

DIET FOR MEDITATION

Swami Kriyananda



Deep meditation requires a calm breath and heartbeat. It is carbon in the blood that forces them into activity. Physical exertion, tensions, and emotions feed carbon into the blood and force the lungs and heart to increase their activity. (Note, for example, how you pant after running a race.)

But certain foods also have the same effect. Carbohydrates especially are to blame. The excess of carbon in the body from too many sweets forces the heart to beat faster, and the lungs to work harder. For this reason, the yogi should not eat too many sweets, nor too many starches and other carbohydrates. For the same reason he should avoid the use of stimulants, which speed up the heart. Tea and coffee are not recommended in the yoga teachings.

Overeating can place as much of a load on the heart, however, as any stimulant. Here again the reason for the yogic teaching, “*Stokum stokum anekoda*—Eat a little bit, frequently.”

It is well to eat more raw foods, especially fruits and nuts, and not to eat for three hours prior to any long meditation.

A strong mind can force a reluctant body to do its will, but if the body is brought into harmony with one’s spiritual aspirations, the resulting teamwork can be a tremendous aid on every level—physical, as well as mental and spiritual.



☞ *The Art and Science of Raja Yoga, Step Fourteen: Diet* ☞