



DAVID HARP AND NINA SMILEY, Ph.D.

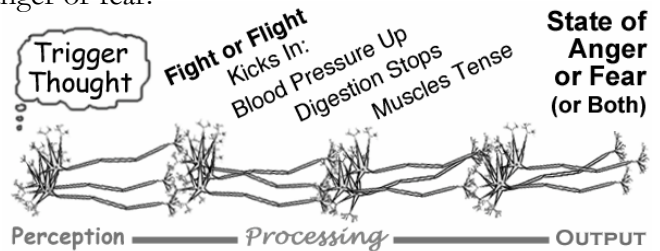
David Harp and Nina Smiley's

The Three Minute Meditator

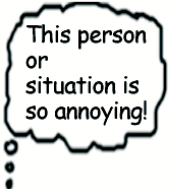
Just Seven Steps to Serenity...

In **Step One**, we learn how the brain works (brain cells called “neurons” chain together to form “Neural Paths,” which produce our emotions, words, and actions). On a practical level, perhaps the most important thing we learn is how “Trigger Thoughts” stimulate an ancient brain process known as the Fight or Flight Response, which causes anger or fear.

We then learn that simply by re-focusing our attention onto the breath when we notice fear or anger arising, we can consciously trigger the calming Relax and Release Response. On a philosophical level, we learn in Step One how a meditator views the world that we live in.



From This...



To:



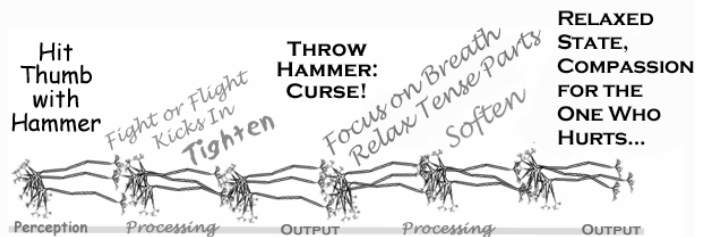
This...

In **Step Two** we learn a variety of meditation exercises to clear the mind, to give us a respite from fear, from anger, from desire. This builds Mental Muscle™, which allows us to deal with Dead End Thoughts and Difficult People, simply by splitting our attention between the breath (which triggers the Relax and Release Response) and the person who is difficult, or the painful repetitive thought.

In **Step Three**, we learn how to watch the mind, how to see the thoughts and neural paths within it. By observing when and where they occur — by knowing the highways and byways of our “Neural Neighborhood” it becomes easier to work with our angers, our fears, and our desires — often because we can, as David puts it: “See it coming, *before* it hits the fan.”

In **Step Four**, we learn about Visualization and Relaxation. We apply these techniques towards dealing with the thoughts and neural paths that we have learned to identify by using the strategies in Step Three.

In **Step Five**, we embark upon the lifelong task of learning how to Soften Around Pain. Physical pain, or mental pain. Acute pain, or chronic pain. When we no longer have to tighten around pain, and resist it, we both hurt less, and can explore the reality, the truth of our own minds, our lives, our relationships.



In **Step Six**, we begin to cultivate the mental states of Compassion, Non-Judging, and Don't Know. Without these, even the attempt to practice mindfulness can become just another opportunity for self-hatred, self-criticism, and unfulfilled expectation.

In **Step Seven**, we embark upon the road to total freedom, with Living in the Now, and The Master Skill.

Over time, we can learn to **use the act** of dealing with the obstacles in our life to build Mental Muscle™ and to practice the techniques of Softening Around Pain, Compassion, Don't Know, Non-Judging, and Living in the Now (that effortless state in which thoughts of past or future disappear, and we act skillfully in the present). We have then spun straw into gold, turned manure into fertilizer. Even if we only manage occasionally to understand that life can be an exciting challenge and not a trial to be endured, and that compassion and awareness trump anger and fear – **This is the Master Skill...**