

Mindfulness Meditation



In his book “Wherever You Go, There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life,” Jon Kabat-Zinn gives recommendations for starting and maintaining a meditation practice through numerous essays about the ups and down of such a practice. Here are some of his suggestions, which might help you in your efforts to become a meditator:

- **Make time each day for practice.** This goes without saying – if you set aside a regular time each day (like first thing in the morning or before you go to bed at night) you’ll be more successful at keeping up a consistent practice.
- **Keep it simple.** Don’t go to too much trouble or create a complicated ritual because you’ll be less likely to keep it up over time.
- **Stop and be present.** The most important step is stopping whatever else you have been doing for even a few minutes and notice the present moment. You can do this anywhere, at any time.
- **Pay attention to each moment.** No matter what you are feeling or thinking, this is what you should pay attention to. You don’t have to notice anything other than what is already happening right now in this moment.
- **Focus on the breath.** Watch yourself breathe in and out and follow each breath. This simple technique can help you anytime you get overwhelmed or distracted. Just keep returning to your breath.
- **Be patient.** Cultivating a practice such as meditation takes time so you have to have patience for the process.
- **Practice, practice, practice.** The consistency with which you practice will make all the difference, so keep it up whether you feel you are making progress or not.
- **Don’t judge.** Keep an open mind and let your practice unfold in its own way. There is no right or wrong way to meditate so stop trying to be perfect.

Remember that you will reap the benefits of a meditation practice no matter how long you practice or how “well” you do it. Just get started and see where it takes you.