

## ABSTRACT

### *VIPASSANA MEDITATION: A QUALITATIVE STUDY*

**Purpose:** The report describes a qualitative study that explores the subjective experiences of *Vipassana* meditators, and the process and outcome of their meditation practice.

**Method:** This nonclinical sample population was recruited through snowball sampling methodology. Their experiences were recorded through audio-taped interviews, open ended questions, emails, and telephone conversations.

**Results:** For these volunteers, heightened awareness, catharsis, and community support had created a mutually reinforcing spiral for numerous social, cognitive, and behavioral changes and enabled improved interactions with Self, others, and the environment. All volunteers believed that their improved satisfaction with life was an outcome of the psychological stability and role modeling provided by the *Vipassana* environment.

**Conclusions:** *Vipassana* had reconstructed new moral, social, and philosophical structures with significant cognitive, behavioral, cathartic, and social benefits. It was conducive for stress management, sensitivity training, in facilitating empathy, compassion, altruism, supportive communication, prevention of burnout, and for increasing productivity in work environment for nonclinical population. The environment represented a role model for rehabilitation and community development programs, and provided a viable preventative as well as intervention treatment method for mental health programs.

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