

JAPA MANTRA MEDITATION: OM Shanti

**“A mantra is a much more complex concept than a mere chant.
It unites sound, body, and mind in a deeply philosophical experience.”**

-Risha Lee, Rubin Museum of Art, NYC

History of Mantra

Origins of Mantra are found in the teachings and practices recorded in the ancient Vedas (Hindu texts) of India, and are older than 1000 BCE. Mantra evolved from the ‘Rishi’, the wise sages and sacred leaders of the community, during deep states of meditation.

Historical evidence suggests that Mantra was possibly the first type of meditation that was developed and practiced as a system or method.

In ancient times, Mantras were secret, known only to the Rishi, handed down to student from teacher in spoken lineage. Over thousands of years, many Mantras were shared for larger communities and became known in widespread capacities, but scholars speculate that hundreds still remain protected in secrecy and can only be obtained by a guru or teacher.

Japa Mantra Meditation

The meditation technique of using a repeated mantra is called ‘Japa’ Meditation. Japa is another word from Sanskrit, and translates meaning ‘to mutter’ or ‘to recite’.

Japa Mantra Meditation is the methodology of repeating a specific Mantra as the instrument of meditation. The Mantra becomes the specific focal point of the mind during Japa Meditation.

The mantra: OM

Pronunciation: A-U-M

Translation: no direct single word can describe OM. It is said to be the first sound heard at the creation of the universe and resonates in all forms of life. It is the foundational sound of the vibration of life.

The mantra: śāntiḥ

Pronunciation: Shaaan-ti

Translation: Peace

The practice: OM śāntiḥ OM śāntiḥ OM śāntiḥ

Shanti is classically practiced in series of threes to symbolize philosophical or spiritual meanings. For example: body-mind-spirit | past-present-future | individual-community-universe. Repeat in series of three any number of times to bestow the energy of peace.

