

7 Simple Steps to Meditation Practice



“Meditate? Are you kidding? Add another commitment to my overwhelming schedule? Get real!”

Don't be so quick to dismiss this simple practice. Starting today, with only a few minutes of daily meditation, you can calm a chattering mind, soothe a stressed nervous system, and connect more deeply with something amazing – you!

Forget learning a special mantra, a buckwheat yoga pillow, or mala beads. All you need is a quiet place to sit for fifteen minutes a day, and a commitment to practice daily. No exceptions. If you live with others, notify them that you are not to be interrupted during this time. Turn off your phone and remove distractions from the room. You can even meditate in your car over the lunch hour if you find it impossible to be alone at home.

1. Sit in a comfortable upright position, hands resting in your lap.
Be seated on the floor or chair. Maintain a straight, but not stiff, posture.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Inhale slowly and fully, pause briefly, then exhale slowly and completely. Repeat three times. Don't rush this. You are signaling your mind and body that you are taking charge. And you are releasing pent up adrenaline that clogs your nervous system.
4. Allow your breath to return to its normal pace, and calmly observe it.
With your attention on the breath, notice it flowing in and out at its own pace. If you have been busy it may be fast. If you are relaxed it flows more slowly. Perhaps it is smooth; perhaps it is jerky. You may sigh occasionally. None of this matters. You are allowing your breath to be however it needs to be in order to support and sustain you. Acknowledge how your breath is always there for you, moving in and out of its own accord.
5. Continue focusing attention on observing your breath.
6. When you notice your mind wandering, gently bring your focus back to the breath. Thoughts, ideas, things to do, and feelings, will arise into your awareness. This is to be expected. Because your mind is relaxing, mental impulses rise to the surface for attention. Simply acknowledge any mental impulse, release it, and return attention to the breath. Don't

think of these mental thoughts as an enemy to fight – such resistance only intensifies them. Allow them to release, for now. If important, they will return later when you resume activity.

7. At the end of ten to twelve minutes, gently bring awareness back to your body, and to the sounds, scents and sensations of your surroundings. It may take a few moments to re-orient to the room. Because attention has been drawn inward, it takes a few moments to refocus it outward again.
8. This completes your meditation.
Return to your daily activities, maintaining any calm you may have achieved for as long as is possible. And don't forget to congratulate yourself on taking a rare fifteen minutes out of your day for yourself. You are worth it!

Don't have fifteen minutes? Then commit to five. Once that's accomplished, extend it to ten. Eventually fifteen minutes will be easy, and you'll begin to look forward to your healing meditations.

The value of meditation is not measured in any one the sitting experience itself, but in the accumulated affects as the practice refines your nervous system and mental faculties. Such change is not noticeable within one sitting. You may have meditations that seem serene, and that is wonderful. Yet most of your experiences, especially in the beginning stages, will reflect a "busy mind". Simply sit, practice, then get up and return to your everyday life. Over time, you will begin to notice increased mental clarity, serenity, a calmer response to drama unfolding around you, heightened creativity, and an enhanced sense of self-assurance. Additional and advanced techniques are available. Yet when practiced with consistency, this simple "meditation on breath" is sufficient for most people, and results can be profound.

About Ellie:

Ellie Hadsall is an author, spiritual mentor, intuitive and personal coach. A daily meditator for over 35 years, she has taught the practice of meditation to people from all over the world. Ellie is ordained in the Kriya yoga spiritual tradition, and is currently writing a comprehensive handbook on the practice of meditation, incorporating teachings of multiple traditions. She believes we are riding the wave of a new consciousness frontier, and meditation is a foundational practice that will support us through the upcoming changes.

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