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## Why meditation is the new secret weapon in the workplace

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Melbourne based Pauline McKinnon has been a leader in the field of therapeutic meditation for 30 years. As an author on the topic and psychotherapist, Pauline specialises in the Ainslie Meares' natural style of meditation. According to Pauline, also the founder of the Stillness Meditation centre in Kew, Victoria, the workplace is high on the scale of stress levels. Within the general pace of life, high expectations, technology and related disruptions, competitive pressure and a range of other challenges, many workplaces are seeking skills to assist in managing these stress levels. Meditation, if learned and practiced effectively, can be an ideal answer to workplace issues.

"Meditation is the skill of choice made by many organisations wanting to lower stress and support the wellbeing of their employees," Pauline said today.

"And it's well known that a range of significant businesses have already incorporated meditation into their staff wellness programs; companies such as Apple, Google, Proctor and Gamble and many more.

"Meditation is ideal because once learned, it is easy to implement, low cost and can be tailored for any workplace. Staff can participate without having to change clothes or commit too much time and meditation can usually be undertaken conveniently for example, in a spare meeting room."

Stillness Meditation, originated some 40 years ago by Australian psychiatrist Ainslie Meares, is Western style meditation and medically based. It is also known as Stillness Meditation Therapy (SMT). Unencumbered by spiritual or ritualistic traditions, SMT aims to reduce physical and mental tension and provide profound mental rest. Within this practice, results demonstrate lowered blood pressure, anxiety reduction, stress management and a higher quality of life that leads to health and wellness. SMT can be undertaken in any quiet place and doesn't require special positions or chanting or focus of any kind. With a significant history of Meares acclaimed work and supported by Pauline's personal experience, books and teaching practice, this form of meditation is growing in popularity. While anyone of any age can benefit from SMT, it is well suited across the corporate sector for its simplicity and ease of integration into life.

"All the research indicates that meditation in the workplace is an excellent way to help staff balance the weight of corporate responsibility with the need to be calm and effective communicators," Pauline added.

"Setting up a program of meditation in the workplace is easy. There are five simple steps:

- Research meditation providers to find the most suitable for your needs as well as requirements for the best meditation experience within your workplace.
- Undertake a one hour workshop with a chosen meditation provider to address staff and educate in the proposed technique and its potential benefits.
- Commit to a series of sessions for individuals or groups. Meditation requires persistence if benefits are to be realised.
- Allocate a quiet room that provides the necessary facilities as discussed with the chosen provider. It's good to have a few 'rules' in place to ensure everyone understands the protocols involved, for example, respect for others, quiet entry, no talking, no phones, etc.
- Be prepared to allocate two to three days per week on which a time for meditation can be integrated into the workplace. As with any skill, practice makes perfect – and repetition of meditation is the key to success.

"Meditation is an excellent way to reduce stress levels across an organisation. For lifetime benefits, ideally, employees will practice their meditation sessions out of office hours as well.

"We have helped many organisations implement Stillness Meditation programs. The world needs a little more peace – corporate no less! Once a style of meditation has been introduced and practiced, it takes little time to appreciate the value it provides to health and wellbeing - and the benefits may be felt almost immediately."