



deepening change

STRENGTHS - EMPATHY - CONNECTION

WORKPLACE MEDITATION GUIDE

Deeping Change is making **meditation** and **stress reduction** simple and accessible for all workplaces.

- **Flexible in-house facilitation** of 20, 30 or 45 minute sessions at any time of day – structured as one-offs, regular weekly or 6-8 week skill building programs
- Half day or full day **Team Building** sessions combined with tools for emotional intelligence, resilience, coaching, managing change and culture
- **Executive Presence** and **Mindful Governance** - Individuals, Teams and Boards
- **Conference Speaker** and facilitation of **Break-out Sessions**

Simple ideas for integrating meditation into your **People & Culture** plans. In Australia the known benefit of creating a mentally health workplace is **\$2.30 average return on investment for every \$1 spent**. *Source: PWC*

What is Meditation?

Meditation typically refers to formal, seated meditation practice. There are many types of meditation—those that focus on opening your heart, expanding your awareness, calming your mind, experiencing inner peace, and the list goes on.

Meditation is an intentional practice, where you focus inward to increase calmness, concentration, and emotional balance. Seated meditation usually begins with deep breathing in a comfortable position, bringing all your awareness to your breath—inhalation and exhalation—consciously guiding the mind toward an anchor, or a single point of focus.

There is a timeless misconception that we are supposed to stop our thoughts through meditation. We have 60,000 to 80,000 thoughts a day — that's one thought every 1.2 seconds. Sitting with your eyes closed doesn't stop them. But when we can innocently follow our breath in

and out or repeat a mantra or affirmation over and over, at a certain point we will disconnect from that tsunami of thoughts.

At Deepening Change we teach simple breath-work, meditation and mindfulness techniques. We recommend meditating for 30 minutes at a time. If this feels a little daunting, relax, we will do a mix of gentle breathing exercises and a guided meditation to make this practice easy.

Why Meditate?

The reasons why we meditate are as varied as the many ways there are to meditate. In the West, most people are drawn to meditation to quiet the internal chatter of the brain and to reduce stress. Meditation is a very effective stress reducer.

The actual act of meditation can be as simple as sitting quietly and focusing on your breath or mantra – a word or phrase. There are countless traditions and no singular correct way to meditate. The benefits you will feel is finding that you have more patience, feel more grounded and better able to respond to stressful situations, and be more in touch with your ‘gut feelings.’

Scientists have found that a consistent meditation practice not only boosts the mind, but it also bolsters the body. Meditation can help reverse heart disease, reduce pain, and support the immune system, better enabling it to fight disease. Meditation can lower production of the stress hormone cortisol, meaning meditators are better able to adapt to stress in their lives.

How do I prepare the room?

Any room or outdoor area is suitable for meditation. Prepare the room so seats are facing each other in a circle configuration. Placing chairs around a standard meeting room table is fine too. Consider putting a ‘do not disturb’ sign on the door.

What do I wear and what should I expect?

Please turn off your phone as the phone vibration alerts can disturb others. In meditation comfort is queen. It is fine to wear the clothes that you have worn to work, there is no need to get changed.

In meditation we sit in a seated position, with our feet flat on the floor and our hands in our lap, usually with palms faced upwards. This is because our bodies associate lying down with sleep. It is important in meditation that we are alert and present.

Simple Techniques: *16 Seconds and So Hum*

Need help relaxing at any time of the day? Try this **16 Seconds Breath Exercise**:

Observe your breath as you slowly inhale through your nostrils to the count of four. Then hold that breath in your belly to the count of four. Then gently release the breath and follow it out to the count of four. Then hold the breath out to the count of four. Now return to regular breathing.

Source: Davidji

Below is the **So Hum meditation practice** – try 10 minutes:

- Close your eyes and take one full minute to settle in by taking a few deep breaths.
- Start to repeat the mantra *So Hum* to yourself silently, slowly synching the rhythm of your breath to the mantra.
- As you inhale, silently repeat the word “So”, as you exhale, silently repeat the word “Hum”.
- Continue breathing slowly and aligning your mantra to your breath, being careful not to rush your breath if you notice your mantra speeding up.
- Each time you notice your mind wander, simply draw your attention back to the mantra *So Hum*.
- When your time is up, gently release the mantra, take a moment to sit quietly before opening your eyes. *Source: Deepak Chopra*

About Penny Lello

Penny leads Deepening Change proudly providing services across Culture, Wellbeing, Change, Coaching and Meditation. Penny serves in Boardrooms and Executive Committees nationally and within South Australia. She has delivered change programs for a diverse range of organisations involving from 15 to 120,000 people.

She has accumulated rich experiences in working with complexities and nuances among diverse groups, especially around how to shift mindsets, evolve group dynamics and change behaviours. Penny has worked with GE, Westpac, News Corporation, BAE, BHP, Vodafone, Hutchison Whampoa, Department of Premier and Cabinet and SA Health.

Penny is a certified Meditation Teacher and a member of the Meditation Association of Australia. She has trained globally with Davidji, Deepak Chopra and Eckhart Tolle.

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