

2025 Pain Care Skills Training (PCST) & Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Combined Agenda

Meditation – A Pathway to Living Stress-Free (with skills practice)

Presented by: Carmen Palmer, RN, BSN, MPH, Raja Yoga

Meditation Practitioner & Instructor

Offered: 20 August 2025, 0730-1130 AM ET

Location: Partnership for Public Service, 6th floor – Room 608

Course Description:

In today's fast-paced world, stress has become a constant companion for many of us, infiltrating our personal and professional lives. The onslaught of the COVID pandemic increased the global prevalence of depression and anxiety by 25%, according to the WHO. Healthcare professional burnout, survivor's guilt, and unresolved trauma after COVID adds to the rising concern. It's a time to recognize that stress can affect various aspects of life, from physical health to mental and spiritual well-being. As we juggle countless responsibilities and face an endless stream of challenges, the need for a sanctuary of peace to mitigate the negative effects of stress has never been more critical. However, as challenging as it may seem, a stress-free way of life is not an unattainable ideal—it's a lifestyle that emphasizes balance, mindful awareness of who we are and the truth of our innate nature, and the conscious cultivation of inner peace. It means breaking free from the cycles of tension, reclaiming mental clarity, and embracing a more harmonious way of being. Meditation offers a pathway to this ideal, providing a timeless practice that invites us to pause, relax, and with the power of our minds reconnect with our true selves. This presentation will explore how meditation serves as a powerful tool to alleviate stress, promote mental clarity, and pave the way to a more balanced, fulfilling, and genuinely stress-free life. Together, we'll uncover the transformative potential of this simple yet profound practice. This learning environment will be both instructional and interactive. We ask that you come with an open mind, open heart, and a willingness to fully engage and to experience the practice of meditation.

Learning Objectives:

- 1) Identify the true nature of stress and four levels of stress.
- 2) Recognize triggers for stress and symptoms of stress.
- 3) Recognize fear as a reaction to change and the seed for stress.
- 4) Discuss the creative process and the power of our thoughts in creating stress experience.
- 5) Identify external and internal influences on our response to stressors.
- 6) Explore identity crises as key to creating stress in responding to situations.
- 7) Explore how to break the vicious cycle of negative and stressful patterns of thinking.
- 8) Discuss the benefits of meditation in gaining mastery over our thoughts and as an antidote to stress.
- 9) Introduction to higher states of consciousness.
- 10) Explain how meditation enables connection with one's higher states of consciousness, and its direct relationship to conscious choice making.
- 11) Explore steps for meditation, when to meditate, and what to expect.
- 12) Demonstrate how to meditate with full class participation.

20 AUGUST 0730-1130 AM ET

- 0730-0830 Exploring the Dynamics of Stress and the Effects of Stress
- I. Dynamics of stress – definition/ signs & symptoms of stress / causes of stress/ levels of stress
 - II. The creative process/ external and internal influences
 - III. The role of thoughts / types of thoughts / transforming thoughts
- 0830-0930 Introduction to Higher Levels of Consciousness
- I. Software of the soul / soul consciousness
 - II. Three layers of consciousness and conscious decision making
 - III. Benefits of meditation /creating and sustaining transformed awareness and new patterns of thinking, for mitigating the effects of stress
- 0930-0945 ----- **BREAK** -----
- 0945-1045 Exploring and Deepening the Practice of Meditation
- I. Introduction to the innate nature of the soul
 - II. Discuss meditation as a technique to access and experience the innate nature of consciousness (the soul)
 - III. Introduce steps for meditation / Group meditation practice
- 1045-1130 Questions & Answers, Resources