BOOK REVIEW:

MEDITATION - OSHO
PART 1: ABOUT MEDITATION

So what is meditation? In one word: Being. Not doing, not thinking, just being. It’s about becoming the watcher. Of what? Of your thoughts and your bodily actions. Become aware of them. Meditation equals awareness. Anything you do with awareness is meditation.

The first step is to become very watchful of your own body. Be aware about each gesture, each action, each movement. Afterwards, become aware of your thoughts. This will allow you to create an inner peace, a bridge between mind and body. The third step is to become alert of your desires, feelings, emotions and moods. You may call this ability self-awareness. It is the most difficult from all three steps. Once you reached awareness in these three steps, the fourth and last one can take place. It is to become aware of your own awareness. This is called the ultimate awakening or enlightenment. This would make a real Buddha.

- Meditation will help you grow in sensitivity. Sensitivity to things, actions, people, feelings. And this sensitivity will bring love. By meditating deeply, love will be brought to you, like a new quality to your being. You always want a love that comes from meditation, not from the mind.
- Meditation will bring you joy. A joy that is there for no reason. A joy that is internally generated and that does not depend on external factors. A lot of people find joy that is caused by something outside their being such as getting money, meeting a beautiful women, going to parties, etc. The problem with this kind of joy is that it is momentary. It will disappear. Once you found joy that is stable and unchangeable, you’re step closer to Buddhahood.
- Meditation will help you rediscover your intelligence. Meditation is capable of destroying all the barriers society imposed on you and prevented you to be intelligent. Our minds are often ‘pre-programmed’ by society. The fact is that every human being carries a deep, great potential within him – or herself. Meditation can allow you to get in touch with that potential.
- In short, meditation will help you to become your “real Self”. It is there. It just needs to be discovered. Don’t let society determine your Self. Only you can do it – through meditation. Meditation will help you realize what is going to fulfil you, what is going to make you flower. And that is different for each individual.
PART 2: THE SCIENCE OF MEDITATION

Before starting meditation as a beginner, consider some RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Create enough space for yourself**: disengage yourself totally when you meditate: no phone, no shoes, no people around you that may disturb you.

- **Pick the right place**: you can sit in nature or in your own room –doors closed–. The best alternative is to have a special ‘meditation room’. After meditating a few times in that room, the room will become “meditative” and it can help you to get in a meditative, peaceful state.

- **Be comfortable**: Comfort means the ability to forget your body. You should find a posture that makes it possible for you to forget your body. Comfort of the body is a basic requirement for reaching inner stillness.

- **Begin with Catharsis**: Begin with cleansing → in all human beings there is some kind of suppressed madness, anger. Throw it out. Release it. Especially for beginners, this is a very useful technique. Before you sit down, start with something active, something alive and energetic: scream out your suppressed feelings of anger or madness and an inner stillness will occur. A more silent meditation will be possible for you. If you can allow the madness to come out, cleansing will happen. Sitting meditation can be done.

A few more guidelines to FREEDOM...

- The **3 essentials of meditation** are:
  1) Relaxation
  2) Watchfulness: you are the watcher, the ‘witness’ of your thoughts.
  3) A non-judgmental attitude: never judge the thoughts you experience, just watch them.

- **Be playful**: meditation is not something serious, it is playful.

- **Be patient**: Slow down. Wait very patiently for that moment of stillness. Don’t try to hurry. Only total surrender will make you reach that inner stillness.

- **Don’t look for results**: The ego loves results: it is result-oriented. Your ego doesn’t usually care about the action itself, it wants the results. Ego needs challenge, needs results. Meditation is only for those who are NOT result-oriented. Meditation is a non-goal-oriented state.
PART 3: THE MEDITATIONS

In the next chapter OSHO presents some meditation exercises. Some are more advanced than others. You may find these exercises too hard or too long, especially in the beginning. Don’t worry. For beginners, I recommend to start little ‘mini-versions’ of these exercises. My aim is to give you a general idea about these meditations. I will briefly name each of them and talk about the underlying principles which I consider to be valuable for you. (TIP: a great way to begin your meditation journey is to use the application *Headspace* on your iPhone. Very user-friendly. The vocal guidance will help you to start off easily and expand into other, more advanced meditation exercises in the long term.)

- **OSHO active meditations**: The principle of active meditation is that you do something “active” – dancing, singing, jumping, shouting, etc. – in order to become silent. The underlying idea is that energy moves in a dual polarity: once you are active, a passive and silent state is needed. There has to be a balance. So when you are absolutely alive, vital and full with energy, at a certain moment of time, silence must happen. A meditative state will be the result. The next 3 meditations are based on the principle of dual polarity.

- **OSHO dynamic meditation**: This is already a pretty advanced type of active meditation. It contains of 5 stages, lasting 1 hour. Firstly, breath chaotically through the nose, while concentrating on exhalation for 10 minutes. The aim is to create chaos in your repressed system. It is to destroy all your past patterns. What most people don’t realize is that breathing is deeply connected with your mental state. Once you are able to change your breathing, you can easily change the state of your mind. Big, deep breaths will make you feel at ease. Short, shallow breathing is often characterized by a fearful state. Be aware of that. The second stage is *catharsis*: throw it all out. Go totally mad for about 10 minutes: scream, shout, cry, jump, dance, sing, laugh, etc. The underlying principle is to let go, to become empty of all inner repressions. Thirdly, jump up and down for with raised arms screaming “HOO!”, for around 10 minutes. Each time you land down, let the sound hammer deep into the sex centre. Give all you have and exhaust yourself totally. The underlying principle is that by doing this – hitting the sex centre from within – energy will start to flow within. This exercise is a kind of vehicle to bring your energy upward, towards the head. The fourth step is to stop, to pause totally for 15 minutes. Stop whatever you are doing and don’t do anything. Let the energy move in one upward flow. Here, you will become silent. Don’t do anything but stay alert, aware. Witness what is happening. This is true meditation. The fifth and last stage is to celebrate and rejoice with music and dance for about 15 minutes. Express your gratitude toward the whole and carry this feeling throughout your day.

- **OSHO kundalini meditation**: Closely related to the OSHO dynamic meditation. It consists of 4 stages, each stage taking 15 minutes. Firstly, be loose and allow your body to shake. The shaking refers to your solidity. The aim is to make your very
foundations become liquid, fluid, flowing. Secondly, dance and let the body move as
it wishes to move. Thirdly, close your eyes and be still – sitting or standing- and
witness what is happening. Lastly, keeping your eyes closed, sit or lie down and be
still.

- **OSHO nataraj meditation:** This meditation is one big dance. Start – with eyes closed –
dancing for about 40 minutes. Be totally one with the dance. Dance so deeply that
you forget that you are dancing. Lose yourself totally in the dance. Secondly, keeping
your eyes closed, lie down and be silent for 20 minutes. Lastly, dance lightly and
enjoy the feeling that runs through your body for about 5 minutes.

In fact, ANYTHING can be a meditation: eating your food, talking to your friends, taking a
shower, cleaning the house, etc. How can you turn these actions into meditation? By de-
automatizing. This is the secret: de-automatize. A major problem people have is that their
brains work on autopilot most of the time. However, only by being fully aware of our
actions, can we become meditative. We can actually be aware and enjoy our actions. So only
if you keep alert, any activity can be meditation.

Drop all prejudices you had about meditation. For those who thought that meditation was
just sitting underneath a tree in a yoga posture, you are wrong. Anything can be meditation. Even
sports. Running, jogging, swimming: they can all be a meditation. The secret here is to
learn to melt your mind, body and soul. Totally lose yourself in it. Become one with the
activity. Remember that the movement used in sports creates awareness. If the activity
becomes automatized and you lose that awareness, stop it and try something new.

- **Vipassana meditation:** This exercise goes back to the very essence of meditation. It
can be done on three different levels. The first is: awareness of your actions, your
body, your mind, and your heart. Be alert when you move your body. While walking,
while eating, while taking a shower, be alert. The same holds for your mind.
Whatever thought or emotion that comes by, watch it. Don’t get involved. Don’t
identify with it. Simply witness it. The second form of Vipassana is breathing,
becoming aware of your breathing. Become aware of the belly, its rising and falling as
you are breathing in and out. As you become more aware of the belly, the body
relaxes, the mind becomes silent, the heart becomes silent and the moods disappear.
The third form is to be aware of the breath at the entrance, when the breath goes in
through your nostrils. Become aware of the coolness to your nostrils when you
breath in. Breathing from the belly is more natural, more relaxed. Women tend to
breathe through their bellies more than men. Most men have chosen to breathe
through the chest, in order to look more athletic. Learn how to breathe from your
belly.

- **Opening the heart:** Try to be headless. Move “headlessly”. Feel like your head has
disappeared. This may be very weird in the beginning, but gradually a strange feeling
will be felt: your centre will fall down to the heart. For the first time, you are at the heart. You will be looking through the heart and not through the head. Secondly, be more loving, because love can only function through the heart, not the head. The heart synthesizes, the mind divides. Only the heart can give unity. Look through the mind and you will see atoms, division. The mind can only analyse. Look through the heart and you will see unity, love and peace. You will see ‘oneness’, God. The heart radiates peace, radiates love.

- **Inner centering:** Most human beings don’t realize that – in order to find the Real Source – joy has to be internally generated. Whenever there is joy, most people feel that it is coming from outside of them. You see the sun and you become happy, you see a good friend and you become happy, you see high-sugar foods and you become happy; the examples are countless. But joy is always within you. Whenever this joy arises, try to remain centered in that feeling of happiness. Don’t focus too much on the object provoking that feeling. Focus on the feeling, the joy itself. Become aware of that feeling. Awareness will deepen it. Remain at the center of the cyclone. The cyclone means desire. Desire is a disease, it is disturbance. But in each cyclone, there is a center which is undisturbed. As the Shiva says: “In moods of extreme desire, be undisturbed.” Once you know how to be undisturbed, the world can’t be misery for you anymore. Nothing can hurt you anymore. There is no suffering anymore. Once you can remain undisturbed in anger, in desire, you can play with them. Know your center, become grounded in it and you will become a master. Don’t be a slave, don’t live in reaction. Be centered. Be a master.

- **Golden Light meditation:** Preferably done in the morning, first thing after you woke up. Lie down in your bed on your back, eyes closed. Breathe in deeply and let golden light come into you through your head. It will cleanse your whole body and make it absolutely full of creativity. This is male energy. Then exhale and let darkness come from your toes upward – this is feminine energy. This will calm you, it will give you rest. Do it for about 20 minutes early in the morning.

- **Meditation on darkness:** In this exercise, OSHO suggests to find a place that is ‘naturally’ dark. Find a dark room or go to a remote village without electricity, a mountain peak, whatever place is dark. Stare into that darkness with open eyes. It will give you a very deep soothing feeling. Among OSHO, people lost touch with real darkness. Real darkness will cause the rise of many things deep from your unconsciousness. Things that might even frighten or scare you, but in fact they’re just mental creations. By staying alert, you will realize that. You will become a master again.
- **Meditations in sound**: Sounds are everywhere around you. They are always moving towards you. The exercise? Bathe in the center of sound. OSHO suggests to just close your eyes and feel the whole universe filled with sound. Feel as if every sound is coming towards you and stay alert. This feeling will provide you with a very deep peace.

- **Enter the clear sky**: Meditate on the sky. Lie down on your back and just look at the sky – preferably an unclouded, clear sky – Don’t blink, stare at it. Your eyes may feel painful or tears may come, but don’t worry about that. It’s part of the exercise. The underlying idea is to really ‘enter’ the sky. Become one with it. Don’t start to think about the sky, but *become* the sky. Move deep in it. To have a real meditative effect, this practice should take at least 40 minutes. A useful tip? Be more inclusive. Include the sky into your being. Not only the sky, but everything in life. Include more. Look at the sun, close your eyes and include it within you. Feel it within you. Look at a painting, close your eyes and include it within you. You will feel more fresh, more young.

- **Finding the Witness**: One of the quickest and easiest ways to become a witness is to focus on the *pineal gland*, also called your ‘third eye’. It is located just in the middle between your two eyebrows. Close your eyes and focus them right on that point, as if you are looking with your two eyes through the pineal gland. You will feel that suddenly, you become very attentive. You become a witness of what is happening. Always try to be a witness, an observer. It is meditative.

- **Just sitting**: Sitting and doing nothing may be harder than you think. Your mind will find a million arguments to not just sit. But if you can be aware of that inner voice and don’t get bothered by it, amazing things can happen. OSHO suggests to sit in front of a plain wall, eyes half-open allowing the gaze to rest softly on the wall. Don’t try to concentrate on anything in particular, just hold a diffuse image. Relax your breathing; let it be natural. Lastly, be comfortable and let your body be immobile. You can sit on a matrass, a chair, whatever feels comfortable. Hold your back straight and stay still for about 30 minutes.

- **Just listening**: Listening too can be a meditation. OSHO makes a brilliant distinction between *meditative listening* and *concentrated listening*. When you listen meditatively, you understand. When you listen concentrated, you learn. Listening with concentration often means that you are tense, too eager to learn, to absorb, to know. You are only interested in knowledge. The mind is focused, tense. When you listen meditatively, you are relaxed and totally open. The mind is not tense but loose. You listen not to know, but to understand. Try to increase meditative listening. It will be hard first, because society learned you to listen with concentration: all schools,
colleges, universities teach concentration, because the goal is to know, to memorize. The art of listening has never been taught to you at school. To listen meditatively, you will have to drop all thinking. With thoughts running through your head, it is not possible to listen. Right listening means to be in a totally receptive, open and silent mood.

**PART 4: OBSTACLES TO MEDITATION**

There are 2 obstacles to meditation:

1. The ego
2. The constantly chattering mind

- OSHO claims that our society is organized in such a way that people create an ego, from the beginning of their lives. In the school you’re told: “Come first in class and we will reward you with a degree”. In sports you’re probably told: “Become the best of your team and you will win a trophy at the end of the season”. The examples are limitless. Most youngsters start their journey with these ideas. The ego goes on bigger and bigger as he or she succeeds. Among OSHO, ego is the greatest disease that can happen to man. If the ego is too big, it prevents you from moving on. If the ego is too small, it becomes a wound and by creating an inferiority complex, it prevents you from moving on as well. In either way, ego will provoke problems.

Ego means possessiveness, – *me, mine, I* – dominate your spoken language. Ego means division. OSHO argues that our universe is one. It is a unity. Nothing is divided. Everything is connected with everything else. You are connected with the earth, the trees, the people around you, with everything. The more you feel this connectedness, the more the whole existence is part of you. The reality is a unity and with the idea of *me* and *you* we are falling out of reality. As the Buddha said: ‘Float with the stream. Let it take you to the ocean’. Ego, the false sense of self or the “I” can never relax. It will find problem after problem after problem. It won’t allow you any rest. Meditation makes you realize that the ego is unreal. It is completely false. It is not your real center. Your ego - the false idea about yourself - comes mainly from outside: people say you’re this or that, that you are intelligent or beautiful or vital. And out of all these things, people create a false image about themselves, a false identity. Why false? Because only YOU can look into yourself. Only YOU know who you are. Your inner reality is not available to anybody else, except YOU. Sometimes, sit silently and think who you are. Many ideas will arise. Find the source of these ideas. Find out who you are. Meditation will allow you to do that.
Your mind automatically transforms everything around you, every experience into words. These words can create a barrier. They create a barrier between consciousness and existence. OSHO recommends to be very aware of your constant verbalizing and to be able to stop it. Just try to see things; do not verbalize. Try to be aware of the presence of things without labelling them with words. Let things be without language. Meditative growth can only happen if you stop verbalizing. Meditation means living without words. Meditation is the communion between consciousness and existence.

The mind is one of the most beautiful and - at the same time - most complex mechanisms in the world. Don’t try to control it. Just watch it. Be a witness. Look deep at it with love, with deep respect. OSHO argues that there is nothing wrong with the mind itself. So just watch it from a distance and enjoy it. Let thoughts come and go, let them move in full freedom. The more you are able to watch them, the more silent you will become. Gaps between thoughts will arise, glimpses of ‘no-mind’. And with practice, these glimpses will become longer and longer until you become a master.