



The Power of Meditation

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[Meditation with Music - Click Here](#)

Chapter 1: Meditation and Success

Mediation for the Modern Life

Somewhere in Silicon Valley, a group of computer programmers sit silently in a room together, legs crossed and eyes half-closed, listening to the sound of their own breath. Elsewhere, the owner of a small real estate company starts her day by breathing deeply and engaging in yoga poses. Still, elsewhere, a data entry specialist finishes his turkey sandwich and returns to his cubicle, puts on his headphones, and breathes deeply while listening to the sounds of bells and waterfalls.

Meditation looks different for different people, but one thing is for sure: it is quickly gaining popularity in Western culture. It has many professional and personal benefits including increased productivity, reduction of stress and depression, and reduction of troubling physical symptoms such as headaches and muscle tension, to name a few.

The word “meditation” often elicits images of devout men sitting silently in mystical temples far away. It can seem foreign and certainly something too far removed from daily life to have a practical application for business or even for personal gain. You may have preconceived notions about what meditation entails or cultural or spiritual beliefs which you feel may hinder you from participating in meditation. While meditation does have its roots in several spiritual practices, it is increasingly being recommended by Western medical professionals as research is bringing to light the multiple health benefits of regularly engaging in this form of focused relaxation.

[Relaxing Meditation Music](#)

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Regardless if you choose to meditate for spiritual reasons or for physical and mental health, meditation generally consists of the following elements:

- *A relaxing environment:* whether it is in the woods, by the lake, in a studio, or in your living room, meditation usually occurs in an environment that is physically comfortable and free from noisy distractions. Some people choose to sit on a cushion and focus on their breathing in complete silence while others may choose to lay on their beds and listen to relaxing music.
- *Posture or movement:* during meditation, the participant will generally sit in a specific posture, such as with the legs crossed, spine straight, and hands resting on the knees. Sometimes participants will lay down or engage in specific movements, such as with yoga or t'ai chi.
- *Focus:* while meditating, the participant will focus on a number of things from their simple breath, the feeling of energy moving through the body, an object, a value or ideal, or a word or phrase called a mantra.
- *An open mind:* during meditation, the participant allows their mind to let thoughts flow through their mind without judging them. Often times, the meditator will observe the thoughts instead of suppress them and then gently bring their focus back to the intended subject.

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How Meditation Increases Success

The idea of being successful, or being able to accomplish what you have set out to do or being able to achieve the state of mind you desire, is usually associated with words like “persistence,” “patience,” “hard work,” and “goal-setting”. Meditation most likely wouldn’t even be one of the top hundred words associated with success. But it should be.

Think about it. If one activity, alone, could improve several aspects of your mind and your body at the same time, from problem-solving skills to general creativity to blood pressure, immunity, and headaches, wouldn’t you think it could greatly contribute to your overall success in life? The healthier you are and the more empowered you feel, the more likely you will be to accomplish the goals you have set for yourself.

Making Meditation Work for You

While meditation can be a prolonged activity, it doesn’t have to take hours of your day. Even a ten or fifteen minute session of meditation can provide some benefits of relaxation.

The following list serves as a reference for different kinds of meditative practices. Choose one or two that you think you might enjoy and incorporate them into your schedule. Many people prefer to meditate early in the morning before starting their day to help them start with a positive outlook. Others choose to meditate just before bed to help them relieve anxious thoughts and drift off to sleep peacefully. A few meditative exercises are detailed later in Chapter 3: The Practice of Meditation.

[Guided Meditation - Click Here](#)

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- *Deep Breathing or Breath Focus:* Involves closing your eyes and focusing all of your attention on the experience of your breath filling your lungs and leaving your body. This is the basis of most meditative practices and many methods build upon this.
- *Body Scanning:* This method is used primarily for relaxation. It involves paying attention to different parts of your body in sequence, allowing yourself to tense and then relax each part, paying attention to how each part feels during the process.
- *Energy Focus:* Focusing your attention on the energy that flows through you and finding a sense of being “centered” or “grounded,” meaning a place of relaxed and empowered wholeness. May also involve the use of “chakras” or centers of energy as dictated in the Hindu traditions.
- *Gazing:* This is a variation of the Breath Focus technique. Instead of having your eyes closed, you can choose to focus your gaze on an object.
- *Visualization:* Entails closing your eyes and focusing your attention on an image of a peaceful place, such as a beach, a mountain, or a favorite hiking trail.
- *Guided Imagery:* Involves listening to a teacher or a pre-recorded track to guide you through peaceful images and engage your senses.

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- *Mantra*: Involves repeating a word, syllable, or phrase many times, either in your mind or out loud.
- *Music*: Involves listening to soothing sounds of bells, harps, stringed instruments, wind instruments, and nature sounds while focusing on your breathing.
- *Yoga*: This exercise is actually a form of meditation, as each movement is carried out slowly and methodically, paying attention to the breath and energy in the body. It is especially effective when paired with a beautiful setting in nature or meditative music.
- *T'ai Chi*: A form of meditative martial arts that allows the user to focus attention on the inner energy flowing through the body.
- *Qi Gong*: Combines relaxation, meditation, movement, and breathing exercises to restore and maintain a sense of balance. Focuses on the Chinese concept of Qi, or energy, particularly concentrated around the spine, torso, and forehead.
- *Walking Meditation*: Walking can be used as a form of meditation when the user focuses attention on the feeling of movement, allowing all other thoughts to pass by. This is one of the most versatile practices because it can be completed while walking down the hall at work, on the sidewalk, or out in nature.

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- *Insight or Mindfulness Meditation:* Involves practicing mindfulness on the random stream of inner thoughts, feelings, and sensations as they flow by. It includes a focus on the present state of being as opposed to future or past events.
- *Positive Affirmations:* Entails focusing on the positive thoughts that will help you accomplish your goals. Examples include, “I am successful,” “I am loved,” “I am able to do this,” or “I can do anything I set my mind to.”
- *Reading Reflection or Quiet Time:* Involves reading a poem, sacred text, or scripture and reflecting upon its meaning or personal impact. Can also be paired with spoken word, sacred music, or journaling.
- *Movement Meditation:* Involves attaining a sense of groundedness or centeredness and then allowing your body to move in various ways, focusing on the feelings of your body.

Chapter 2: The Benefits of Meditation

The Benefits of Meditation for Business Owners and Entrepreneurs

If you have ever attempted to start your own business, you are probably very familiar with the stress of working long hours, taking on increased responsibilities, and trying to problem solve your way through unexpected challenges. You might find yourself struggling to find time to eat three square meals a day or sleep more than a few hours each night, let alone adding something as indulgent as meditation.

Some stress is natural and unavoidable. Over time, however, increased and prolonged exposure to stress will erode away the health of both body and mind. It can lead to an array of symptoms including frequent headaches, upset stomach and digestive issues, chest pain, difficulty sleeping, and hypertension. Additionally, stress worsens the symptoms of other diseases and can even slow recovery times from injury and illness.

Meditation, however, has so multiple benefits specifically for business owners and entrepreneurs. After engaging in meditation, the mind and body are relaxed, relieving the symptoms of stress. Meditation increases the ability of the mind to engage in creative tasks, tasks which require intense focus, and tasks which require problem solving. Additionally, meditation helps your mind cope with barrage of information that can pass through it in a given work day.

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It may seem difficult to justify taking time out of your busy schedule to “do nothing”. But when you view meditation as a regular part of a healthy lifestyle and you consider the numerous mental and physical benefits; it’s easy to understand why so many business owners choose to engage in it. Taking a little time to rest and recharge through meditation will increase the productivity and efficiency of your entire day.

Furthermore, after engaging in meditation, even the daily tasks of pouring a cup of tea, driving, or filing papers can become a form of meditative concentration as your mind is already geared up and ready to apply this newfound mindfulness to everyday situations.

Corporate Meditation and Employee Morale

Some businesses hire corporate meditation services to encourage their employees to engage in meditation together. Corporate meditation has a three-fold benefit for a company: it improves employee health and wellness, it increases employee productivity, and it increases employee morale.

Meditation results in reduced costs of employee absenteeism because employees can enjoy the health benefits of meditation including reduction of stress, injury, and illness. Employees will be less likely to call in sick because their bodies will be healthier. Additionally, employees who feel that their job is actually helping them to be more productive and healthier will report overall higher levels of job satisfaction, resulting in less employee turn over.

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Meditation also increases productivity, especially for people whose professions require them to use their creative thinking skills or to concentrate for extended periods of time such as engineers, designers, architects, programmers, and artists. Additionally, meditation can help employees learn new tasks because it improves memory retention and general learning ability. When the mind is relaxed and free from distractions, it can work much more productively at the task at hand.

Meditation can help increase employee morale for several reasons. The first is that employees can develop a sense of emotional closeness by engaging in a shared experience together. Second, the process of relaxation can help lower emotional defenses which will in turn make the participants more likely to work well together on team projects and support each other under the pressures of deadlines, demands, and changes. Finally, employee morale can be increased by the introduction of a corporate meditation program as employees may feel that their employers care for their general well-being. Employees will find it easier to take pride in a company that takes pride in them.

Research studies are beginning to prove the benefits of corporate meditation programs. According to Project-Meditation.org, a Detroit-based chemical plant implemented a corporate meditation program. After just three years, they reported an 85% reduction in absenteeism, a 120% increase in overall productivity, a 70% reduction in injuries, and a whopping 520% increase in company profits.

The Benefits of Meditation for Personal Well-Being

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Meditation, especially when used as a regular part of a healthy lifestyle, has multiple benefits. When you review the list below, it will be easy to see why so many people are incorporating it into their professional and personal lives to help them achieve a greater sense of success. How many other activities can provide so many physical and mental benefits?

Physical Benefits

- Decreased heart rate, blood pressure, and cholesterol
- Improvements of symptoms of insomnia
- Reduction of symptoms of PMS
- Reduced thickness of artery walls, reducing risk of heart attack and stroke by 8 – 15%¹
- Improvement of chronic pain symptoms
- Reduction of the distressing symptoms of asthma, allergies, depression, cancer, fatigue, and heart disease²
- Decreased muscle tension
- Improvements in levels of energy
- Increased immunity to fight off disease
- Reduction of free radicals, resulting in less tissue damage³
- Higher skin resiliency
- Slowing of the ageing process
- Decreased experiences of headaches and migraines
- Improvements in fertility as meditation helps regulate bodily hormones

¹ www.project-meditation.org

² www.mayoclinic.com/health/meditation/HQ01070

³ www.ineedmotivation.com/blog/2008/05/100-benefits-of-meditation

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Mental Benefits

- Decreased anxiety and nervousness
- Increased feelings of independence and confidence
- Causes the brain to age more slowly by increasing grey matter in the brain⁴
- Increased creativity
- Increased ability to problem-solve
- Increased ability to concentrate
- Greater sense of self-awareness
- Reduction of negative thoughts
- Increased serotonin, resulting in improvements in mood and behavior
- Improved ability to learn new tasks
- Increased productivity
- Increased emotional stability
- Increased sense of intuition
- Increased ability to resist impulsive urges
- Increased job satisfaction
- Fewer distressing symptoms of mental illness
- Decreased feelings of aggression and road rage
- Improvements in listening skills
- Increased tolerance
- Increased ability to empathize with others and demonstrate compassion
- Increased sense of wisdom
- Ability to live in the present moment
- Increased ability to forgive others

⁴ www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2005/11/051110215950

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- Increased sense of self-actualization or wholeness

Chapter 3: The Practice of Meditation

Preparing Body and Mind for Meditation

Meditation involves being intentional and mindful while placing your body in a comfortable position. Before you begin to engage in meditation, make sure that you have an allotted amount of time in which you will not be disturbed by phone calls or demands from family members or coworkers. Choose an area in which you feel safe and relaxed, with soft lighting and minimal noise. Make sure that your body is relieved by visiting the restroom, drinking water, and eating a snack or a meal beforehand so that bodily urges do not overwhelm you and distract you from your meditative exercises. You may even want to make sure that your body is clean and that your skin is moisturized so that you can feel most comfortable when gaining awareness of your body and so that discomforts do not overwhelm you.

Adjust the temperature of the room or wear appropriate clothing so that your body will be neither too hot nor too cold. Use a comfortable cushion with a soft fabric to sit upon.

If you are using music in your meditation, use something that you are familiar with which does not have any surprising clangs, screeches, or riffs. Put your music player on constant repeat so that you will not have to break your attention to start a new song.

The Meditative Posture

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While meditation does take several forms, from laying down to sitting to moving to balancing in various positions, many meditative exercises start with and can be completed with a simple sitting posture. This posture can be used for meditation involving mindfulness, breathing, imagery, gazing, prayer, and music among other things.

The meditative sitting posture is important because it allows the meditator to sit comfortably, allowing for good circulation and alertness while engaging in relaxation. Maintaining alertness is essential as meditation is not simply just relaxation, but it is also a mindful awareness.

Start by choosing a room or space that is free of distractions and that has a comfortable temperature. Turn off your cell phone and all other distractions. Wear clothes that are comfortable and that do not itch, shift, or dig into your sides.

Sit on a cushion on the floor. Or, if you choose, you can sit on a couch, an office chair, or a bed as long as it will allow you to comfortably maintain a strong posture.

Cross your legs in front of you, tilting your pelvis slightly forward to accentuate the natural curve of your spine. Distribute the pressure of your body evenly between your buttocks and your legs. If you are sitting in a chair, place both feet evenly on the floor.

Elongate your neck and your spine, allowing your head to rest in line with your shoulders. Slightly tuck your chin inward. Relax your jaw, your

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