

FAQ's - When you're starting to Meditate

Q: When I meditate, my mind is very active and I have trouble getting rid of thoughts and coming back to my breath.

That's fine, the brain naturally generates thoughts and you cannot stop them or clear the mind. But you can notice those thoughts and distractions and then gently but firmly return your focus to the breath. As best you can do this without judgment or frustration.

In fact, you can even congratulate yourself when you notice you're lost in thought because it's at that point you can reconnect with the present moment.

Q: Do I have to be in a quiet place?

It helps in the beginning to find a quiet place, but you don't have to, you can meditate or be mindful many times during the day without sitting down and closing your eyes. Just bring your focus to your breath or sensations in the body anytime you choose.

You don't have to find the perfect place; in fact it's better if you bring mindful awareness to everyday routine activities like driving, walking, washing your hands, doing the laundry or waiting in line at the store.

Q: What time of day should I meditate?

Some people find it helpful to find a regular time to meditate and it becomes a routine part of the day. But try a number of different times and places and see what works well for you. It may be first thing in the morning, at a lunch break or later in the day. Fit it in when your schedule allows.

Q: Do I need to sit in a specific position or on the floor?

No, the general rule is to sit in a way that is comfortable, stable and where you can feel at ease. Try to sit relatively straight up, but not rigid so you can breathe easily and naturally. You may sit on a chair or a cushion on the floor, try different ways and see what works best for you. Your hands may rest comfortably on your knees or thighs or folded together lightly.

Q: Do I have to meditate daily, what if I forget for a week or so?

As best you can, establish a regular routine and meditate most days of the week. Remind yourself with post-its or phone/calendar notifications. If you fall out of practice, don't be hard on yourself, just start again, each new moment is a fresh start!

Keep at it, research shows just eight weeks of regular practice even if only for 5 – 10 minutes a day can produce positive results See the link on benefits.