

Resilience Through Meditation

Home Practice Start-up Guide

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Why Meditate?

Unleash your true potential, and be more productive , focused and efficient with a 5 minute daily practice!

In today's world, many people will tell you that they are working at the edge of their abilities. Whether it is because they are working in an area outside of their major field of study, or because our organizations are always looking for ways to be more efficient and do things faster, as a result, people are often pushing themselves.

In order to stay in balance and do this with grace, one must be resilient. Resilience isn't something that you are born with, but rather, it is developed, like a muscle. This is why we practice being present, which is really what meditation is.

This guide should give you everything that you need to start a meditation practice

While meditation is a simple practice, getting started can seem intimidating

Meditation

Dictionary Definition: to reflect upon, ponder or contemplate.

The word meditate comes from the latin *meditari* which means to think about or consider

What it is:

- Slowing your thoughts down, witnessing them, and then releasing them.
- It is a way to train the mind to pay more attention to what is going on right now.
- A positive, practical, scientifically proven technique which trains our minds to be less distractible.

What it isn't:

- The absence of thoughts
- An escape from reality
- A religion
- A new age relaxation technique
- A mysterious trance like state

Meditation doesn't require special skills or tools
You can spend as few as 5-15 minutes a day to develop a simple meditation practice

Getting started

1. **Decide on an amount of time and stick with it.**

- **Start small.** Commit to 5 minutes a day for 5 days if you are new at this,
- Build up to 5 minutes twice a day, then 10-15 minutes daily when you are ready to sit for a longer stretch.
- **Consistency is key.** Meditating a few minutes a day will pay off with better results than 30 minutes once in a while.
- It is easier to include meditation into a day where you follow a routine (weekdays vs. weekends)

2. **Switch your phone into airplane mode, set the timer for your desired time.**

- Choose a timer bell that isn't jarring when it sounds

3. **Experiment until you find the right fit for you.**

This program was designed to instruct you in a variety of secular (non-religious) ways to meditate. With a spirit of fun and lightness, try new methods with us each month until you find one that gets you excited to keep practicing.

4. **Be easy on yourself.** Don't over-complicate this and don't be too hard on yourself. No one needs one more thing to stress about in their day. If your mind wanders (and it will), gently bring your attention back to the breath. Just begin again!

Taking a good seat

Tips for sitting on the floor

- Sit on the edge of a blanket or cushion to elevate your hips higher than your knees.
- If knees don't come to the floor in the traditional cross legged posture support them with a blanket.
- Sit with back straight and with a soft/supple spine, relaxed with a slight curve in the lower back
- Keep chin parallel to the floor
 - If chin lifts your mind may tend to space out
 - When the chin drops, sleepiness follows
- Hands resting comfortably in lap or on knees

Tips for Sitting on a Chair

- Sit on the edge of a blanket or cushion to elevate your hips higher than your knees.
- Feet flat on the floor. If your feet don't reach the floor, put a blanket under them.
- Sit with back straight, with a soft/supple spine, relaxed with a slight curve in the lower back
- Sit toward the front of the chair, without leaning back on the chair, leaving the upper back free.
- Keep chin parallel to the floor
 - If chin/eyes lift your mind may tend to drift
 - When the chin/eyes drop, sleepiness follows
- Hands resting comfortably in lap or on knees

* The most important aspect of your sitting position is that it is comfortable, if you are not comfortable, your awareness will be on the body and you will be distracted from your meditation.

Basically – here is what we are doing

1. Every time your mind begins to shift its focus from the breath and your thoughts drift away, you simply bring your attention back to the breath.
2. You repeat this again and again until your meditation timer sounds.

- What we are exercising here is your “attention muscle”.
- Don’t be surprised if you have to bring your attention back **a lot** in a very short span of time.
- Over time you are more in control of where you place your focus.

Follow the Breath Exercise

Before beginning set a timer for 10-15 minutes on your phone or computer.

- Sit down, close your eyes and concentrate on your breathing. Be aware of every in breath and out breath. Breathe automatically and freely, do not try to control your breathing.
- Pay attention to how the air slowly passes through your nose, fills up your lungs and goes out again.
- Notice whether you breathe through your belly, your diaphragm or the upper part of your chest.
- Just notice with every breathing in - the sensations that you feel when the air streams in through your nose, or when the air fills up your belly.
- With every breathing out, notice the sensations that you feel when the air streams out through your nose or when your belly sinks down when the oxygen leaves your belly.
- If you start to think of something else instead of your breathing simply return to your focus on the breath.

When the timer rings, reflect in your journal on your experience.

Did your mind wander a lot, or a little?

Was your experience different on different days, or when you were tired vs more rested?

Challenge yourself to spend a few minutes every day and see what happens over time. Write it in your journal.

Journal Day 1

Journal

Day2_____

Day3_____

Journal

Day4_____

Day5_____

How do you know if it is working?

Indications of progress:

- Ability to stay present in your daily life without your mind drifting away
- Increased ability to focus
- Experience of mental calm during challenges
- More easily adapt when things don't go as planned
- You may find yourself to be less reactive, more patient, and less anxious the more you meditate.

You only need a few minutes of meditation a day to get these results.

The Importance of Community

- The Resilience Through Meditation program is founded on the concept of Sangha which means *community*.
- Many find it easier to quiet their minds when practicing with a group. This is because the combined energy of a group of people practicing will elevate the practice of the individual.
- While a consistent personal daily practice supports your growth, balance and stability, the sangha will support your practice over time.

If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.

-African proverb

Resources

Insight timer is rated the #1 free meditation app.

<https://insighttimer.com/>

It has thousands of guided meditations and you can see who around the world is meditating when you are!