

THE BASIC

MEDITATION GUIDEBOOK

EVOLV PHYSIOTHERAPY



THANK YOU

Thank you for purchasing this guide.

We now know that pain is multi-factorial, and practicing meditation and mindfulness techniques can greatly assist the journey to recovery.

WHY MEDITATE

Keeping your mind in a constant state of flux is like keeping the motor on your car running all night long. You and the car will eventually run out of gas. Quieting your mind needs a top five placement on your “to-do” list.

Since we are so well aware of the needs of others, from our employers to our families, it is easy to overlook ourselves. Therefore, keep the notion that it is necessary to quiet your mind in the forefront of your mind. In this way, you will be able to go forth and do more.

Block aside a time and place for yourself that enables you to think of nothing, do nothing, and clear your mind. If you have to leave the house, then do so. Let everyone know that you are unreachable.

Sit quietly in your car if you have to, take some cleansing breaths, and think of absolutely nothing. You will see how even recharging for a few minutes during lunch each day will make a difference. Imagine then how productive the art and practice of meditation can be, in many ways.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Studies are beginning to show through trials how meditation is having a positive impact on an individual's health. It seems as though training your mind could have a direct impact on improving the health of your body.

A Healthy heart – Studies are beginning to show that meditation could possibly be one of many contributing ways to lower cholesterol and blood pressure. Of course, any way to lower cholesterol and blood pressure is a way to a healthier and happier heart.

Arthritis and other joint diseases – Meditation seems to have a direct impact on the ability to cope better with pain and stiffness associated with disorders involving chronic pain.

Fatigue and sleep disorders – Individuals who practice meditation may get a bonus that transcends further into every category of health. Without a good night's sleep, fatigue sets the stage for disease and stress. Getting a good night's sleep will aid in the fighting off and recovery of illness. Those who meditate may find it easier to fall asleep and stay asleep.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Warding off stress – It not only gives physical health benefits; meditation is also a wonderful way to ward off stress. Anyone who has ever practiced meditation may very well say that it has helped him or her in dealing with stress. Of course, meditation does not eliminate stress; however, it helps an individual cope better with it. This has a dual benefit – one of a healthy body and the other of a healthy mind.

These are just a few of the reasons why meditation is good for you.

WHEN AND HOW TO MEDITATE

Once you have decided to invest your time and effort into learning how to meditate, it is also important to decide on the when and the how of meditation. Meditation will offer many benefits in the areas of health, concentration, stress, anxiety, and joy.

Setting aside a committed time is a very important component of meditation. Making sure that everyone respects your commitment is also vital to the success of your meditation experience.

MAKE A COMMITMENT

The first and probably the most important aspect of beginning meditation is to commit wholeheartedly from the outset. When you speak of meditation, let everyone know that you are going to meditate as part of your routine. Do not say that you are going to “try” meditation; that will only set you up for an easy escape from the beginning.

Make sure that your words and actions are aligned with the commitment to meditate.

PICK A TIME

Pick a time of day or night and make a commitment to stick to that time and date. Make sure that you choose a time that will always be convenient for you without any disruptions. If that means locking yourself in your room for a period of time before bedtime, get a sign that says that meditation is in practice and do not disturb.

If you choose to practice meditation in the morning, get up a few minutes earlier every day to begin meditation.

FREQUENCY

When you first begin to meditate, keep your expectations in check. Start off slowly and increase the time gradually. In this manner, you will not start off on too high a level with too many expectations and then you will not be disappointed. Give it some time.

Start off with 15-minute intervals each morning. Morning is best because your body has not fully awakened to the stressors of the day. Thereafter, when you begin to see the rewards of meditation, you will be able to increase and adjust your schedule accordingly.

POSTURE

Another important aspect of meditation is your posture. A pose that is too rigid or too loose will diminish the meditation experience. Sit with your spine upright, but not too stiff. Sit on the floor on a comfortable blanket or mat.

Make sure that your neck is straight and your shoulders are not slouched, but remember to relax your arms and legs.

It may take some time to adjust your position, but over time, you will realize what the right position is once you have experimented.

Do not expect to be miraculously transformed in the beginning. Meditation – just like anything else – takes time, patience, and practice.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Many individuals think of sitting on top of a mountaintop with legs folded and fingers poised when thinking about successful meditation. Meditation does not, however, have to be that extreme. As a matter of fact, meditation can be quite simple if you follow a few tried and true tips for successful meditation.

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ROUTINE

When it comes to meditating successfully, make sure that you have an allotted time set aside each week for this purpose. If you choose to start meditating, it is best to begin with a once per week practice until you are more comfortable with the art of meditating.

Even if you have to put it in red pen on your calendar, put it on your calendar. Use your smart phone to schedule a reminder or even send yourself an email reminding you of your date with rest and relaxation. The rewards of being intentional about meditating are worth their weight in gold.

MAKE YOUR INTENTIONS KNOWN

Let everyone in your household know that you will be taking on the practice of meditation and when, how, and where you will begin this process of transformation.

Let everyone know that you are committed and disciplined to maintaining this goal and that your health and his or her happiness depend on it, as well.

Let your family in on a little secret. Tell them that meditating will be good for you and create a happier more relaxed and healthier you. This will have a trickle down effect on all of your family members and it is in their best interest to support you as you go on this newfound journey.

PICK A LOCATION

Find a soothing, relaxing, and out of the way area for your meditation practice. Set up the area with a few comforting photos, some scented candles, a comfy pillow, and a nice throw rug. Even if it is just a corner of your bedroom where you can go and lock yourself in and not be disturbed, it is very important to claim your private space for your meditation retreat.

LEARN

Educate yourself on the art of meditation to that you will have a base knowledge before you begin. Get some educational materials to view, watch some videos online, and gather some reading material on the subject.

Arming yourself with knowledge before you begin will allow you to have a more peaceful and results oriented experience.

By educating yourself, setting aside a quiet location, letting your family know of your intentions, and securing a quiet spot to meditate in, you can float into a meditation experience that is successful and peaceful all rolled into one.

3 TIPS TO QUIET YOUR MIND

If you are not overachieving and extremely busy in today's society, you are the exception and not the norm. We are all guilty of this; we overextend, overachieve, and overstress ourselves to the point of breaking. Little do we realize, however, that we are hurting our body by hurting our mind.

THE ART OF GRATITUDE

It is so easy to be upset when things do not go our way. From the moment we spill our coffee, lock our keys in the car, and forget our lunch, a spiral of circumstances can set us off into a tailspin of negativity. However, we can choose to stay in a state of discontent and let that dictate our day, or we can be grateful for the other things in our lives even if they are not present in front of us right now.

Did you ever notice that when something nice happens, we tend to smile for a moment and then move on? However, when something goes wrong, we feel the need to tell everyone and anyone that will listen. It is in those exact moments of discontent that we need to focus on what we are grateful for, and it is then and only then that we will pull ourselves up from discontent.

Keeping the focus on gratitude offers your mind something to smile about, regardless of outside circumstances. Focusing on people, places, and even things that make you grateful, gives your mind the quiet respite that it needs to stay active and healthy in the future.

A TIME FOR NOTHINGNESS

Everyone has a busy schedule; that is a known fact. We all set our schedules to overflowing and then complain that we do not have time for ourselves. Take a good hard look at your schedule and see what you can delete and what you can delegate. If you are going to have a healthy mind, you need to take care of it just as you would your body. One cannot function healthily without the other.

The best tip for quieting your mind is to put that on your schedule. Put it in big red pen on your calendar, text yourself a reminder, and place it on your list of things to do this week.

TAKE A MOMENT

Being in the moment has become a cliché; however, if you really take the time and trouble to learn what that means, you will learn how to quiet your mind. Focus on what you are doing at the exact moment you are doing it.

In this way, you are focused on the moment at hand and not two days from now when something big is arising. These are just three helpful tips for quieting your mind.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Transcendental Meditation is the art and skill of learning how to separate oneself from negativity and stress and come to a place of awareness and self-realization.

Just the sound of transcendental meditation sounds like a blessing in itself. Imagine the benefits you can obtain from actually learning how to practice transcendental meditation and make it a part of your weekly routine.

Transcendental meditation can improve your health in many ways. First, there is the medical benefit and second there is the benefit over the negativity of the mind. Last but not least, there is the spirit benefit.

Transcendental meditation may offer health benefits to the physical body, but also helps to relieve stress. This type of meditation also offers benefits to the spirit or soul as some may call it.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Scientific methods of exploring transcendental meditation document health benefits in many areas:

- Cardiovascular health
- Joint and arthritic disorders
- Pain disorders
- Blood pressure and cholesterol levels
- And even menopause

Meditation of course starts with the mind, but it also has a direct impact on the benefits of the body. It stands to reason that if the mind is healthy, alert, active, and alive, then the body will follow its direction.

MENTAL HEALTH

Transcendental meditation is a practice recommended as an alternative form of therapy or as an addition to traditional medicine. Many individuals claim that this type of meditation is beneficial to their mental state of mind. It has been known to provide extra comfort and care for those who experience issues such as:

- Anxiety
- Fear
- Stress
- And even some forms of depression

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BREATHING PRACTICES

While a part of meditation is getting in touch with your awareness, another part has to do with relaxing and clearing your mind. Breathing is an important tool to get to both those places. Breathing may seem as simple as breathing in and out; however, this is not entirely the case.

For mediation to be successful, you will need to read up a little, listen to some CDs, and most of all practice a bit of breathing properly. Here are a few easy breathing practices to make your beginning mediation experience an enlightened one.

BREATHING PRACTICES

Proper Sitting for Proper Breathing

First and foremost, make sure that you are comfortable. Sitting upright with a straight spine will help the energy flow and prepare you for proper breathing exercises. Do not sit too rigidly, or you will be uncomfortable and unresponsive to the proper breathing format.

Relaxation of the Body

Once you have gotten into a comfortable seated position, it is important to relax your body to prepare it for breathing techniques and meditation. No matter how well you practice your breathing, if your body is tense, you will not have success. Begin by relaxing the muscles in your toes, moving to your ankles, and work your way all the way up to the top of your head. Once your body is in its relaxed position, then it will be time to begin your proper breathing techniques.

BREATHING PRACTICES

Pay Attention to Your Breaths

In the beginning, simply pay attention to your breaths. Be attuned to the rhythm of the breaths, focusing on the in and out of those breaths. Do not try to control those breaths; just be aware of them. It is very important to be aware of how you are breathing in the beginning before trying to learn any new technique on how to breathe. Being aware is an important part of the process.

Pay Attention to Your Body

Once you are acutely aware of how you breathe, it is important to pay attention to your body. If you are not experiencing your stomach rising and falling with each breath, you may be tense in the moment. It is important to have your breath enter into the nostrils and leave through mouth naturally.

Establish a Rhythm

It is very important to establish a breathing rhythm. Once you become aware of your breathing, you will notice that it is easier to establish a rhythm. Once that rhythm is established, you will find your meditation to flow easily and you will get the most benefit out of that meditation.

COMMON PROBLEMS

As with any new adventure, the feeling of starting off with tons of excitement and exhilaration and then falling to the other end of the spectrum is common. When you begin your endeavor of meditation, it is important to remember that there will be times of frustration. Meditation is not a magic pill that, once swallowed, will come easily and effortlessly. It takes practice and it takes patience.

There are some common problems with mediation in the early stages.

- It is hard to focus - In the beginning, you may have high expectations that meditation will magically transform your life and it will do so immediately. This is not the case. Meditation takes focus. When you find your mind constantly shifting gears and you are unable to sit quietly and focus on breathing, you need to regain control of that focus. Sometimes picking a focal point in the center of the room or even a focal point that you have created will alleviate the problem of focus. Concentrating on your breathing will also help you gain control of your meditation experience.

COMMON PROBLEMS

- Thinking too much – If you are thinking too much about trying not to think too much, you will sabotage yourself. Try not to focus too much on getting clear and quiet. If you find you are straining the muscles in your forehead, trying to clear your mind, then you are trying too hard. Start with a slow progression of deep breaths and by tensing and releasing various parts of your body and your muscles. When it comes to meditation, too much effort can strain your results.
- Too many distractions – If you have not designated a quiet space for your mediation, chances are that you will not have a successful beginning. It is very important to have a set-aside room or space for your meditation practice. If you have chosen a place with too many distractions and too much traffic, you have set yourself up for failure. In addition, it is imperative to tell your family members that you have a schedule and you intend to stick to it.

COMMON PROBLEMS

- Disregarding your commitment – In the beginning, when you are not quite seeing the immediate results you may have anticipated, it is easy to disregard your commitment. However, make it a point to stick to your commitment even if that means being accountable to a friend or family member. If you give up too soon, you will never reap the amazing benefits of mind, health, and body.
- Difficulty with the breathing rhythm – Sometimes individuals may breathe in too deeply and out too rapidly. The point is not to hyperventilate yourself, but to find that rhythm that works for you. Long, slow, deep inhalations with long, slow exhalations will work better than short breaths in and short breaths out. Once you get the feel for the rhythm, you will have meditation down in no time flat.



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