

# **Meditation Made Easy!**

## **Reduce Stress & Improve Your Health!**

*“The gift of learning to meditate,  
is the greatest gift you can give yourself in this lifetime.”*

Sogyal Rinpoche

### **What is Meditation?**

**These are just a few of the many websites on the web about meditation!**

**From FreeMeditation:** Meditation is a state of thoughtless awareness in which the excessive stress producing activity of the mind is neutralized without reducing alertness and effectiveness. It is a state of profound, deep peace that occurs when the mind is calm and silent, yet completely alert.

**From WhatMeditationReallyIs:** A process of getting to know your own mind.

**From TheBuddhistCentre:** Meditation is a means of transforming the mind.

**From Wikipedia:** To enjoy an indestructible sense of well-being while engaging in any life activity.

**From “The Light of Pure Knowing” by Rupert Spira:** We normally consider ourselves to be a collection of thoughts, feelings and sensations: I, the separate self, living inside the body/mind, and made of the body/mind and meditation is normally considered to be an activity that I, this body/mind, undertakes in order to achieve some kind of goal, whatever that goal might be: enlightenment, stillness, peace...from that point of view, the separate self is believed to be what we are and meditation is considered to be an activity that we do. But meditation, as it is understood in this approach, is not any kind of activity. *Meditation is what we are, not what we do.*

In this approach, meditation has nothing to do with an activity or cessation of activity of the mind: focusing, watching, training or stilling it, or watching the breath...I'm not suggesting that these conventional types of meditation don't have their uses; of course they do...but in this approach meditation is simply to be, to be the presence of Awareness, simply to be that which is aware.

We're aware right now of our experience...these words..our thoughts and feelings...sights or sounds present in our room, the tingling sensations of the body. We are effortlessly aware of all this flow of experience and we don't need to make the slightest effort to be that which knows or is aware of our experience. Meditation is simply to be knowingly this one, the one that is aware of our experience.

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### **Myths About Meditation!**

**Concentration:** Concentration is an effort to fix attention on a particular object or idea for a long time.

**Struggle:** Meditation is not about struggling with your thoughts and emotions and making them go away.

**Mental Effort:** “I must stop thinking!”

**Uncomfortable sitting position:** Though it’s important to posture the body in certain types of meditation, it’s not about pain. The often seen “lotus” posture is a choice but not a necessity.

**Doing “it” for long periods of time:** During this course, you’ll experience the benefits of meditation in sixty-seconds!

**It’s religious:** Though religious traditions practice meditation, meditation alone is not religious.

**I can’t meditate because....** I can’t sit still! (You don’t have to!) I get anxious! (That’s normal and actually a good sign!) I tried and it doesn’t work! (Let’s try again!) I don’t have the time! (If you have time to breathe, you’ve already made the time!)

### **Benefits of Meditation**

**Bodily Benefits** – Lower Blood Pressure, improves the immune system, increases body vitality, improves sleep, improves athletic performance and increases overall health of the body, decreases pain and inflammation.

**Mental Benefits** – Improves attention, increases memory, intuition develops, increases clarity and peace of mind, induces the ability to better focus, increases resilience during hard times.

**Emotional Benefits** - Improves compassion and empathy, increases positive emotions, generates helpfulness, decreases anxiety and fear, reduces stress and depression, more able to respond to life instead of reacting to it, brings emotional stability over time.

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*“If it weren’t for my mind, my meditation would be excellent.”*

*Pema Chodron*

### **What is one of the primary benefits of meditation?**

Stress relief. The deep rest experienced during the practice of meditation allows the body to naturally dissolve stress and strain. When stress is reduced in the nervous system during meditation, benefits like better sleep and clearer thinking also naturally develop. Over 600 research studies have verified that the daily practice of meditation produces a wide range of positive effects on a person's mind, body and behavior.

### **What is stress?**

Stress is the tension that arises between what we want to happen and what is happening. The mind says, “no!” and rejects what is. That rejection, that mental pushback creates the tension that we begin to feel. The chemicals in our body change, our energy begins to drop, the vibrational quality of our life lowers and becomes dense and heavy. We can become trapped in that state of resistance if we don’t have the tools to free ourselves. All of that you’re learning are tools for that freedom!

### **Myths About Stress**

We believe that stress comes from external circumstances, our family, our relationships, our kids, our job, the headlines and that we have no choice because *it’s a stressful situation* and everyone nods their head in agreement. But if stress originated from outside of ourselves then everyone would be responding the same way and that is clearly not the case. So it’s not the situation but your response to it, your thoughts about it that make it a stressful situation or not. Your mind is creating the stressful situation by deciding that it is! What mind is creating this stress? The unknown mind, which is the untrained mind. Meditation helps us get to know our own minds and the thoughts it’s thinking. Meditation helps us see life for what it really is: neutral data!

### **The Questions**

- \*What about the thoughts that race through my mind?
- \*Does there need to be a definite length of time for each meditation?
- \*Is any particular posture necessary or desirable and if so, why?

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*“Feelings come and go like clouds in a windy sky.*

*Conscious breathing is my anchor.”*

*Thich Nhat Hanh*

### **The Practice**

There are many forms of meditation. We will try each one of these meditations throughout this course. In the end, you must find the way(s) that work(s) for you. By trying them all, you'll have a sense of which ones are in alignment with where you're at now, at this time in your life. Your inner Self which tell you which ones IT loves!

**Breathing Meditation:** Breathing techniques are often done in certain types of yoga classes but since we're breathing all the time, this can be done anywhere even sitting in traffic!

**Mantra:** A mantra is a powerful sound or word that you can use to enter a deep state of meditation. Silently repeating a mantra as you breathe is a powerful way to enter into the silence of the mind. Repetition of the mantra helps you disconnect from the thoughts filling your mind. “Om” is a common mantra but any word, like “love” works.

**Mindful Meditation:** Here we activate mindfulness while participating in silent activity. Mindful eating is a powerful experience of preparing your food and eating it in the silence with total awareness of the moment.

**Guided Meditation:** Guided meditation is a popular technique which uses another's voice. Many feel that this is not traditional meditation and perhaps it is not; however, any activity, especially for the beginner, that creates a state of calm, inner peace is valuable.

**Silent Meditation:** This is the most commonly practiced form of meditation. This involves sitting in a comfortable position, back straight and hands resting comfortably on your lap or knees. Some suggest keeping your eyes open, others recommend lowering your gaze, still others close their eyes completely. Again, try all three and see what feels right.

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*“If a person’s basic state of mind is serene and calm, then it is possible for this inner peace to overwhelm a painful physical experience.”*

*The Dalai Lama*

### **Additional Resources**

Meditation Science

David Lynch Foundation

Huffington Post - multiple articles including Debbie Gisonni

TM.org

[www.Humankinetics.com](http://www.Humankinetics.com)

[www.Accessstoinsight.org](http://www.Accessstoinsight.org)

[www.Meditationoasis.com](http://www.Meditationoasis.com)

[www.EmmaSeppala.com](http://www.EmmaSeppala.com)

[www.Iam-u.org](http://www.Iam-u.org)

[www.How-to-meditate.org](http://www.How-to-meditate.org)

[www.Breathmeditation.org](http://www.Breathmeditation.org)

[www.Finerminds.com](http://www.Finerminds.com)

[www.Scienceandnonduality.com](http://www.Scienceandnonduality.com)

[www.Meditainment.com](http://www.Meditainment.com)

[www.Meditationscience.weebly.com](http://www.Meditationscience.weebly.com)

[www.Meditation-methods.com](http://www.Meditation-methods.com)

[www.Chopra.com](http://www.Chopra.com)

[www.Chopracentermeditation.com](http://www.Chopracentermeditation.com)

[www.Ulifeline.org](http://www.Ulifeline.org)

[www.Bjceap.com](http://www.Bjceap.com)