

THE GIRL'S GURU

Shares

16 Practical Tips For Meditation



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Introduction

In one of the sacred Hindu scriptures, the Upanishads, there is mention of two birds in a tree. One of the birds is very active, jumping from branch to branch looking for food; defending its territory from other bird; looking for nesting material, and in constant vigilance of predators. The second bird is observing the first bird as it remains still, demonstrating no activity.

The Upanishads uses the two birds as a metaphor for the two aspects that are found within each of us. Unfortunately, most of us have lost our connection with one of these aspects. We have lost ourselves in our thinking and doing in hopes that it will eventually lead us to happiness and success while overlooking that aspect of us which is silent and still, the only place where true happiness and success can be found.

Many religions and philosophies advocate meditation. Particularly mindful meditation, has become extremely popular over the last few years. It's also used as a tool in many activities and for self-help purposes.

While meditation can be very simple, there are several common mistakes and misconceptions about meditation that you'll want to avoid if you're new to the practice.

Getting started on the right foot increases the odds of maintaining your meditation practice and getting the most benefits from it.

16 Tips for Meditation Beginners

A Meditative Practice Brings Many Benefits:

- 1. It's the one time your mind really gets a rest.** Your mind is constantly active. It's thinking about ten different things every 15 seconds. It's telling you that you need a drink of water. It's worrying about your date next Saturday and reminding you that you don't have enough money in your bank account to pay your cable bill.
 - Sleep isn't any better. In your dreams, you're largely acting and behaving the same way you do while awake. You're still worrying about the same stuff during your dreams. Sleep is great for resting your body, but it's not as useful for resting your mind.
 - In meditation, ***you create a space where your mind is essentially empty.*** In many forms of meditation, you focus on one trivial thing and concentrate all your thoughts on that single item or idea. It's incredibly relaxing.
- 2. You learn how to focus.** When you think of meditation, do you imagine someone sitting alone in a quiet room with subdued lighting? This is the easiest way to meditate, with no distractions. It's like meditation with training wheels. But you could actually be meditating most of the time as well.
 - It's easiest to learn to meditate under ideal conditions. Then, ***try expanding your meditation skills to other activities.*** You know you can really meditate when you can stay calm, happy, and focused on a loud, hot, busy, smelly subway.
 - Most of us focus very poorly. Imagine how much better you would feel and how much more you would accomplish if you could stay focused on the activity at hand. Plus, it's hard to worry if you're controlling the content of your thoughts.
- 3. You can find answers.** When your mind is running a hundred miles an hour, it's difficult to find elegant solutions to your challenges. A brain needs a little space to find effective solutions to tough challenges. ***Meditation can provide that needed space.***

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Have you ever noticed that many of your best ideas have come while doing something that occupies your mind in a rather mindless way? Activities like mowing the grass, taking a shower, or driving down the highway with little traffic are great for solving problems. Your mind is occupied but free to wander a little. Meditation is similar.

4. **Meditation is Healthy.** Stress is incredibly hard on the body. Meditation reduces stress, lowers your pulse and blood pressure, and improves sleep.

Meditation can be done quickly. You'd be surprised how much more you can accomplish and how much more enjoyable your day is when you meditate for a few minutes several times a day.

Meditation isn't just for a yogi in India. ***Anyone can use meditation to bring rest and peace into their life.*** It can also improve your performance. Learn to meditate and enjoy a greater quality of life.

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1. **Sit up straight.** Slouching may be comfortable for a couple of minutes, but it takes more strength than you think to support poor posture. Sitting up straight allows your skeleton to support your weight.
2. **Start slowly. *Just a couple of minutes is enough to start.*** There are two good reasons for this. It's easier to be compliant when you only have to sit for three minutes at a time. It's also challenging to meditate for an extended period of time if you're not experienced.
3. **Meditate multiple times each day.** By sitting for just a couple of minutes, you should have time to sit for multiple sessions. You might want to try meditating for a few minutes each hour.
4. **It's all about the breath. *Your breath connects you to the moment and helps to keep your mind focused.*** The breath isn't something to be focused on intensely, rather it acts as an anchor to maintain awareness of the present.
5. **Count if necessary.** If you're struggling to maintain awareness of your breath, count your breaths. Count each inhalation until you've reached five and then start over.
6. **Keep your eyes opened slightly.** It's easier for your mind to wander from the present if your eyes are closed. Keep your gaze lowered and soft.
7. **Acknowledge thoughts but avoid dwelling on them.** All thoughts should be treated the same. They're just phenomena passing through. Let them go and return your attention to the breath.
8. **Be patient.** It seems like it should be easy to concentrate for a few minutes, but the mind likes to stay busy. It's a challenging habit to break. Be patient.
9. **Sit comfortably.** It isn't necessary to sit with your legs folded up like a pretzel. ***Any position that can be held comfortably for the planned time is good enough.***

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10. **Use a timer.** Without a timer, you'll find yourself worrying about the time and continue to peek at the clock. Set a reliable timer and you won't be as preoccupied with the time.
11. **Increase your meditation time by 5 minutes each week.** Avoid the temptation to progress too quickly. Ideally, you'll look forward to your meditation sessions. Progressing too quickly causes restlessness and agitation.
12. **Consider getting expert assistance.** There are many free opportunities to meditate with others. Look for local meetups or contact your local Buddhist temple. With so many people meditating, you're bound to find an expert willing to help.
13. **Take every opportunity to meditate.** Meditating at home under perfect conditions is great practice, but ***the ultimate goal is to have the ability to meditate anywhere.*** A skilled meditator can meditate on a 99-degree packed, loud, smelly, subway.
14. **Be persistent.** If you're meditating each day with the full intention of improving, you'll eventually become a skilled meditator.
15. **Stretch first.** Your meditation position should be comfortable and easy. If your position feels like a stretch, you won't be comfortable. Stretch first.
16. **There's no reason to be concerned about your hands.** Just place your hands comfortably on your lap. Allowing your hands to be lower can eventually pull down on the shoulders and become uncomfortable.

Meditation can bring you both mental and physical benefits. Use these tips when beginning to meditate and you'll quickly become skillful at a practice you can enjoy for the rest of your life.

A Note from The Girl's Guru

"At the center of your being you have the answer; you know who you are and you know what you want." - Lao Tzu

Divine Beloved, what lies ahead for you is the opportunity to take an inward journey to discover that which is undiscovered by most. Anything you could want in your life is merely a prop upon which you project your thoughts and emotions. What you want is to experience the emotions and feelings that you believe will come when you achieve your desire.

No one object or person can provide you with the emotions and feelings that you desire to experience. To depend on anything outside yourself to make you happy is guaranteed to lead to disappointment

You alone have the power to align with the Infinite Creative Power within to experience unchanging peace.

Intuitively Yours,

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