



## Denise Denniston and Peter McWilliams, 'What TM is'

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### What TM is not

#### TM does not involve religious belief

*TM is not a religion? I've heard it was just some Westernized form of Hinduism.*

No, no – it's absurd to assume that just because TM comes from India it must be some Hindu practice. Italy is considered a Catholic country. Galileo, an Italian, discovered that the earth is round. The fact that the earth is round is no more connected with the Catholic Church than TM is connected with the Hindu religion. TM is a scientific discovery, a technique, which happens to come from India. As with all scientific discoveries, it works everywhere because it involves the basic laws of nature. TM does not involve any religious belief or practice – Hindu or otherwise. Just like bathing always works to get you clean, TM is a universally applicable *technique* for getting the most out of life.

*Isn't Maharishi a monk?*

Yes, he is. Many great scientists and thinkers are men of profound religious convictions. Gregor Mendel, who discovered the laws of genetics, was himself a Jesuit priest. Einstein often spoke of his 'cosmic religious sense'. A scientist's personal religious beliefs have no bearing on the validity of his contributions to science.

*Does TM conflict with any form of religion?*

No. People of any religion practice TM. In fact, they find the increased clarity of mind brought about through TM greatly broadens the comprehension and enhances the appreciation of their individual religious practices. Priests practice TM, rabbis practice TM, ministers practice TM, and they recommend TM to their congregations. [...]

*What about atheists?*

Atheists enjoy TM and for the same reason the devoutly religious enjoy it – it involves no dogma, belief or philosophy. The technique is purely scientific and produces scientifically verifiable results.

*But doesn't meditation have something to do with knowing God? Doesn't that make TM essentially a religious practice?*

TM has something to do with knowing *anything*. It makes the mind more orderly, gives the body deep rest, and improves the coordination between the two. This means that with clear awareness we can focus sharply and succeed in activity – whatever our activity may be. [...]

## **No special diet**

*Aren't most meditators vegetarians?*

Some are. Many aren't. But then, a lot of nonmeditators are vegetarians. The point is, there are no dietary restrictions or recommendations involved with TM.

*No daily ration of brown rice?*

Nope.

*I can still eat Big Macs?*

You can eat anything you want.

*This is sounding better and better.*

## **No special clothing**

*No funny clothes?*

No.

*How about sandals? Some meditators wear sandals.*

And some wear Sneakers, or Hush Puppies, or Gucci's. We get all kinds. People who practice TM grow to express their own unique individuality, and this is reflected in their life style, self expression, and, of course, their clothing. [...]

## **TM is not contemplation**

*What is contemplation?*

Contemplation is thinking *about* something (a problem, a philosophical idea) or just letting the mind wander from one idea to the next with no particular direction.

*Isn't that what people mean by meditation?*

Many do, yes. They say 'I am meditating' on this or that thought. Some call quiet reflection 'meditation,' while others glorify their day-dreams with the title 'meditation.'

Transcendental Meditation (TM) is a very specific technique, very different from any of these sorts of 'meditation'.

## **No change of life style**

*No change of life style?*

There is no need to change in any way to start TM. There are no pleasures you must abandon, nor any new traditions you must uphold.

*So my life would go on without change.*

Without *forced* change. Life is always changing. The TM program produces remarkably rapid growth. Your life will continue to change naturally, in the direction of more strength, more effectiveness, and more enjoyment. But remember, you're in full control of your own growth – it's your responsibility every step of the way.

*There is no need to change anything to start TM?*

Right.

## What TM is

*Now that I know what TM is not, tell me what it is.*

Let's give you a complete definition first; then we can analyze it point by point.

But please remember that TM is an experience, and like any experience it is hard to describe or define. No matter how clearly or cleverly we might describe a strawberry, for instance, you would still have only an abstract idea of the strawberry. But when you see a strawberry, feel a strawberry, and taste a strawberry, then the experience becomes very real. So with that in mind –

Transcendental Meditation is a simple, natural, effortless technique that allows the mind to experience subtler and subtler levels of the thinking process until thinking is transcended and the mind comes into direct contact with the source of thought. [...]

*The source of thought. What's that?*

Have you ever had the feeling that thoughts don't just spring to mind fully formed?

*I've never thought about it.*

Consider it for a moment. Do thoughts simply pop into the mind, fully formed, or do they seem to come from somewhere deep within the mind, existing at some abstract, more subtle level before they become totally clear?

*Well, they're not just there. I guess they do seem to come from someplace.*

They seem to come from somewhere within us.

All these thoughts come from one source: a field of pure energy deep within the mind.

*You're getting a bit abstract, aren't you?*

Let us be abstract just a minute longer, because what we want to find out is what the source of thought is really like.

Every thought has some meaning, some direction. Even a nonsensical thought or a thought in a dream makes some kind of sense to us – we recognize it as a picture, as words, as an emotion, or as an idea. This means that every thought has some kind of intelligent purpose or direction. We don't think at random because thoughts themselves contain intelligence.

So now we know one thing about the source of thought – it has to be creative, a reservoir of intelligence. Every bit of intelligence that we display in our daily lives reflects the intelligence contained in our thoughts.

Also, we experience thousands of thoughts every day – they just keep coming and coming. So they must be coming from a virtually unlimited source of energy.

The source of thought, then, is the source of millions of individual bundles of creativity, intelligence, and energy.

*Some people don't seem to display as much intelligence as they might.*

Right. We all display different degrees of intelligence in different kinds of activity. That's why we're talking about TM – all of us want to display *maximum* intelligence in *everything* we do. Thinking is the basis of action, action is the basis of achievement, and achievement makes us feel fulfilled.

*This still seems abstract ...*

Consider it from the objective point of view. According to physics, everything that exists is built up of layers of energy, one inside another. Einstein demonstrated that matter is just another form of energy with his equation 'E = mc<sup>2</sup>.' Also, we notice that in all creation, from the growth of the plants

to the movement of the planets, there is great order, or intelligence. Since thoughts also exist, they must be made of the most basic form of energy as well. And they have their source, or basis, in the same field of creative intelligence and energy that underlies all creation.

*What does this have to do with TM?*

The regular practice of the Transcendental Meditation technique taps this field of energy within ourselves, bringing it out to fully enhance our lives. We tap the source of intelligence, and daily we are more intelligent. We tap the source of energy, and daily we are more energetic. We tap the source of creativity, and daily we are more creative. So Transcendental Meditation is a process by which one contacts this source of pure creativity and intelligence at the basis of the thinking process, allowing this creative intelligence to be expressed in greater clarity of mind, greater efficiency of action, and increasing fulfilling achievements in daily life.

### **TM is effortless**

*'Easy' and 'effortless'?*

Anything that is natural *must* be easy and effortless. It is easy to talk, to eat, to sleep, to enjoy our friends – and because it is so easy it's also effortless. The same is true of TM. Once the technique is learned, the process flows – easily and effortlessly.

*Ah! There's the catch! 'Once the technique is learned.' Just how many years does it take to learn this technique?*

Years? Days. Hours, actually. Four two-hour sessions with a qualified teacher of TM, and that's it.

*And then I do TM whenever I want?*

No. TM is practiced twice a day, morning and evening, for 15–20 minutes each time. It's preparation for activity. We sit comfortably anywhere we happen to be: propped up in bed, on a train, in the office, in your living room, anywhere. [...]

The Transcendental Meditation program fits into your life something like this:

You wake in the morning wishing that sleep would have worked a little better. You begin your morning TM and contact the source of creative intelligence. By the time your TM is finished you feel refreshed, awake, alive. As the day wears on and this feeling of freshness wears off, you begin to feel less efficient, more tired. Time for the early-evening period of TM. The deep rest of TM dissolves any stress accumulated during the day and the contact with creative intelligence enlivens the mind. After TM you are ready to engage in a full evening of enjoyable activities.

Our days are structured in cycles with a period of rest (night's sleep) and a period of activity (the day and evening). TM adds two additional periods of revitalizing rest – making the entire structure of activity more flexible and more enjoyable.

From D. Denniston, P. McWilliams and B. Geller (illus.) (1975) *The TM Book: How to Enjoy the Rest of Your Life*, Michigan, Versemonger Press, pp.13–16, 19–23, 26–7, 32–3, 35–6, 38–9, 44–7, footnotes and illustrations omitted.