

Meditation or Mind Quieting Exercises



“We tend to be particularly unaware that we are thinking virtually all the time. The incessant stream of thoughts flowing through our minds leaves us very little respite for inner quiet. And we leave precious little room for ourselves to be, without having to be run around doing things all the time. Our actions are too frequently driven rather than undertaken in awareness, driven by those perfectly ordinary thoughts and impulses that run through our mind like a coursing river, if not a waterfall. We get caught up in the torrent and it winds up submerging our lives as it carries us to places we may not wish to go and may not even realise we are headed for.

Meditation means learning how to get out of this current, sit by the bank and listen to it, learn from it, and then use it's energies to guide us rather than to tyrannise us. The process doesn't magically happen by itself. It takes energy. We call the effort to cultivate our ability to be in the present moment “practise” or “meditation practise”.”

Jon Kabat-Zinn

The 5 Essentials of Successful Meditation or Mind Quieting

1. **A Pure Environment.** This refers to air quality and sound both internal and external. This can be a quiet room, place of worship or a place with natural sounds only like beside the sea, by a river or under a tree.
2. **Absence of Internal Dialogue** – Thoughtlessness. Meditation or quieting the mind requires the absence of internal dialogue. A quiet mind is not thinking, it is being. Don't judge your success.
3. **A Concentration Focus.** This can be a natural sound like running water or trees rustling in the wind, your own breathing, contracting and relaxing muscles in the body, filling your body with light, repeating a single syllable word with a personal positive connotation like God, Love, Peace, Free, etc or visualising it on a chalkboard. If a distracting thought (internal dialogue) occurs quietly and calmly return to the concentration focus.
4. **A Comfortable Position that Requires Wakefulness.** The goal of mediation is to quiet the mind, not to sleep. Find a position other than lying that you can comfortably remain in for at least 20



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minutes. Release the tension from your muscles, open your hands, take off your shoes and socks and relax your face and shoulders. Maintain a good posture; it is essential for muscle relaxation, proper breathing and for good blood, lymphatic and energy flow. At first it may be difficult to maintain a good posture due to de-conditioned muscles or improperly moving and aligned spinal joints. If you choose to sit follow the guidelines recommended by your chiropractor.

5. **Deep, Slow, Diaphragmatic Breathing.** Using your diaphragm, slowly inhale as much air as possible through your nose. Think of filling your stomach with air instead of your chest. Gently hold for 1-3 seconds then relax your diaphragm and slowly exhale as fully as possible through your mouth. If you are using a word or sound for a concentration focus say the word or utter the sound as you exhale. Bring your belly button toward your spine as you exhale.

Implementing Meditation or Mind Quieting

1. Set aside 20 - 30 minutes everyday for your mind quieting exercise.
2. Have no expectations. You are practising not performing. The more you practise the more skilled you will become. The benefit comes from engaging in practise, not from how well you performed.
3. When going through particularly stressful periods, perform your mind quieting exercise twice or more a day.
4. Be prepared. Practise is the key, there's no point taking your first tennis lesson in the stress of the Wimbledon final!
5. Practise while waiting for your treatment, to relax and get the most from your healing experience.

