and soul. Ultimately meditation is used to progressively settle down the mind into the field of pure silence, or what Dr. Chopra and Wayne Dyer call *the gap*, which is usually overshadowed by the activity of the mind. Most of the meditations we teach are silent sitting meditations. However, in the retreats, we teach more advanced meditation techniques.

4. What are the benefits of meditation?

Meditation is one of the few things in the self-help arena you can do that produces measurable changes. In other words, you can take a few hours of meditation training, and then go into a medical lab and meditate, and they can measure the changes in your breathing, your blood chemistry, your brain waves, and your response to stress. And if you were sitting in a medical lab, all wired up, and they saw you enter a state of rest deeper than sleep in 5 minutes, a knowledgeable researcher would look at the instruments and say, "Oh, you just started meditating. I can see it on the meters."

Meditation aids in lowering heart rate and blood pressure, and the practice has also been used to help people quit smoking, conquer drug and alcohol addictions, reduce blood pressure and reduce symptoms of PMS, anxiety, stress, and depression.

Some other psychological benefits can be a calmer manner, a clearer mind, better decision making, and being in the present moment, rather than agonizing over the past or worrying about the future. Those who meditate report higher levels of self-esteem, and are less dependent on what others think or say about them to feel their value as a human being. Meditation also helps you to clarify your true intentions and desires, increase your intuition, and develop a peaceful mind. It has been proven to improve memory, creative thinking and concentration. Rarely is there a reason not to meditate.

5. Do you notice any changes in your students after they meditate?

Just in the last six months meditation students ages 14 - 75 have reported that they have received so many benefits:

Students report that they study better, sleep better, feel better about life, and are more spiritually connected.

Others report that they quit smoking without effort, lowered their blood pressure, have less pain, lost weight and have a greater sense of well being.

Just today, I heard from one of my students, from ASU, who said that he definitely felt less stressed and feels alert throughout the day, and more peaceful. Pretty good. He's only been meditating for a month.

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6. What do you find most fulfilling about your job? Why do you teach it?

I teach meditation because I know it works, and I see the results in myself and others – along with better health, a happier life, a sense of peace, it also awakens people's compassion for all living beings, as it has mine.

I am an activist - an activist for the protection of the environment, the welfare of animals, and an activist for peace and equality.

I first joined environmental organizations and animal welfare organizations and over time, became frustrated in trying to change people's minds about these concerns – I was working from the outside in.

Then I realized that if I can help one person at a time access their own inner peace, and awaken their sense of compassion, their relationship to all living beings could change. That is when I started the Sedona Meditation Training Company.

I teach meditation because I am an activist. I love to see the peace it brings to each one of my students. Each one of us has the responsibility to live in peace. And I found peace through meditation. This is my job, my purpose, to teach people to experience their own peace. If we

each work for peace in our own way, we can make this world a sweeter place to live for all beings.

I like to say my mission in life is to teach as many people as possible the practices of meditation in a nourishing and engaging learning environment so they're inspired to still their minds, experience present moment awareness, come to know their true essence and live from there.

My favorite poem by Chinese Philosopher Lao Tzu is this:

If there is to be peace in the world,
there must be peace in the nations.
If there is to be peace in the nations,
there must be peace in the cities.
If there is to be peace in the cities,
there must be peace between neighbors.
If there is to be peace between neighbors,
there must be peace in the home.
If there is to be peace in the home,
there must be peace in the heart.

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