

Be Still: Peace Through Meditation

Meditation is the practice of focusing attention — often on the breath, a sound, or bodily sensations — to develop awareness, calm, and clarity.

Common Benefits

- * Reduced stress and anxiety
- * Increased focus
- * Improved emotional regulation
- * Better sleep and overall well-being
- * Deeper connection to the Divine

Posture & Environment

- * Sit upright but relaxed (chair or cushion).
- * Hands resting comfortably, eyes closed or softly open.
- * Comfortable, quiet setting.

Core Principles

- * Breath Awareness: Intentionally focus on the inhale and exhale
- * Noticing & Returning: When the mind wanders, gently bring it back
- * Non-judgment: Treat thoughts like passing clouds — no need to engage. Just observe, refocus and continue on.

Psalm 46:10 — Be still, and know that I am God.

Joshua 1:8 — Thou shalt meditate therein day and night...

Luke 5:16 — And [Jesus] withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

Psalm 5:1 — Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation.

D&C 43:34 — Treasure these things up in your hearts, and let the solemnities of eternity rest upon your minds.

“We pay too little attention to the value of meditation, a principle of devotion. . . . Meditation is the language of the soul. It is defined as ‘a form of private devotion, or spiritual exercise, consisting in deep, continued reflection on some religious theme.’ Meditation is a form of prayer. . . .

President David O. McKay (1873–1970)

Meditation is not about ‘emptying the mind’ — it’s about coming back to the present, again and again, with kindness.

How to Begin a Personal, Consistent Meditation Practice

- * Baseline: What is the minimum you could do on your worst day that would still be doable? (example: 3 deep breaths before getting out of bed)
- * Build up slowly: After practicing at your baseline, increase time. Maybe 5, then 10 minutes a day
- * Use a timer or app (e.g., Insight Timer, Headspace, Calm)
- * Create a quiet routine: same time/place helps build habit
- * Don’t judge the session: Even “distracted” meditations have value
- * Journaling: Optional tool to reflect after meditating
- * Unplug: Set aside regular time during day without devices

How to Practice Ujjayi Breath *(pronounced oo-jai)*

1. Find a Comfortable Seated or Standing Position

- * Sit or stand with a straight spine.
- * Relax your shoulders and jaw.

2. Inhale and Exhale Through the Nose

- * Keep your mouth closed throughout the practice.
- * All breath happens in and out through the nose, not the mouth.

3. Constrict the Back of the Throat Slightly

- * Imagine fogging up a mirror with your mouth open — feel the whispery sound it makes in your throat.
- * Now, close your mouth and try to make that same whispery sound with your mouth closed, breathing through your nose.
- * This slight constriction at the back of the throat creates the signature ocean-like sound.

3. Keep the Breath Steady and Even

- * Inhale for a count of 4–5, exhale for a count of 4–5 (or whatever is comfortable).
- * Let the breath be smooth, steady, and audible to yourself.

What Does Ujjayi Breath Sound Like?

- * Waves of the ocean
- * A gentle snore
- * Wind in a tunnel
- * Darth Vader (my favorite)

It's audible, but not forceful or harsh.

It's not gasping, wheezing, or straining.

Why Use Ujjayi Breath?

- * Calms the nervous system (activates parasympathetic state)
- * Focuses the mind (helps anchor attention in breath-based practices)
- * Regulates breath during yoga postures
- * Builds internal heat (helpful in physical yoga styles like Vinyasa)
- * Encourages present-moment awareness

Box Breathing

- * Imagine you are tracing the four sides of a box as you repeat this breathing pattern

1. Inhale 4 counts

2. Hold 4 counts

3. Exhale 4 counts

4. Hold 4 counts