

HOW TO START A MEDITATION PRACTICE IN 4 EASY STEPS



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What is Meditation?



When I first started learning to meditate I had no idea where to begin or what to do. So I Googled it, read some magazines and talked to a few people who I knew meditated.

Here's what I found out...it doesn't matter who you talk to or what advice you read. Meditation is a VERY personal thing. There are a few guidelines you should follow to get started, but what works for one is probably not going to work for another. You need to develop your own personal form of meditation.

Here's the great thing...there are no rules! The great thing about no rules is you can create your own rules. The most important rule is to just start. It's like learning any new skill, it takes time to develop and the more you do it, the better you get at it. Here are a few basic guidelines to get you started.

How do I get started?

I. Be open minded. Trust the process.
Have patience.

II. Find a place and time.

III. Breathe

IV. Choose a method of meditation

On the next few pages I'm going to go a little more in depth on this basic outline.

The goal is to keep it simple so you don't get overwhelmed. If it feels overwhelming you won't start. And I want you to just start.

These are the baby steps I took in learning how to meditate, so I know they work.

It's like running a marathon - you have to learn to walk first!

*The goal of meditation
isn't to control your
thoughts, it's to stop letting
them control you.*

The Age of Enlightenment





Step 1

BE OPEN MINDED

If you go into this with specific expectations you will likely get discouraged. That's the last thing I want for you. I want you to be open minded and give this a fair chance. Trust the process and trust yourself to learn something new.

It takes time to build a new practice in anything. Training your mind to quiet will take time, practice, and patience.

You should expect that this will take a few times, especially if you've never meditated before. You should expect that you will get more out of meditation the more you practice it. You should expect to find a style that works for you if you follow my process.

This isn't a one and done situation. Meditation is a practice, a lifestyle. It isn't something you just do once and you're problems are magically solved. However, if you build a practice and stick with it, you can expect lower stress levels, less anxiety, and a more positive outlook on life.



Step 2

FIND A PLACE AND TIME

Find a place and time when you will not be disturbed or interrupted. Your mind needs time to calm itself. Don't be rushed or in a place where people are going to try to get your attention.

That said don't feel like you have to find 20-30 min of time. You can start with just 5 minutes at a time. Everyone can find 5 min a day.

Choose a place you are comfortable. Choose if you want to sit up or lay down. In the mornings I like to sit. It gets me up for the day and I'm more aware of what I'm doing. At night I lay down in bed. My nightly meditation is designed for relaxation which enhances the quality of my sleep.

Try a few sessions in a row of each to see what works for you.

Building a meditation practice is a personal thing. Don't let anyone tell you you're doing it wrong.



Step 3

BREATHE

Breathing is a key element of meditation. When we control our breathe it puts us in a state of mindfulness that connects our mind and body. We're no longer operating on auto pilot. We are taking over the driver's seat. This is especially important if you are looking to start a meditation practice to help with stress and anxiety.

Stress and anxiety operate on auto pilot. Our minds are controlling us. When we control our breathe, we are telling our minds that we are taking over now. We are in charge of our thoughts.

Begin by taking 4 deep breaths. Breathe in for a count of 4. Feel your lungs fully fill with air. Hold for a count of 4 then slowly exhale through your mouth for a count of 4. Hold the exhale for a count of 4. Repeat this process 4 times. Inhale for 4, hold for 4, exhale for 4, hold for 4.

As you exhale allow your body to fully relax. Drop your shoulders, relax your jaw, let all your muscles come to rest. Release all tension in your body.



Step 4

CHOOSE YOUR STYLE

There are a few ways you can meditate once you are in a relaxed state:

- 1) Use a mantra
- 2) Listen to music or a guide
- 3) Just be

1) Mantras are a word or phrase that you repeat over and over again. I love using the word "grace". It reminds me to give myself grace as well as extend it to others. Choose a word that works for you. Some ideas: love, joy, peace, fun, strength. Using a mantra is a great way to keep your thoughts from racing all over. It also can be a great reminder or self pep talk to keep you motivated.

2) There are guided meditations on the internet. Some are more music than talking. Both are a great way to get started with meditation. It helps keep your thoughts from taking over and gives you ideas when you're meditating on your own. Another option is listening to binaural beats. You can find these types of playlists on music apps. It is designed to get your brain into a certain wave length. (

**This is a great article about binaural beats
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<https://www.healthline.com/health/binaural-beats>) See what works for you. Don't be afraid to try different things.



Step 4

CHOOSE YOUR STYLE

3) Just be. Allow thoughts to come and go. Don't dwell on them. Don't worry about them. Don't force any thoughts to come or go. This type of mindful meditation does take some practice. It can be hard to shut our minds down and just let thoughts be. We want to worry and find solutions. You just need to non-judgmentally allow your thoughts to pass through. When a thought comes in, don't react. Just notice the thought like a butterfly passing by. Let it go. Once you're able to meditate for longer periods of time, you will notice the thoughts become less and less.



Final thoughts

The important part is to just start. Be patient. Have zero expectations. Don't give up too soon. Give it a fair chance.

It takes time to build a new habit. But I promise, if you keep with it, you will notice a difference.

I have created a Pinterest board called Meditation. It has lots of ideas and tips and motivation for meditating. Check it out if you're looking for more info - pinterest.com/ConfidentlyCosmic/meditation