



Make Time for MEDITATION

A daily practice—even just 60 seconds(!)—can take you from crazed to calm. Get ready for your moment of om.

WHY YOU SHOULD DO IT

"If meditation came in the form of a pill, it would be the best-selling drug on the market," says Suze Yalof Schwartz, founder and CEO of Unplug Meditation, the world's first secular drop-in meditation studio. "It gives you the opportunity to delete stress on demand and puts everything in perspective."

Lower blood pressure, decreased depression and anxiety, and increased focus, memory and productivity are just some of the scientifically proven benefits.

HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

"Get up and get it done!" says Yalof Schwartz. When your alarm goes off, hit the snooze bar. But instead of going

back to sleep, sit up and, before anything else, meditate for 5 minutes. Yalof Schwartz believes a morning meditation sets up your whole day for success.

If 5 minutes sounds like a lot, start with just 60 seconds. "In our busy schedules, we all have one minute to meditate," says Leonard Perlmutter, founder and director of the American Meditation Institute. "When you're

ready, add another 60 seconds. Be kind to yourself and you'll establish a rewarding practice."

A good meditation routine teaches us the importance of budgeting our time as conscientiously as we budget our finances, but for most people it has to be easy, says Perlmutter. He likes the idea of meditating both at dawn, to get centered, and again just before bedtime to promote a more restful sleep.

Don't worry about the amount of time you spend meditating—the real key to a healthy practice is simply to do it.

WHAT YOU NEED

First, what you don't need: a still mind. Nobody has one. Perlmutter says it's our nature to think. "Meditation is not meant to eliminate thoughts," he explains. "It simply teaches you to direct the mind's mental traffic."

Second, make sure that you are comfortable. When the body is relaxed and settled, you are less likely to get distracted.

Finally, remember that you can meditate anywhere. "When you close your eyes, slow down your breath and get present, you're meditating," says Yalof Schwartz. "I've done it on the subway and on line at Starbucks—it works everywhere."

Check out guided apps, like Headspace, Calm and Yalof Schwartz's Unplug*.

So, what are you supposed to think about when you meditate? Here are Suze Yalof Schwartz's tips on getting started.

1 Close your eyes and focus on a single point—your breath, a mantra, a sound—or visualize an object.

2 Let your focus go—this happens consciously or unconsciously.

3 Drift in the gap of peace and nothingness that arises, even if it lasts a millisecond.

4 Notice when your thoughts have sneaked back in.

5 Bring your attention back to the single point of focus.

6 Repeat.

* Visit unplugmeditation.com, go to Online Classes, click Start Free Trial and enter code FAMILYCIRCLE for 50% off a monthly subscription to the Unplug Meditation app for six months. Valid through September 1, 2018.