

Makeovers Meditation Exercises. Practice “No Response”.

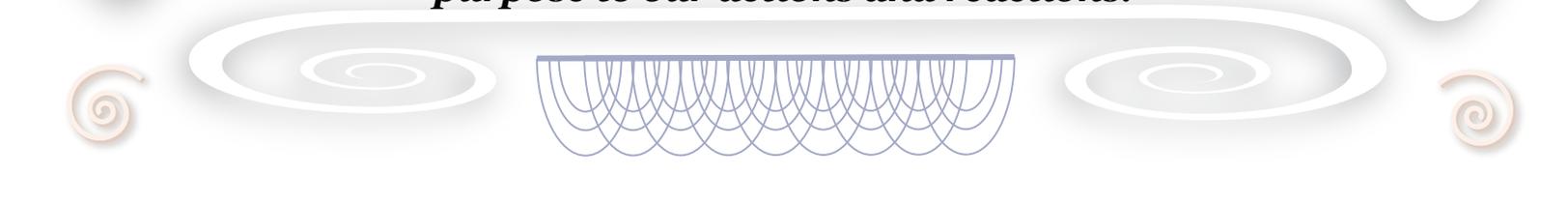
In our world of dualities, we are afforded both an action and a reaction for every encounter we have with others. Most of the time, we act or react immediately. What if we didn't? What would change? What would be different in our lives and interactions with others if we could pause before we act or react. What if we gave ourselves the freedom to have no immediate response? This is what it means to practice, “**No Response**”.

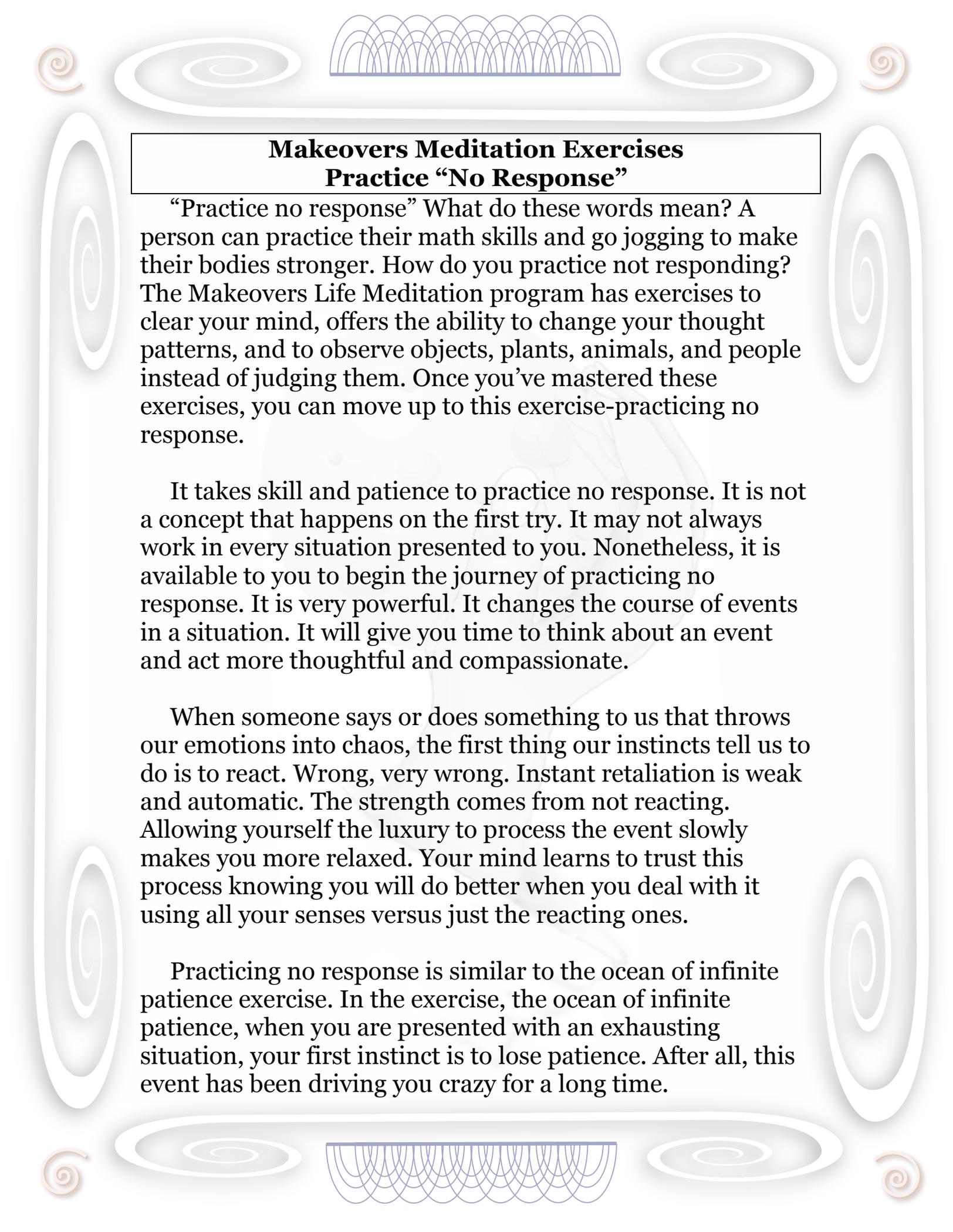
As soon as an event or encounter registers in our brains, we tend to act or react: *No time to think. No time to plan a response!* This is another example of the tendency to live life in the automatic. Living this way allows emotions to flood over our speech and our actions. When we act or react immediately—especially to disappointment, hurt, and anger—**most of the time we overdo it.** This is especially so when we have grown accustomed to the familiar actions of another person or groups of people: Spouses, children, parents, teenagers, and store clerks. At some point, our reactions may get us into trouble. Often times, we feel bad about the way we handled a situation after we've calmed down. Unfortunately, we can't take our actions or reactions back. People's feelings can get hurt over and over again by immediate and automatic responses.

Example: *“Mom, I have something to tell you. I know that you are going to be very angry. I broke your vase. I'm really sorry. It was an accident. My brother and I were wrestling in the living room....”*

Even in a small situation like this, as the news sinks in, you may slowly start to feel your emotions overwhelm you. You might be genuinely angry with your children for wrestling in the living room and breaking your great grandmother's vase. Practicing “No Response” is an excellent mind tool to use in these kinds of situations. When we give no response at all—even if only for a few seconds—we give ourselves the time we need to step back from the situation.

Practicing “No Response” brings clarity, awareness, and purpose to our actions and reactions.





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“Practice no response” What do these words mean? A person can practice their math skills and go jogging to make their bodies stronger. How do you practice not responding? The Makeovers Life Meditation program has exercises to clear your mind, offers the ability to change your thought patterns, and to observe objects, plants, animals, and people instead of judging them. Once you’ve mastered these exercises, you can move up to this exercise-practicing no response.

It takes skill and patience to practice no response. It is not a concept that happens on the first try. It may not always work in every situation presented to you. Nonetheless, it is available to you to begin the journey of practicing no response. It is very powerful. It changes the course of events in a situation. It will give you time to think about an event and act more thoughtful and compassionate.

When someone says or does something to us that throws our emotions into chaos, the first thing our instincts tell us to do is to react. Wrong, very wrong. Instant retaliation is weak and automatic. The strength comes from not reacting. Allowing yourself the luxury to process the event slowly makes you more relaxed. Your mind learns to trust this process knowing you will do better when you deal with it using all your senses versus just the reacting ones.

Practicing no response is similar to the ocean of infinite patience exercise. In the exercise, the ocean of infinite patience, when you are presented with an exhausting situation, your first instinct is to lose patience. After all, this event has been driving you crazy for a long time.



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Driving your thoughts away from the importance of the matter at hand and shifting them to your ocean of infinite patience allows you to realize that even though it's exasperating, there is still work to be done. Calming down and finding more patience, which we all have when we find our ocean, is key.

In practicing no response, you learn to divert from the instant gratification of reaction into the powerful thought of “How about if I don't react? How about if I take some time to think about it and get back to it when I am more prepared to act?” Introducing the thought, “practice no response” gives your mind a place to go—an oasis, a safe harbor in the storm of daily events. It brings your thoughts back into neutral. I don't have to react. I can now just wait until I soothe myself and deliberate what just happened.

Give yourself the strength to not respond and watch the bridge of trust build in your life in action. Say to yourself in quiet times, **“I have a choice. I decide. I can practice no response in any situation I choose.”**