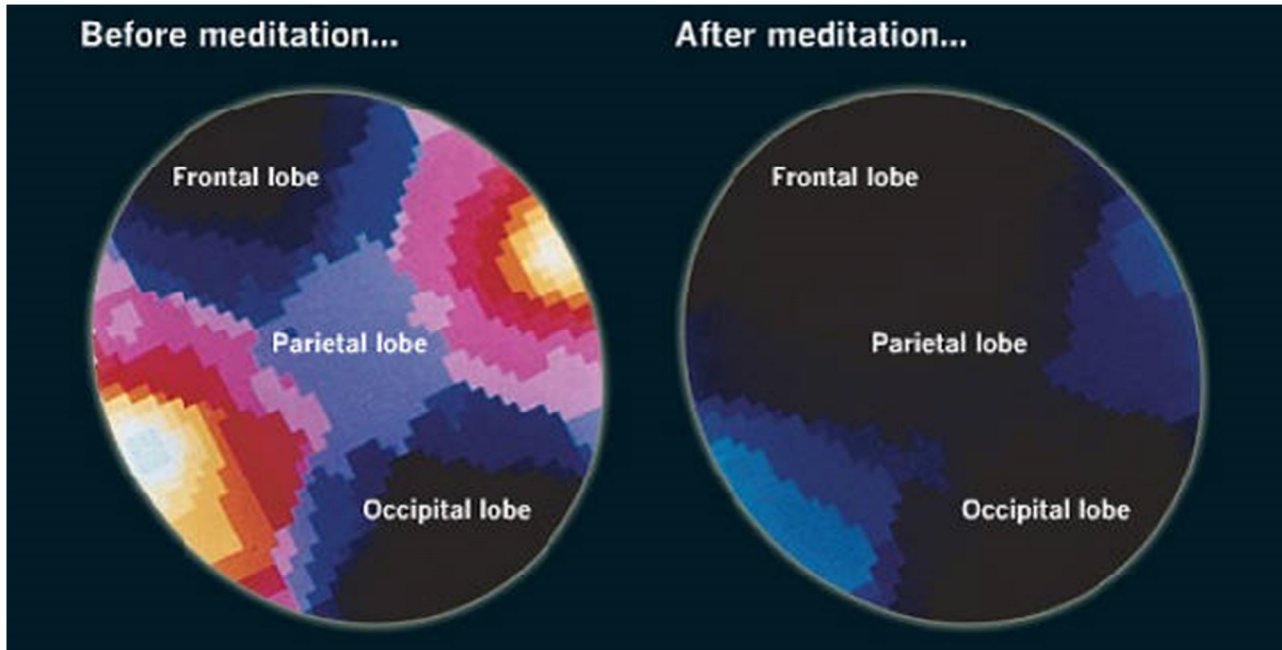


9. MEDITATE--REWIRE YOUR BRAIN FOR HAPPINESS

Meditation is often touted as an important habit for improving focus, clarity and attention span, as well as helping to keep you calm. It turns out it's also useful for improving your happiness:

In one study, a research team from Massachusetts General Hospital looked at the brain scans of 16 people before and after they participated in an eight-week course in mindfulness meditation. The study, published in the January issue of *Psychiatry Research: Neuroimaging*, concluded that after completing the course, parts of the participants' brains associated with compassion and self-awareness grew, and parts associated with stress shrank.

Meditation literally clears your mind and calms you down, it's been often proven to be the single most effective way to live a happier life. I believe that this graphic explains it the best:



According to Shawn Achor, meditation can actually make you happier long-term:

Studies show that in the minutes right after meditating, we experience feelings of calm and contentment, as well as heightened awareness and empathy. And, research even shows that regular meditation can permanently rewire the brain to raise levels of happiness.

The fact that we can actually alter our brain structure through meditation is most surprising to me and somewhat reassuring that however we feel and think today isn't permanent.

<http://www.fastcompany.com/3015486/how-to-be-a-success-at-everything/10-simple-science-backed-ways-to-be-happier-today>