

Meditation Techniques

What is Meditation?

Meditation is a self-directed practice for relaxing the body and calming the mind. Meditation methods can be as simple as sitting quietly while breathing deeply or progress to mantra meditation, guided thought and progressive muscle relaxation. It can be a useful tool for dealing with issues such as anxiety, sleep problems and headaches. Regular practice has been shown to help lower heart rate and blood pressure.

Meditation Techniques

Sit in a comfortable position, set a timer for 5-10 minutes and try one of the following relaxation techniques



Deep Breathing

- Relax your body: Think of each part of your body relaxing
- Rest a hand on your belly, close your eyes and take a deep breath in through your nose and let your breath push your hand out
- Exhale through your mouth. Feel the hand on your belly go in and push all the air out.
- Continue deep breathing, taking your time with each breath, to quiet the mind.

Mantra Meditation: Choose a word, phrase or line of a poem that has a positive meaning for you and repeat it slowly in your thoughts throughout the meditation.

- Close your eyes and inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth.
- Continue this slow rhythmic breathing while focusing on your own special chant word.
- If your mind wanders, redirect back to your mantra and continue deep breathing for 5-10 minutes

<http://www.yogajournal.com/practice/1307>

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Guided Meditation: Begin with deep breathing and then progress to the following:

- Picture yourself in a favourite, quiet place eg. dock at a cottage
- Feel the warmth of the sun on your face and body
- Know that you are safe and have everything you need
- Stay still and enjoy the warm, calm feeling for 5-10 minutes
- Breathe a little deeper, return to the present and continue with your day

Create your own guided meditation script using personal, calming images or use passages from the link below.

<http://www.aplacefortheheart.co.uk/frame.php?sp=/meditations/onlinemeditations.htm>

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR): Begin with PMR and end with deep breathing. This version of PMR involves four muscle groups: Face; neck, shoulder and arms; abdomen and chest; buttocks, legs and feet

- Start by sitting or lying down in a quiet place
- Tense all of the facial muscles; clench teeth and close eyes; hold for 8 seconds while inhaling
- Exhale and relax completely, letting your face go lax allowing the tension to seep away
- Continue with each of the 3 remaining muscle groups allowing complete relaxation between each group
- End the session with a few minutes of focused breathing

<http://stress.about.com/od/generaltechniques/ht/howtopmr.htm>



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