

# The Role of Orgasmic Meditation in Human Flourishing

“ It appears that Orgasmic Meditation (OM) optimizes our own biology, our own nervous system, to disable the sense of wounding, the neurotic storytelling, the operatic internal arias around our personal tragedies. By combining sexual arousal with a mindful turn toward what we have been trying to keep locked up, we release the body’s energy that fuels the great states of joy and well-being that are the birthright of being human. ”

—NICOLE DAEDONE

## OM Benefits

- Deepens joy and intimacy by fusing meditative attention to sexual arousal
- Addresses a major symptom of trauma (emotional numbness) and depression
- Dissolves feelings of isolation, disconnection, loneliness
- Impacts a major indicator of physical health and longevity
- Participants report a reduction in cravings, including for food and alcohol

For more than a century, science and medicine have wrestled with addressing profound areas of psychological wounding—trauma, depression, emotional numbing, addiction, and anxiety among them—that are obstacles to wellness. Pharmaceuticals and a top-down therapeutic approach of adjusting the mind have been the

main methods for mitigating the intensity of the feeling of woundedness. In the case of trauma in particular, the focus has been on dodging triggers in order to avoid flooding the system with negative emotions and states of mind.

New areas of research are exploring approaches in which flourishing, as opposed to negativity, can be triggered. Some of these modalities include months or years of meditation on altruism and compassion (Stanford, Emory), or approaches to happiness that require months or years of cultivating a more spiritually integrated approach to living (Harvard, University of Pennsylvania).

But Harvard lecturer Amy Cuddy popularized a way to understand the bottom-up approach, one in which a shift in the body induces changes in the mind. Known as the power pose, what Cuddy discovered is a stance that induces feelings of confidence.

Cuddy endured years of attack and bullying over this idea, but in 2020 (Elsesser, 2020) it was finally proven. The effect is conclusive.

**Conventional  
approaches to  
healing start  
with the mind**



**New approaches  
activate flourishing at  
the level of the body**

This is the beginning of a revolution, that the body—without the aid of external substances—can change the mind. Even more robust approaches are emerging that are revolutionizing the way we understand how to get to not just base-level psychological health but to peak states of human flourishing. We now know that this can happen through a combination of sexual arousal and meditative concentration, delivered through the methodology of clitoral stroking in Orgasmic Meditation (OM).

OM is a structured attention-training practice

conducted between two people who are following a predefined set of detailed instructions. The practice involves one person gently stroking the clitoris of the other person for 15 minutes while both place their attention on the point of contact and notice what they feel.

Nicole Daedone initiated the research into OM. She felt sure, from decades of practicing Orgasmic Meditation, that science would confirm the extraordinary benefits she had personally observed. She and a group of colleagues set out to gather the proof.

Researchers such as neuroscientist Andrew Newberg, of the Marcus Institute of Integrative Health, and others, have observed intriguing brain changes in both stroker and strokee that occur in just minutes instead of years of practice. These brain changes rival the brain changes and brain connectivity observed in study participants who have received strong and prolonged doses of psychedelics, and in those who have practiced meditation for decades.

OM is proving highly effective in studies, with participants who range from healthy to depressed, whether suffering from chronic anxiety or symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). And OM leverages the body's own neurobiology to do it, through an observable resonance.

The intensity of the experience for one participant is correlated with the activation of several brain structures in their partner.

The effectiveness of OM comes from turning the strongest force in a human body—sexual arousal—mindfully toward our biggest wounds.



In this process, the well-being of sexuality unleashes neurobiological and neurochemical

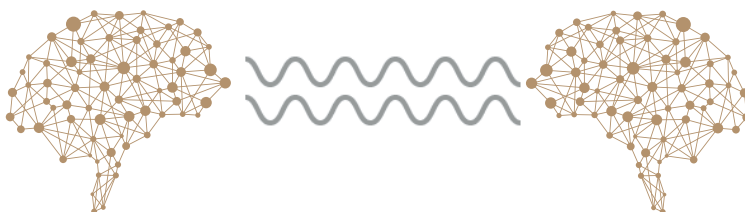
changes that provide one of the strongest possible foundations for healing.

Psychology, according to Freud, was meant to replace misery with ordinary unhappiness. Antidepressants and other psychopharmaceuticals deliver tolerance of difficult states by muting their intensity. If you are suffering from anxiety, depression, or a traumatic wound to the nervous system, then attempting to experience the benefits of meditation can, in some cases, deepen psychological distress. OM has the potential to leapfrog modes of psychological healing to deliver practitioners to the threshold of truly transformative states.

Newberg tells us that the practice of OM rewires the brain in ways that can be associated with positive states of flourishing. “We are getting the first hints of how all of this happens,” he says.

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## Brain changes during OM are correlated between pairs



Source: (Newberg, A. et. al. F1000 Research, 2022.)

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew Newberg is the director of research at the Marcus Institute of Integrative Health and a physician at Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia. Board certified in both internal medicine and nuclear medicine, Andrew studies neurotheology, the relationship between brain function and various mental states—particularly with respect to religious and spiritual experiences.

“This is so promising and we are hoping to look at how neurohormones such as oxytocin (bonding) and serotonin (well-being) are involved. These neurotransmitters are believed to be crucial in spiritual experiences—particularly the feeling of connecting to something larger, to dissolving that sense of separateness that so many report as central to a feeling of purpose. And what role does dopamine play? We don’t know yet but it will be what we study next. It’s an exciting possibility to see how the brain’s reward systems are leveraged in this unique approach.” (Newberg et al., 2021)

### Future Research: Neurohormones & OM

**Oxytocin**  
*“Bonding”*



**Dopamine**  
*“Reward”*

**Serotonin**  
*“Well-being”*

“ OM science shows that the practice of Orgasmic Meditation entrains the brain to the positive, to the good. By laying down new habits, new neurocircuitry, OM helps us build the emotional resilience to face and work with our darkest, most difficult psychological material. It trains us simultaneously to peak states of consciousness and human connection. ”

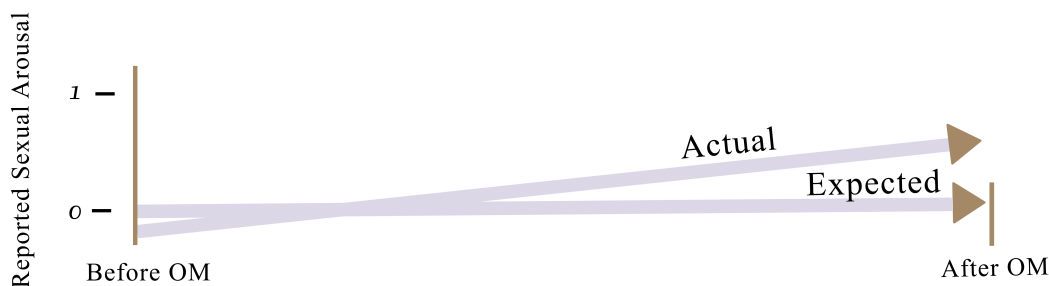
—NICOLE DAEDONE

# The Benefits of Orgasmic Meditation (OM)

There is growing evidence that Orgasmic Meditation has profound broader health benefits. These include increased resilience, trauma reduction, feelings of connectedness, and overall improved emotional health.

The findings listed below reflect a cross-sectional summary of the five peer-reviewed papers published on studies relating to the practice of OM. These studies were conducted by independent universities and research institutions such as Thomas Jefferson University, University of Pittsburgh, and Liberos, a biotechnology company.

## 1. Ability to feel sexual arousal that has been numbed through sexual trauma



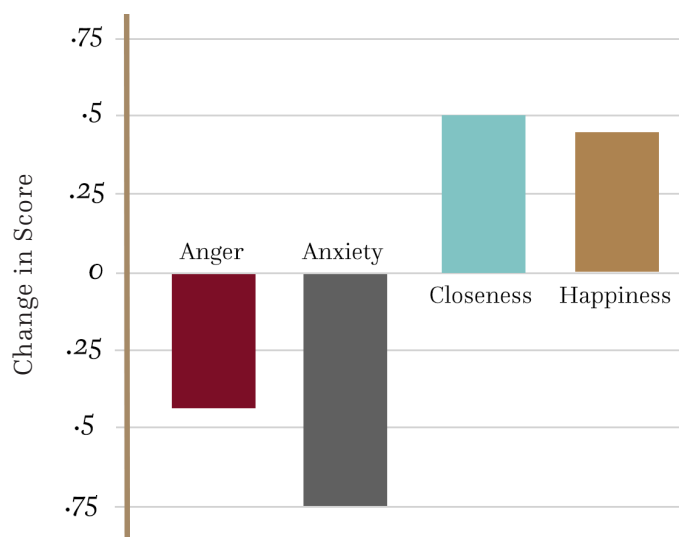
(Prause, N. & Siegle, G. 2021)

A June 2021 study with 250 participants conducted by researchers at the University of Pittsburgh and Liberos, found that people with more adverse childhood events, including sexual trauma, reported higher sexual arousal post OM session than those with less youth trauma (Prause et al., 2021). This unexpected finding suggests that the contained setting of the OM practice may provide people with a history of sexual abuse a longed-for environment that feels safe enough to experience arousal. This conclusion was reached based on comparing adverse childhood experience (ACE) scores and self-reported sexual arousal (both stroker and strokee) in an OM between those who varied in their experience with ACEs. Decreased arousal is associated with depression, which is a focus of future research.

## 2. Potentially improves resilience to stress

During a November 2021 study conducted at Thomas Jefferson University, involving 40 advanced practitioners, OM was shown to affect heart-rate variability (HRV), a marker of resilience to stress (Newberg et al., 2021). This could be an exciting area of future study.

### 3. Increased positive emotions and decreased negative emotions



(Prause, N. & Siegle, G. 2021)

A March 2021 study conducted by the University of Pittsburgh and Liberos involving 250 practitioners of OM found that OM decreases negative emotions, such as anger and anxiety, and increases happiness (Prause et al., 2021). Researchers note it is rare for a modality to expand emotional range. Most current modalities that impact positive or negative affect are aimed at limiting the range. For example, anti-anxiety medications and antidepressants are designed to reduce the intensity of fear and sadness. At the same time, they also reduce the intensity of positive emotions like happiness and contentment. By liberating emotional range, OM allows the practitioner to access a wider range of positive emotions, with greater potential implications for addressing negative states associated with clinical disorders.

### 4. Reports of reduced cravings

A study by Dr. Caroline Griggs involving 40 advanced practitioners of OM, using a 14-point questionnaire, found that OM practice decreases the craving for food, nicotine, or alcohol (Griggs and Thiel, 2022). New research is underway to determine the duration of the effect.

### 5. Potentially improves emotional regulation

A November 2021 study conducted with 40 advanced OM practitioners at Thomas Jefferson University using functional magnetic resonance imaging found the OM practice affects the brain's functional connectivity in ways similar to changes observed in long-term meditators who engage in practices designed to strengthen emotional regulation (Newberg et al., 2021). This means practitioners are likely to have greater self-control under positive or negative stress, and greater emotional resilience during difficult times. The changes in the brain were measured in OM practitioners in a resting state.

## **6. Induces mystical, or heightened experiences of peak human flourishing, feelings of “oneness,” or “flow”**

In a July 2021 study (review pending) administered online with 780 OM practitioners by Dr. Vivian Siegel (MIT) (Siegel & Emmert-Aronson, 2021), 62 percent of participants reported a mystical experience in a previous OM on par with people who had taken the second-highest dose of psilocybin, as rated by the MEQ 30, a validated and quantitative measure of mystical experience (Barret et al., 2015). Forbes reported the following in a 2021 article titled “How Science Is Making Sense Of The Mystical Experience In Psychedelic Medicine” (Ponieman, 2021):

“ Dr. Albert Garcia-Romeu, a Johns Hopkins assistant professor and member of the University’s Center for Psychedelic and Consciousness Research, says that the mystical-type effects produced by psychedelics have been linked across the board to benefits in a number of different populations, including people with depression, cancer patients, and people with different types of substance use disorders like alcohol dependence and tobacco addiction. ”

A follow-up OM/MEQ 30 study found that 23 percent of participants attained a “mystical experience” in their most recent session, with a strong correlation between partners (Siegel & Emmert-Aronson, 2021). Recent studies have shown psilocybin treatment produces large reductions in depression, addiction, and other mental health disorders over the long-term. Vivian Siegel concludes, “Given that OM apparently can trigger a mystical experience of similar power to psilocybin, and that psilocybin has shown promise in the treatment of mood and substance disorders, this study raises intriguing questions about whether OM might also be effective in the treatment of these disorders” (Siegel & Emmert-Aronson, 2021).

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## **7. Brain changes that can lead to strong emotional bonds**

A November 2021 study conducted with 40 advanced OM practitioners at Thomas Jefferson University found through functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) data that the OM practice creates connections between two regions of the brain responsible for self-judgment and cognition (Newberg et al., 2021). Connections between these two particular regions, the insula and temporal lobe, have been shown to lead to strong emotional bonding with others, including higher levels of compassion.



## **8. Benefits for elevating mood**

A study with 40 advanced OM practitioners by Dr. Caroline Griggs, using the Sleep Cycle Premium App and a 14-point questionnaire called the “Tumescence Survey,” found that OM reduces sleep quantity and quality but results in an improved state of well-being (Griggs and Thiel, 2022). While a consistent amount of steady sleep is extremely beneficial for well-being, a tipping point occurs at which too much sleep can adversely impact heart and cognitive functioning. For those who suffer from clinical depression, decreased sleep has been associated with a reduction in symptoms. Advanced OM practitioners seem to require less than the average eight hours of sleep per night while still feeling rested; this is similar to what’s been found in meditators participating in secluded retreats.

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“ The Tumescence Survey is a 14-item self-report questionnaire created by leadership of the Institute of OM Foundation to capture symptoms and behaviors frequently described as being improved by OM practice.





## Questions?

Contact Us

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Institute of OM Foundation

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