

REFLECTION

*an introduction
to meditation*



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WELLNESS

welcome

Welcome! My name is Jordan and I'm so glad to have you here. One of my missions is to help you become more aware and conscious of your body, mind and habits to ultimately enhance all aspects of your well-being.

Within this guide, you will find tips to form an easy and effective meditation practice. I have provided you with information on how to get started and what you will need, meditations to introduce you to the crucial link between your body, mind and your breath, as well as journal prompts to explore deeper.

Mindfulness is not only important while meditating, but throughout our daily lives as well. It is important to create awareness and observe all aspects of life so that we can fully experience and appreciate each and every moment. For example, when eating and exercising. Pause to ask yourself, "How does this food make me feel?", "Am I hungry?", "Do I have the energy to workout right now?" ... this sounds simple, but how often do we force ourselves into something we think is right for us, only to feel worse in the end?

I hope you find this guide to be helpful. As always, I am available to chat more and would love to hear what you think. Feel free to email me at: jsimonewellness@gmail.com

Ready to enhance every area of your life?

xo Jordan



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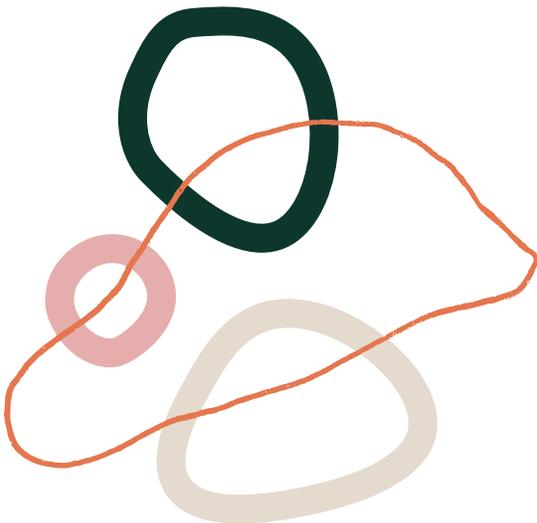
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the point

It's time.

It's time to wake up where you've been snoozing through life.

The point of meditation is to shine light and awareness in aspects where there has been cloudiness, uncertainty and darkness. We've created the darkness with our thoughts and we've been stuck inside of them so long. I'm here to tell you that you are NOT your thoughts. There is a whole identity underneath all of the 'thought' happening within your mind. It's like meeting someone you have never met before but you've known your entire life.

What am I talking about?

I'm talking about how we react and move through life based off of what is happening around us on a daily basis. Our external world has complete control over our internal dialogue, emotions and well-being.

The point of meditation is to become aware of this and stop it in its tracks. We have the power to experience joy when we're having a bad day, to love when we feel lonely, and to know peace in the midst of chaos and confusion. How? Because we are not our thoughts. Our thoughts are what create the chaos, confusion, loneliness, and bad days. We can choose to completely identify with them, or choose to see what is beyond.

I know this might sound difficult, but I assure you it's easier than it seems. The only thing you need to experience a shift in perspective is you and your breath. Yup, that's right - no fancy cushion or rigid posture is needed to feel the positive effects of meditation (although, they're nice to have ... more on this later).

So, before you tell yourself this is all too much, let's dive into some meditation myths.

meditation myths

MYTH #1

THERE'S NO WAY I CAN STOP MY THOUGHTS.

Good news - there's no way anyone can stop their thoughts! 'Not thinking' is not a requirement for meditation, and good thing because it most certainly can't be done. Meditation is about *noticing* your thoughts and what comes up in stillness - it's about being a witness to the chatter and noise we create for ourselves. When you notice a thought as just a thought and do not identify it as reality, you are rising to a higher level of consciousness.

Remember: You are not your thoughts. You are the thinker with thoughts.

MYTH #2

I WILL FINALLY BE ENLIGHTENED AFTER 'X' AMOUNT OF DAYS SPENT MEDITATING.

If you're still becoming frustrated with stand-still traffic, judging other people by what they say, blowing up on your spouse for not doing the laundry, or identifying as the victim in certain situations, you have not reached enlightenment. There is also a 99.9% chance that this will never happen... simply because you were born a human, just like the rest of us.

MYTH #3

I'M NOT GOOD AT MEDITATION.

This is like saying "I'm not good at breathing." There is no "good" or "bad" when it comes to meditation. It just is. You are quite literally placing awareness on your breath, noticing thoughts and distractions, labeling them just what they are, and placing awareness back on your breath. Some days are going to be more difficult than others and you will feel more distracted - but I argue that those are the days you need meditation the most.

MYTH #3

I CAN'T SIT STILL, THEREFORE, I CAN'T MEDITATE.

If sitting still is a major distraction in the beginning of your meditation journey so much so that you cannot stop fidgeting, then get up and move! Go for a walk and focus on your breath instead, do some yoga while placing awareness on your breath and one point of vision, or do the dishes while being completely present and notice when your mind wanders. Then try meditating in stillness in small increments and work up from there.

essentials

YOUR BODY

ALL bodies are welcome to meditate. There is no fitness requirement and you certainly don't have to know anything about meditation to begin. All you need is yourself, just the way you are right now.

So grab a seat in a comfortable position or put your shoes on and go for a walk. I invite you and your perfect body to embark on this journey of meditation!

YOUR BREATH

Your breath will be your central focus of each meditation practice. It is rhythmic, involuntary and quite literally decreases our response to stress when our attention is placed around it.

Generally, in the beginning of each meditation practice, you will want to take around 5 intentional, deep breaths to gain awareness and presence yourself in the space you're in. From there, you can breathe normally and place your attention on the rise and fall of your chest, or the cool air entering your nostrils versus the warmer air leaving your nostrils... more on technique to come.

nice-to-have

You want meditation to be something that you enjoy doing and that provides you with a good feeling. You don't want it to be just one more thing on the 'to-do' list because after a couple of days of feeling like a chore, you won't follow-through with it anymore.

Below are some ways to make meditation enjoyable, relaxing, and something you look forward to. Try making it a part of your routine - maybe a morning ritual as you sit down with your hot tea or coffee and get present with the day. Or, if you are someone who generally has a lot of energy, try working out before you sit for meditation to release the built up energy and easily come into stillness.

MEDITATION CUSHION

Sitting on a meditation cushion keeps you alert and focused by sitting upright. This is helpful rather than sitting on the couch or in bed, where your mind is more likely to wander or you might be tempted to drift off to sleep.

AROMATHERAPY

- Essential oils are a great way to enhance your mood, create a calming atmosphere, create a sense of grounding, etc. A few drops can be placed on your wrist and neck, or you could diffuse your favorite blend.
- Palo santo (when burned) is a really fragrant wood that creates an atmosphere of clearing and renewal.

nice-to-have

SOOTHING SOUNDS

White noise and/or ambient music playing softly in the background encourages relaxation during meditation. You could also choose to sit in a quiet location and notice the natural sounds and rhythms around you.

JOURNAL

Journaling prior to or after meditation is extremely helpful when you feel like your thoughts are scattered or you're having trouble concentrating. Getting your thoughts and feelings out into writing will help you improve your focus, concentration and attention span. This can be done before or after meditation, or both.

MEDITATION APP

These are great if you would like someone's voice to guide you through a meditation, if you would like to choose from different soothing sounds, if you would like to set a timer for the duration of your meditation - or if you would like all three.

focus

BREATH

This is probably the most common area of focus in meditation. Focus your attention on your breath and simply bring it back to the breath whenever your mind wanders.

- *In-Breath*: Focus your attention on the in-breath; placing your attention on the cool sensation at the tip of your nose as you breathe in.
- *Out-Breath*: Focus your attention on the out-breath; placing your attention on the warm sensation at the tip of your nose as you breathe in.
- *Rise & Fall of the Chest*: Focusing your attention on the steady movement of your chest as you inhale and exhale.

SENSATION

If you feel a particular sensation in your physical body and it becomes to be a distraction, notice it without judgement and without quick reactivity. Acknowledge it for exactly what it is and let it go.

THE PRESENT MOMENT

Observe whatever is happening in the present moment. This is a great meditation while doing household chores, standing by the copy machine, eating a meal, or having a conversation with a friend. Placing your focus on what is happening in the present moment will help you to fully experience whatever you're doing and increase your awareness to what is happening around you.

meditations

MINDFULNESS

A mindfulness meditation is to be fully present with your thoughts, being aware of what we're doing, how we're feeling, but not being reactive or judgmental towards anything we're experiencing. Simply observing what is coming up, acknowledging it and letting it pass.

We can practice this style of meditation two ways: sitting down in a comfortable position with eyes closed, focused on our breath.

Or, we can choose to be mindful anywhere, at any time.

For example, while doing chores or commuting to work - this can be an opportunity to notice what thoughts and emotions come up. Think of yourself as the observer of your thoughts instead of identifying with what you're thinking and feeling. This isn't about dismissing or ignoring how you feel, but observing that you can think or feel a certain way and if it does not serve you, have the ability to let it go.

The more one practices this type of meditation, the more non-reactive and less triggered you will become when stressful life events occur.

try it

If seated in a comfortable position, close your eyes and take 5 deep breaths to create presence in the space and relax the thinking mind. Inhale for a count of 5 and slowly exhale for a count of 8, pausing for a moment at the end of each inhale and exhale. Come to a normal rhythm or breath and place your attention on it. Observe when thoughts or emotions come up but be intentional to not create judgment or reaction around them. Let them pass as you bring your awareness back to your breath.

meditations

GUIDED

This is also known as guided imagery or visualization meditation. Typically, this is done by a guide or teacher and there are three great apps found below that can support you in guided meditation.

This can also be done by imagining an event or situation that you are worried or anxious about and visualizing it going well and in your favor. Maybe you are going for a job interview and you visualize the interview going well and you getting the job.

You can also visualize yourself in a relaxing setting such as the beach or in a forest. It is suggested that you use as many of your senses as possible - what do you hear, smell, or touch while visualizing these settings?

try it

- Calm
- Insight Timer
- Headspace

Visualize yourself in a relaxing setting of your choice - where do you want to go? Make sure to create a detailed mental picture with sounds, textures and smells included. What does it feel like to actually be there?

meditations

MANTRA

In Sanskrit, *man* means "mind" and *tra* means "vehicle" or "transport." The mantra is a tool to help you increase awareness and consciousness that exists beyond your "thinking mind".

This is where a personally assigned mantra, such as a meaningless word, simple phrase or sound is repeated in a specific way. The idea behind this is that it will allow you to settle inward towards a relaxed state, allowing you to experience inner peace without effort or concentration.

try it

Get into a comfortable seated position with your eyes closed. You have the option to come up with your own mantra or you can choose from the options below:

- "So Hum"
- "Satchitananda" (pronounced Sat, Chit, Ananda)
- "Love is the only miracle there is"
- "I change my thoughts, I change my world"

As you settle into your seat, take 5 deep breaths. Inhaling for a count of 5, exhaling for a count of 8. Bring your breath to a normal rhythm and repeat your mantra on the in and out breath. For example, if your mantra is "So Hum", repeat "So" on the in breath and "Hum" on the out breath. You can set a timer for however long you would like.

meditations

LOVING KINDNESS

We all have within us, this natural capacity for loving kindness, or friendship that is unconditional, open, gentle and supportive. This is the practice of directing well wishes towards others. During this practice, you might feel a natural opening of your heart towards yourself and other people. This is a wish that everyone be happy.

try it

Repeat this phrase by thinking of yourself in a light of loving kindness:

May I be filled with lovingkindness

May I be held in loving kindness...

May I feel connected and calm...

May I accept myself just as I am...

May I be happy...

May I know the natural joy of being alive...

Repeat this phrase again as you envision someone who is dear to you, starting it with "May you..." Next, repeat this phrase again as you envision a neutral person in your life - a neighbor or a grocery store clerk. Next, envision someone who you have a difficult relationship with and repeat this phrase. And lastly, repeat this phrase as you envision the entire world and all of the beings in it... humans and animals living everywhere...living in richness, poverty, war, peace, hunger, abundance...Aware of all the joys and sorrows that all beings experience.

Bring this practice to a close by coming back to extend kindness to yourself. Sitting for a while and basking in the energy of loving kindness.

meditations

BODY SCAN

Emotions are stored in our physical body and live there until we work through them. This meditation allows you to develop awareness of your the sensations that you are feeling in different parts of your body, and to relieve tension wherever it is found. By practicing this type of meditation, you have the ability to decrease stress, improve well-being, and decrease aches and pain.

try it

Place attention on all physical sensations in your body with non-judgement. Start with the crown of your head, and slowly move your attention down through your ears, face, neck, chest, shoulders, arms, belly, pelvis, hips, thighs, knees, shins and calves, ankles, feet and toes. Notice how things feel - Are your muscles tight in one area? Do you had pain somewhere? Does one part of the body feel colder than another? When you get down to your feet, change directions and slowly move your attention back upward towards the crown of the head. Repeat as many times as you would like.

journal prompts

If you were to fully step into your power, what would that look like for you? What could you achieve? What is holding you back from fully being in your power?

List 20 things that completely light you up inside.

Write about your top 3 goals. What are they? How will you feel when you achieve them? What will your life look like?

Write about your top 3 goals. What are they? How will you feel when you achieve them? What will your life look like?

Reflect on how you've changed and grown since 5 years ago.

Write 5 things you are grateful for this week.