

## CRUSH chronic disease in the THRIVE Academy!

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developed flotation tanks in the 1950's and it set off a series of research into sensory deprivation and its effects on the brain and how that translated into other health benefits as well. As a result of the research and noted benefits, float tanks were produced for commercial use and float centres started opening in several countries during the 1980's and continued to grow in popularity. Now, there are hundreds of float centres in dozens of countries all over the world.

Flotation therapy is a way to achieve deep relaxation by spending 60-90 minutes floating in a warm (90-95 F) solution of epsom salts and water that keeps you suspended with absolutely no effort. The contained environment inside the float tank normally has a certain amount of control available to the user, such as minimal lighting and meditative music. For those who want a complete sensory deprivation experience, you can also choose to go pitch black with nothing audible. This allows you to choose an environment the best suits your needs and personality.

### What can you expect in a floating session?

Before you begin a floating session, you will be provided instructions by appropriate staff on what to do prior to the session, during, and after so there are no real surprises. This will involve a warm shower prior to the float, stripping naked (you can wear a swimsuit if desired), and entering the tank with ear plugs (to prevent any water entering the ear) and a water "pillow" to ensure you can completely relax.

Once you enter the tank, you do normally have some options. The first one is whether to close the lid on the tank, as claustrophobic individuals may feel a bit anxious with the lid down, even though that would be the ideal recommendation. Keep in mind that it is quite roomy in the tank with dimensions of 7 feet long, 4.5 feet wide, and with 4.5 feet between your face and the ceiling of the tank.

From there, you can choose to keep a soft ambient light on at the foot of the tank and whether you would like some soft meditative music. This is completely up to you and will depend on your comfortability and goals of the float session.

Once you lay back you will immediately find that there is no risk of sinking in the tank or having to work to stay afloat. With approximately 1000 pounds of epsom salts in the water, your buoyancy is guaranteed!

It can normally take up to 15 minutes to get relaxed and comfortable in the tank as you adjust your preferences to this entirely new experience. Once that is set, you can then completely let go, do visualization experiences, or simply enjoy 60-90 minutes of complete silence. It is quite common to fall asleep in the tank, and to wake up feeling completely refreshed.

Since you are lying in the float tank in your own private room (and if you choose, you may be naked) you will be notified of the end of your session by the ambient light coming on in your tank and a soft voice over speakers that indicates your session is complete. If for some reason you are enjoying a deep sleep and this doesn't wake you up, in a few minutes the filter system will turn on and begin agitating the water which will undoubtedly wake you up out of your slumber.

Following the float, it is important to wash the salts off your body and out of your hair using the shower inside your private room. Following that you can get dressed and exit the room to be greeted by staff who will ask how your session went and provide any comments to help you interpret the benefits of your float session.

### The health benefits of flotation therapy

The primary benefits with flotation therapy is achieved through sensory deprivation, weightlessness, and magnesium. This is an incredible trifecta to induce relaxation due to elimination of environmental stimuli, reduction of pressure and/or pain, and the remarkable ability of magnesium to lower anxiety and promote muscle relaxation.

The cool part of being in a sensory deprived state is that your brain no longer needs to pay attention to outside stimuli and can go into a completely relaxed or guided state. Think of a float tank as meditation and relaxation taken to another level. Of course, when you can achieve these higher levels of consciousness, all kinds of things can happen. According to neuropsychiatrist Daniel Amen, M.D.:

*"You're not stuck with the brain you're born with. By changing your brain, you can change your life. With simple breathing and awareness techniques it is possible to quell anxiety and panic, calm inner turmoil and fight depression by learning how to short circuit*