



*Tap for Confidence:
Meditation*

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Tap for Confidence: Meditation

What is a good way to start meditating?

There are many ways to meditate, but people who are new to meditation often find it difficult to get started. Here is a simple, step by step procedure to begin a daily practice.

Remember that meditation is a skill in which you are training your mind, body and spirit. Your subjective experience will change from a busy, unruly, anxious, racing mind to a deeper sense of calm, stillness and serenity as you continue to meditate.

1. Find a comfortable chair to sit in. You may like to have your feet flat on the floor or extend your legs. Sit with your back straight, but comfortable. If you lie down to meditate you may fall asleep, so sitting is recommended.
2. Rest your arms on the arms of the chair or in your lap so that your shoulders are relaxed as much as possible. Your hands should be palms up.
3. Choose a couple of one syllable words to use in your meditation or choose a two syllable word that will focus your meditation. Choose any words you like, such as:
 - a. safe and secure,
 - b. love and peace,
 - c. calm and relaxed,
 - d. happy and healthy,
 - e. courage (cour-age),
 - f. peaceful (peace-ful),
4. Continue to use the same words every day for several weeks to train your mind. You can always change your words later.
5. Decide how much time you want to meditate. Get a timer or use the timer on your smart phone. Most people like to start with 10 minutes of meditation, which is both doable and enough time to experience some benefits. You can always increase the time later when you are more comfortable and more

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skilled in meditation. If 10 minutes is too difficult, start with 5 minutes and increase the time by a minute every few days as you become accustomed to meditating.

6. Start meditating by inhaling while you silently say the first word or first syllable, then exhale and silently say the second word. Slowly and comfortably inhale into your belly and slowly exhale at the same pace. Keep your inhalations and exhalations equal. Continue doing this for 10 minutes.

If you have some physical discomfort that is calling for your attention, give it your attention by breathing into the sensation. The sensation will probably quiet down fairly soon and may completely dissipate.

7. When your mind runs off with your worries, judgments, to-do list, questions, things you want to remember, ideas, etc., just gently return your awareness to silently saying your meditation words. Gently do this. Your mind will always run off with thoughts. Don't be distressed by this. It will settle down more and more easily as you become more skilled at meditation.
8. Don't beat yourself up for your mind running off. It is part of the process for your busy, stressed mind.

While You Meditate You May Notice:

1. Your eyes water. This is normal. Your nervous system is relaxing.
2. You may yawn. This is just an energy release.
3. You may get warm. This is your nervous system relaxing your blood vessels.
4. You may get "antsy". This is your stressed mind trying to reassert control to make you quit meditating. Just continue to breathe into the "antsy" feeling

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and gently repeat your words.

5. You may feel physically lighter or physically heavier. It may change from meditation to meditation. It's OK.

Benefits of Meditation

These benefits are not listed in any particular order. It is not necessarily a complete list and not everybody experiences all of the benefits mentioned.

1. Your whole body calms down and releases your stress.
2. Your mind generally calms down.
3. You have fewer anxious thoughts.
4. You worry less.
5. If your blood pressure is high, it may decrease.
6. You may focus better.
7. Your concentration improves.
8. Your handwriting may improve.
9. You may become more organized.
10. It may be easier to do the things that you know are good for you.
11. You may have spiritual experiences.
12. You may become more creative.
13. Your memory may improve.
14. You may mellow out and be less irritable.

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15. It may become easier to “zone out” when you want to.
16. You may sleep better.
17. You may have more energy.
18. You may think more clearly and have more options.
19. You may have improved problem solving ability.
20. If you are diabetic, your insulin needs may change over time. Pay attention to testing your blood sugar.
21. You may get insight into a problem you are struggling with.

Tips and Comments about Meditation

1. Just do it. Just breathe into your belly and say your words for 10 minutes regardless of what you experience. Do this for at least 6 weeks.
2. If you need instruction about how to do belly breathing, or abdominal breathing see the section entitled, Breathe Better.
3. If you like, keep a journal and note what you experience and what improves. This is often very encouraging and reinforcing when you see the differences.
4. If you are comfortable, close your eyes while you meditate. Some people can meditate better while looking at something, such as a burning candle, a loving object, a flower, a cross, a mandala, a picture of someplace peaceful. Do what works best for you.
5. Some people like total quiet and some people like music that facilitates a meditative state of mind. Do what works best for you.

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6. Generally, sit in a chair without crossing your arms or legs, so you get a free flow of energy throughout your body. Some people like to feel grounded by keeping their feet on the floor. It doesn't make any difference for others. Some meditation practices advocate sitting in the lotus position with legs folded in and with the middle finger lightly touching the thumb.
7. This is a training process. Don't judge the quality of your meditation by your subjective experience during your meditation. They are not necessarily connected.
8. Set an intention or purpose for your meditation and gently state it to your unconscious mind. Your intention can remain constant or change every day. Intentions are always a positive statement.

Very Important: Your mind cannot produce a negative, so don't say, "I don't want to feel stressed." What do you want, if you were not stressed? Calm? Relaxed? Confident? Courageous? Peaceful? Choosing the best words for your meditation can match your intention or purpose. Don't say, "I don't want to be so forgetful." Set your intention with, "I want to have a good memory."

9. As you become more skilled and comfortable with meditation you may get to a place where you miss your meditation time. You may enjoy the experience of thinking "No-thing". It can be quite blissful. Generally, this is more advanced meditation practice.
10. With a more advanced meditation practice you may have quite vivid images, hear music, feel sensations or have other kinds of physical, emotional and psychological experiences. Some people get profound insights about problems they are struggling with. You may have deep spiritual experiences as you continue to meditate. This is a singularly individual experience, but whatever happens with you, it's all OK.

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Advance Intention with Meditation

You may want to ask for Divine assistance with your intention for your meditation or need Divine assistance for help with a problem.

Start by visualizing the color of Divine Energy for your request. Take whatever color comes to mind. It is your color. What color is peacefulness? What color is confidence? What color is love? Just take whatever comes to mind. It is right for you.

You have an energy center at the top of your head. If you are already familiar with chakras, you understand this is the crown chakra that allows you to connect spiritually.

Ask for Divine assistance and visualize the color entering through the top of your head. It will go where it is needed and as far into your body as is needed. This may also change as you practice it more.

For example you want more confidence. It comes to you that confidence is blue. Imagine Divine Blue Confidence Energy gently coming into the crown chakra and flowing where it needs to go in your body.

Continue to breathe and silently say your meditation words.

You may wish to disconnect from Divine assistance at the end of your meditation by closing your crown chakra or by stopping the color of the energy. You may also wish to stay connected to Divine Energy. It is your choice.

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Breathe Better

Breathe better, with abdominal breathing, to boost your energy. This technique is regularly undervalued. **Breathing is free, easy, and simple, so it is often ignored and overlooked.**

To get the most out of breathing, which means that you get the most oxygen out of breathing, you need to bring the air all the way to your diaphragm. That is the big, dome-shaped muscle that divides your chest from your abdomen. There are more air sacs in the bottom portion of your lungs, so there is more blood to absorb the oxygen. More oxygen means less discomfort in the muscles when you exercise. More oxygen means more energy for your muscles. More energy means more enthusiasm to exercise.

The Energy in Your Belly

Lie on your back on a bed or on the floor. Loosen your waistband, if it is snug. Pull your knees up so your feet are flat on the floor or bed. Place a small paperback book on your abdomen below your waistline.

Breathe in slowly so you expand your belly and raise the book. Exhale slowly to return the book to its original position. Inhale and exhale for the same amount of time, such as a count of 4 one-thousand, 5 one-thousand, or 6 one-thousand. If your diaphragm has atrophied or weakened from lack of use, you may need to start with a count of 3 one-thousand, for example, and increase that slowly until the muscle gets stronger.

To prevent dizziness, keep the amount of time you inhale equal to the amount of time you exhale. If the inhalations are not equal to the exhalations, the oxygen/carbon dioxide equilibrium in your brain becomes imbalanced, and you will become dizzy or lightheaded. If you do get dizzy, just stop for a minute and it will go away.

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Do not lift your shoulders as you breathe, since this prevents air from going deep into your lungs, where you get the most benefit.

Practice abdominal breathing every day for two to five minutes to strengthen your diaphragm. This alone will release stress in your body and make you feel calmer and more relaxed.

Once you have strengthened your diaphragm and trained your body to be able to do abdominal breathing while lying down, you can practice while you are sitting and standing. Then you can naturally do abdominal breathing while you exercise, such as walk or bike.

Abdominal breathing definitely makes you feel better. Faster breathing is energizing, while slower breaths are calming and relaxing. It truly is the power in your belly.