

Basics of Meditation by Monica Breen

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Consistency

Establish a location where you wish to regularly practice. You might want to have a designated blanket, pillow or chair to sit on.

Sitting Position

Try sitting on the floor with your legs folded, and your seat raised onto a firm cushion or folded blanket. Ideally, your hip bones are above your knees. If you need back support sit against a wall. You may also choose to sit in a chair "Egyptian style" with legs uncrossed, feet on the floor, and hands in your lap.

Time and place

First thing in the morning is best; however, you want to be realistic about your schedule and accommodate a consistent practice, one that is away from distractions.

Length of time

Ideally, you want to work your way up to 20 minutes, but you can set-aside just 5 minutes a day to "sit." Consider that meditation is preparation for how you "move through the world" - it is not necessarily the main attraction.

Attitude

Meditation "attitude" is very different than what most of us are used to in our daily lives. There is no competition, no timeline, or completion date. We aren't seeking a "moment of enlightenment." We are grooming ourselves to become attentive and open to discovering new things about ourselves and the world around us. Be aware of when you slip into judgment, anticipation and/or expectation. Trust that in time, you will discover changes in yourself and your relationship to the world. They will be positive!

Give it meaning

Make a little altar with pictures of people you love, people who challenge you, things that remind you of the gifts that mother earth provides like plants, animals, sunshine and water. Place reminders of things you're grateful for and things you'd like to see change for the better, for yourself or your community.

The mind is used to being busy and distracted. It is not used to a "still" body or quiet time. After a handful of consistent sessions, you get used to the feeling of meditating and may desire to return. You'll learn to be comfortable as a "witness" to your thoughts and emotions (common: boredom, restlessness, planning, mild anxiety, needing to "get going.") Stay curious! With practice, you might to start to feel right at home.