



BE KIND TO YOUR MIND

HOW TO DO MEDITATION AND GUIDED RELAXATION

WHAT ARE MEDITATION AND GUIDED RELAXATION?

Meditation and Guided Relaxation are practices of using our breath and bodies to help us feel calm, relaxed, and softened (less tense). Because these are *learned* skills, we may find they're harder to do when we feel upset, anxious, or angry because being still and concentrating on the breath can make us think about all sorts of things while we experience different feelings. If you find yourself thinking of anything during meditation, know that it is okay! Try to let your mind leave these thoughts as they come to you.

You can meditate for any amount of time, even one minute! Meditation and Guided Relaxation can be practiced any time, even if you are feeling okay. They give us a chance to take a break and allow our bodies and minds to rest.

HOW TO MEDITATE

1. Find a space inside or outside that is safe and comfortable.
2. Once that space is found, sit in a comfortable position:
 - a. A chair
 - b. On the floor (if available, sit under a pillow)
 - c. Legs crossed
 - d. Legs out long
 - e. On your shins
3. Get comfortable in your seat. You may need to make adjustments or change positions during the meditation.
4. Start by closing your eyes or softening your gaze.
5. Begin to notice your breath, the cool air as you breath in and the warm air as you breath out.
 - a. You can breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth OR breathe in through your nose and out through your nose.
6. Notice as you breathe, your stomach and chest rise and fall.
7. Start to count your breaths in to a count of three and out to a count of three (inside your head, not aloud).
8. If comfortable, lengthen the count to four, five, or six.
9. Do this for 1-2 minutes. You can extend this as long as you want.
10. Now, begin to let go of your counting. As you breathe in, think the word **So** and as your breath out, think the word **hum**.
11. Continue for 1-2 minutes. You can extend this as long you want.
12. Let go of the mantra and start to deepen your breath.
13. Blink open your eyes.
14. Roll out your wrists and ankles as you wiggle your fingers and toes.
15. You are now done with the meditation!

HOW TO DO A GUIDED RELAXATION

1. Find a space inside that is safe and comfortable.
2. Once that space is found, find a seat or a place to lay down:
 - a. The floor (if seated, have a pillow under you. If laying down, have a pillow under your head)
 - b. A chair
 - c. A couch
 - d. A bed
3. Get comfortable in your position. You may need to adjust your body throughout the relaxation to get comfortable.
4. Start by closing your eyes or softening your gaze.
5. Begin to notice your breath, the cool air as you breathe in and the warm air as you breathe out.
 - a. You can breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth, OR breathe in through your nose and out through your nose.
6. Notice as you breathe, your stomach and chest rise and fall.
7. Bring your attention to the center of your forehead. Let your attention drift to the following body parts and think about relaxing them:
 - Soften your eyes
 - Next, your cheekbones
 - Relax your ears
 - Soften your jaw
 - Soften the sides of your neck
 - Next, the tops of your shoulders
 - Relax your upper arms
 - Next, your lower arms
 - Relax your hands
 - Next, your fingers
 - Feel your breath rest on your fingertips as you breathe in and out
 - Soften your chest
 - Next, your stomach
 - Soften your hips
 - Next, your upper legs
 - Soften your lower legs
 - Relax your ankles
 - Relax the tops of the feet
 - Relax and soften your toes
 - Feel your breath on your toes moving in and out of the body
 - Relax through the bottoms of your feet
 - Relax the backs of your ankles
 - Soften your calves
 - Relax the backs of the knees
 - Soften the backs of the legs
 - Next, the back of the hips
 - Soften your lower back
 - Next, your mid-back
 - Finally, your upper back
 - Relax the back of the neck
 - Soften the back of the head
8. Feel your entire body relax and soften.
9. Begin to inhale from the top of your head and feel the breath move through the entire body and out through your toes.
10. Inhale through the feet all the way up through the body as you exhale through the top of the head.
11. Lay or sit in silence for 1-2 minutes, or longer if you'd like.
12. Deepen your breath.
13. Begin to wiggle your fingers and toes.
14. Roll out your wrists and ankles.
15. Blink open your eyes.
16. If laying down, move to a seated position.
17. You are now done with your guided relaxation!

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