

Making the Most of Meditation

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Living in such a hectic world can take its toll on your body, mind, and spirit – but the practice of meditation can help you to focus, have a clear mind, and stay centered. Meditation is a practice of learning to train your mind. There are many purposes and techniques.

What all of the techniques have in common is that they work for some benefit in your life. Meditation can help you reduce the effects of stress on your body and mind. It can help you develop a clear mission and purpose for your life. It can help you connect to a higher power.

If you've never meditated before, it can be hard to imagine how to get started. There's a wide range of meditation techniques. Some are simple, while others require a great deal of discipline and training. In the end, though, there's really no wrong way to do it.

As you consider beginning the practice of meditation, there are factors to consider. The first is determining in what position you'll meditate. There are several options for you – choose the one that makes the most sense for you.

Getting Into Position

Determining an appropriate position for meditation can set the stage properly. You really don't have to choose one specific way to do it, but getting your body into a different position from the norm can help you to focus your mind in a more effective way.

While many people choose to use specific yoga positions for meditation, trying to get your body to hold a position that's uncomfortable can actually take away from your meditation practice. Choose a position that separates you from outside activities, but is comfortable.

The Lotus. The lotus position is the one that most people associate with meditation. This position is a seated position on the floor. For this position, you'll bend your right leg and place your right ankle on your left thigh.

Then you'll place your left ankle on your right thigh. This takes a bit of flexibility. Extend your arms and place your hands on your knees palms up. You'll also want to touch your thumb and index finger.

For this position it's important to maintain proper posture so that your spine is properly aligned. You may also want to lower your head so that your chin is touching your chest. It may take some time to be able to achieve this position comfortably.

If you're not able to achieve it comfortably, there are positions that are close, but don't require as much flexibility. These can allow you to work up to the lotus position that you want to achieve and allow you to meditate.

The Half-Lotus. This position is similar to the lotus, but not as difficult. You start in the same way by touching your right ankle to your left thigh. However, when you bend your left leg, you keep it on the floor and rest your left ankle in front of your right knee.

For this position your arm placement will be the same. This will help you to begin experiencing meditation even if you're not quite flexible enough to achieve a full lotus. Many people who want to practice meditation in the lotus position begin with this pose.

Crossed Legs. If you're not ready to perform the lotus, you can also sit with your legs crossed on the floor. Make sure to sit straight up and have proper posture. This position is more comfortable if you're not flexible and will still allow you to meditate.

Lying Down. There are also positions for meditating where you lie on the floor. Lying down can help you to relax your body and separate yourself from your regular daily life. It's very comfortable, doesn't require flexibility, and keeps your body supported.

When it comes to meditation positions, the most important consideration is your comfort. While meditation positions can help you to focus your mind, the wrong position can actually take away from your experience.

If you're new to meditation, you don't need to spend all your time focusing on your body position and trying to contort your body into an uncomfortable pose. Instead, focus on finding a pose where you can relax and focus on what's important.

Breathing for Relaxation

In addition to finding an appropriate position, meditation requires that you pay attention to your breathing. Breathing is an automatic function you perform thousands of times each day without much thought.

Most people breathe using muscles from their chest and upper body. These breaths are often pretty shallow. In order to breathe properly for the purposes of good health and meditation, you'll need to focus on breathing a different way.

For meditation, we use diaphragmatic breathing. This is breathing that comes from the belly area of the body. As you breathe, think of pushing your belly button out as you inhale and pulling it in as you exhale. This will allow you to take deep, relaxing breaths.

You may also want to try counting when you breathe so that you have consistent, rhythmic breathing that leads to relaxation. Try using a count of five. Breathe in for a count of five and exhale a count of five.

Just as it is with your meditation position, you should make sure that your breathing is comfortable. If you're uncomfortable, you won't be able to free your mind for meditation. If you're distracted, then you're not doing it correctly.

The Third Eye

When it comes to meditation, the concept of the third eye is very important. The idea is that when you meditate you can open a "third

eye" that connects you to a spiritual force. Many people meditate with the goal of opening the third eye.

By opening the third eye, you may find that you feel more spiritually connected to the universe. You may also find that your intuition is keener and that you have more psychic sensitivities. It may take time in order to become this connected, so don't be discouraged if your meditation doesn't produce the desired effect.

You may be wondering how you'll know if you open your third eye. People who have achieved this type of spiritual awakening report seeing colors and hearing sounds. The idea is that you're connected to the ultimate source in the universe.

In order to open your third eye, you'll need to be completely relaxed and in a meditative state where our mind is totally at peace. Rather than focusing on issues in your life, you'll need to actually not be thinking consciously. This can take a lot of practice.

If you get too focused on trying to open your third eye and achieve a new level of meditation, you can actually make it more difficult. It's important to free your mind and body and not put pressure on yourself to meditate in a specific way.

Meditation and Religion

Meditation can often be associated with religion, although it doesn't have to be religious. People of most faiths have some sort of meditation. For some religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism, meditation is actually a formal practice.

In other religions it's less formal. In fact, prayer in Judeo-Christian religions is a form of mediation where you become connected to source. For some people, meditation is more about spirituality than actual religion.

You'll need to look at meditation in your own life and decide how it fits your personal religious and spiritual beliefs. Remember that there really aren't any rules when it comes to meditation- it needs to be right for you.

Guided Meditation

When you're new to meditation, it can be difficult to really know how to get started. Guided meditation will help you to get started on your meditation journey. While there are many meditation centers where you can participate in guided meditation, you may want to start out in private.

You'll be able to find many different types of guided meditation audio recordings that will help you to get started. These meditations will cover everything from positions to breathing. They may also help you with specific chants to enhance your meditation and free your mind.

In addition, they may have background music that will be designed to help you relax. Music can be a very powerful addition to your meditation practice. When you find music that speaks to you, you'll find that meditation goes quickly.

You may also want to read books that give suggestions for guided meditation. Guided meditation is a tool that can help you to get more out of your meditation time. The more you practice, the easier it will become and you may find that you don't need guided help anymore.

Finding Space to Meditate

When life is busy and you have a family, it can be difficult just to find a space to meditate. It's important that you find a place where you can have a few minutes of uninterrupted time to meditate. It's difficult to free your mind when someone is talking to you and distracting you.

Any space can be turned into a meditation space if you prepare. You may want to use your bedroom as a space for meditation. Make sure to tell the members of your household that you'll be meditating and that you'd like some private time to do this.

Some people choose to use an office area or gym area to perform meditation. Still others find that a large closet can provide a quiet, private

space to meditate. Have you ever felt like the bathroom is the only place where you can be alone?

It may sound crazy, but many people convert their bathrooms into spiritual places when they need just a few moments alone to refocus and renew their spirit. There's no right or wrong space as long as it's a place where you can clear your mind.

Carving Out Time for Meditation

The people who are most in need of meditating and relaxing are often those that have the busiest and most demanding lives. It can be hard to think that adding one more thing to your schedule can have benefits, but meditation will give you many benefits.

Don't feel that you have to spend hours meditating each day in order to achieve a benefit from it. In fact, even taking just a minute or two to breathe deeply and clear your mind can be of tremendous value to you.

If you have more time, then you can always meditate more. But if you only have a few minutes, make the most of them. Building meditation into your schedule is the easiest way to build consistency.

For example, you may want to make it a practice to meditate each morning before you get going for the day. This can help you to face the day with greater focus and purpose. You'll feel more connected to the world in which you live.

For others, meditating before bed can give the relaxation needed before trying to get a good night's sleep. When the stress of the day has piled onto your shoulders, meditation can help you to relax, unwind, and clear your mind.

Have you ever gone to bed with your mind racing about all of your experiences and all the things on your to do list for tomorrow? Meditation can free you from this cycle that can disrupt your sleep patterns and leave you feeling weary.

But you can also build meditation into your day at any time. If you have a lunch break, you can take five minutes to clear your mind and feel more refreshed by meditating. Even just taking one minute throughout the day to breathe deeply and refocus can have great benefits.

Benefits of Meditation

While there can be obvious spiritual benefits of meditation, there are many benefits that may not be so obvious for adopting this practice. Take a look at some of the benefits you may receive from adding this simple practice to your life.

- Lowers your heart rate
- Lowers your blood pressure
- Increases your ability to sleep through the night and wake feeling rested
- Relieves tension headaches
- Prevents migraine headaches
- Can help with hormonal balance and achieving an appropriate weight
- Reduces anxiety
- Alleviates depression
- Reduces muscle tension and relieves muscle pain
- Adds greater feeling of peace

Meditation can provide many physical and spiritual benefits when you add it to your life. It helps to take small steps in the beginning and to increase the amount of meditation and your goals for meditation as you become more experienced.



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