

# MEDITATION FOR BUSY PEOPLE



## CHECKLIST

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- Defining meditation
  - Practice
    - Train attention and achieve mental clarity
  - History
    - Practiced since 1500 BCE
    - Early meditation practiced in early Hinduism
    - Early meditation practiced in early Buddhism
    - Early meditation practiced in early Judaism
    - Early meditation practiced in early Christianity
    - Early meditation practiced in early Islam
    - Non-spiritual meditation in the 18<sup>th</sup> century
  - Categories
    - Focused meditation
    - Open monitoring meditation
  - Elements
    - Focused attention
    - Relaxed breathing
    - Quiet setting
    - Comfortable position
    - Open attitude
  - Tools
    - Postures or asanas
    - Prayer beads
- Benefits of meditation
  - Reduces stress
  - Decreases symptoms of illness
  - Improves heart health
  - Decreases muscle tension
  - Increases metabolism
  - Slows brain aging
  - Improves psychological wellbeing
  - Improves concentration
  - Assists addicts in recovery

- Meditation and the mind
  - Left hippocampus grows
    - Increases cognitive ability
    - Increases memory
    - Increases emotional regulation
    - Increases self-awareness
    - Increases empathy
  - Posterior cingulate grows
    - Regulates notion of the self
    - Enhances concentration
  - Temporo parietal junction grows
    - Increases empathy
  - Amygdala shrinks
    - Reduces fear
    - Reduces anxiety
    - Reduces anger
- Meditation and the body
  - Activates relaxation response
    - Reduces cortisol
    - Turns off autopilot
- Calming the mind and the body
  - Benefits
    - Experience full relaxation
    - Holistic view of the self
  - How to
    - Slow breath
    - Focus mind on controlling breath
    - Practice breathing techniques
    - Imagine energy leaving body
    - Imagine body getting heavier
    - Allow body to relax
    - Focus until mind and body relax

- Meditation in movement
  - Definition
    - Meditating to movement
  - How to
    - Sit comfortably
    - Slow breath
    - Focus mind on controlling breath
    - Think about your body
    - Think about how your body interacts with the world around you
    - Begin to move with eyes closed if possible
    - Stand up
    - Think about muscles contracting
    - Feel feet firmly on the ground
    - Lift up arm
    - Think about how it feels
    - Put both hands down
    - Move around the room
    - Pay attention to your body
    - Sit back down
    - Sit comfortably
    - Open eyes
  - Popular postures
    - Downward-facing dog
    - Child's pose
    - Corpse pose
- Meditation by observation
  - Definition
    - Meditation to observational thoughts
    - Observe stream of thought
  - Benefits
    - Encourages positive self-talk
    - Increases optimistic mindset
    - Increases happier wellbeing
    - Sharpens focus
    - Get to know yourself better

- How to
  - Sit comfortably
  - Close eyes
  - Focus mind on controlling breath
  - Slow breath
  - Focus on other parts of the body
  - Pay attention to how your body feels
  - Allow brain to wander
  - Recognize your thoughts
  - Let thought finish
  - Gently let go of thought
  - Do this until you're ready to finish
  - Bring attention back to the breath
  - Slowly open eyes
- Meditation with affirmations
  - Affirmations
    - Positive sentences we say to ourselves or others
    - Associate affirmation with images
  - Benefits
    - Increases motivation
    - Changes behavior
    - Changes habits
    - Changes actions
    - Changes reactions
  - Create affirmations
    - Search online for ideas
    - Practice observation meditation
    - Ask yourself what you want
    - Ask yourself what you need
    - Think about your goals
    - Focus on mid- to long-term goals
    - Form affirmation

- How to
  - Repeat affirmations morning and night
  - Practice meditation with affirmations
  - Sit comfortably
  - Close eyes
  - Focus mind on breath
  - Say affirmations out loud
  - Repeat 10 times
  - Focus mind back on breath
  - Open eyes
- Creating a daily practice
  - How to
    - Select time of day
    - Select meditation length
    - Create a meditation space
    - Create go-to meditation
  - Tips
    - Improvise
    - Be kind to yourself
    - Allow yourself to mess up
- Daily meditation for the soul
  - Journal meditation
    - Observation meditation with journaling
    - Ask yourself, “What am I thankful for today?”
    - Reflect
    - Write down answer
    - Ask yourself, “What do I need right now?”
    - Reflect
    - Write down answer