



Meditation Tips-Once you tune into this powerful practise you can use it-versions of it any where, any time you like-in the shower, waiting in a line up, in the middle of a heated discussion etc to keep you centered, calm. As you slow down the breath, your mind slows down or in other words, your mind can't race when your breathing is slowed and conscious.

Meditation can be helpful in supporting

- Better sleep
- Pain management
- Intuition development
- Unlocking creativity
- Relaxation
- Focus
- Dealing with conflict
- Combating stress, anxiety & depression
- Assisting in achieving goals

Thoughts-Awareness

- notice your mind will deviate from your simple focus of one.....two, in.....out, re.....lax etc to what is for lunch, I feel tired, I must remember to call so and so etc. Simply notice and come back to your focus of counting.
- If your mind wanders a lot, you might find a guided meditation via a CD etc might keep you more focused, or a sound machine like what babies use.
- Notice if you are wandering if it is always in the past, present, future or a specific topic/goal/situation. Perhaps outside of meditation there is an opportunity to focus in on it.
- The idea is to be very much in the present and to create a mind-body oneness of self-silence/relax the body and the mind.
- you may become in your meditation very present to feelings(sadness or perhaps tightness in the chest which could be sadness unrecognized etc) and aches and pains, discomfort. If you focus in on relaxing the area (tight jaw muscles) you can help release that tension. Or simply ask your body what it is trying to tell you, How am I feeling today in my body? What is going on? If you feel an urge to cry, give yourself permission to cry. You don't have to even know the source of your tears-just let them come up and release.
- Remember you can use mantras within your meditation such as re.....lax ("re"" on the in breath, "lax" on the out breath. Or Re-lease (re on the in breath, lease on the out) health & healing etc-you decide.

Style & Routine

- keep your practise to what will work for you. 5 min is much better than no practise.
- find a time of day that you can be routine with. Consistency sets us up for success
- mornings are a great time to do this as it sets a nice tone for the day. Doing this in the evening is also a great way to unwind-relax into a great nights sleep.

- consistency can show up as not only same time of day, but same room, same positions, same chair etc. The body loves routine. And routine helps us maintain a practice. You can also help create a conditioned response so that your body gets into a relaxed meditative state faster and easier if done at the same time-same place with consistency.
- a quiet space, darker, no interruptions is a great landscape to undertake this practice. As it becomes easier to focus you can take it outside, do it waiting in a line up etc. I have even used ear plugs to help drown out background sound.
- posture is up to you-sit, lie down, cross legs, feet to the floor. it is up to you. Use pillows-be comfortable. You can try it one way for a week and try it another way the next. See if you can feel that one is more powerful for you or not. If you are falling asleep-perhaps you desire more sleep, or change the time of day or position. Play to find what works well for you. Try to keep a straight back-support yourself with your muscles vs. slouch. Leaning against a wall can be helpful to get started.
- Your breath-mastering it helps to master the mind & body. You will not breathe slowly and have racing thoughts-it just doesn't happen that way. So, when your mind is racing, simplify shift your focus to your breath to slow you down-get perspective etc.
- Eyes closed is often easiest which limits distractions however it can be very powerful to look at something-heart of a rose, pattern, fireplace, vision board etc with a soft gaze.
- As you breathe in through the nose, the belly expands-rounds out, as you exhale the belly drops in.
- There are many, many different forms of meditation. Find what works for you. Some may have you breathe in one nostril and out the other, lay on your back with legs and arms in the air, chant. Keep exploring-find what resonates with you!!
- some days your meditation practice might come easily-easy to focus, be still etc and other times it won't come so easily. That is life. We are like the ocean-sometimes calm, sometimes waving. Be gentle with yourself and remain in the practice and accept that some sessions don't seem as powerful as others.
- When we are restless-scattered-stressed we feel it is more difficult to sit quietly and we will either want to not bother with it or we do it and judge it as not being effective. These are the times when we benefit the most from meditation. Your most beneficial meditations might feel like the least effective but that isn't necessarily true. Quiet the mind and you quiet the body. Observe and accept where ever you and your body are at within each session. Try not to compare them. Thank yourself for doing the practice.
- you may find yourself in a meditative like state in other areas of your life-usually the activities that you really enjoy, feel secure in, time passes quickly. i.e. cooking, skiing, biking, knitting, tennis, running. Know the activities that you feel at "one" (mind/body focus yet relaxed-can be very dynamic yet relaxing) with yourself and incorporate them into your life on a regular basis.

Setting Intentions/Contemplations-added Bonus if you take this part on

- after meditation you are in a very open space to hear yourself or others think/speak. Think about how great it is to listen to someone when you can give them your undivided attention or how you feel that someone is really listening when they look you in the eye and give you 100% of their attention. This is what meditation offers.
- Knowing you are in a calm relaxed state after meditating, it makes perfect sense to take time after and consciously insert ideas into your mind with mantras, written notes of desires/goals you may have, view your Vision Board etc. You and your body remember things when you are relaxed and paying attention.
- You can also use this quiet time where you feel very connected to yourself to contemplate questions and scenarios in your present life. Plant the seed of things such as "Why is XYZ happening for me? What am I to learn?" You don't have to actually sit there and wait for the answer. You can be with that thought for a few minutes-some thoughts might come up or not.

If not, trust that somewhere at the back of your mind-your subconscious is beginning to sort that out and the answers will come. Just like how when you think about buying the Volkswagon Bug car it appears that more Bugs are suddenly in your community. You become a radar for your own desires-what you want more awareness around by simply intending it-planting seeds.

- when you are comfortable with keeping the thoughts away during your meditation you can also plant your desires, vision board etc into your mind before your meditation. The key is to let them go during the meditation-don't let them be a distraction or focus , do your meditation and then after you can insert them for a second time.
- all of these steps are putting you in a great place to practise visualization too

No matter what you Practise, by spending as little as 5 min a day meditating you are sure to notice that it has a calming effect that can last for hours or even the whole day. Start with a goal of 5 min and if you desire, keep increasing. I meditate between 10-30 min. Again, 5 min is more powerful than no meditation. With more frequency and length, the affects are different and most likely even greater. Journaling how you feel after meditating or at the end of the day can help you deepen your awareness of this and in turn increase your motivation to do it. Because of the ability of meditating to bring you more “present-in the now, increase sensitivity” vs. being in the past or future or simply scattered, it can be something fun to play with post bedroom activities too. Lots of athletes use it for sports.