

# Getting started with meditation

Many things happen every day which influence how we feel. Sometimes it feels stressful, challenging or difficult. While it's not always possible to change what's going on, you can always control how you relate to them. It's possible for us to do this when we understand our own mind. Meditation gives us the means to be able to do this - to be comfortable with our mind, just the way it is.

Meditation is a practice for your mind and body. It's all about being present and knowing what we're doing, whilst we're doing it<sup>1</sup>. In recent years, meditation has gained popularity as one way to reduce stress and anxiety.

Practicing even for a few minutes regularly can have an impact on your mental and physical health - and your wellbeing.

Meditation releases tension that our bodies hold. This can help ease your worries, soothe anxiety, boost low mood and improve sleep<sup>2</sup>. It's also great for your metabolism, building immunity and increasing your attention span<sup>3</sup>.



## Seven tips for meditation<sup>2,4</sup>

- 1 Set aside some time in your day - you can start with small sessions of five to ten minutes
- 2 Find a comfortable space and set a timer - check it's got a calming sound
- 3 Choose something to focus on - for example your breath
- 4 Let go of your thoughts and become aware of your point of focus
- 5 It's ok if your mind wanders - make sure you come back to your point of focus when this happens
- 6 Bring your meditation to a close - become aware of how you feel
- 7 Practice regularly - a helpful tip is deciding when you'll meditate next at the end of the session

## Make it a habit

The most important factor to successful meditation is being consistent. Add it to your daily routine. It doesn't matter when, where or how long you're doing it for. If you're struggling to find time, you can even add it to some of your everyday tasks - when you're brushing your teeth, showering or on the bus. And remember, it's ok if you miss a day. Meditation is just like all other skills - the more you practice, the better you'll get at it. And you'll start feeling the benefits of it too.

**Give it a go - you'll see how easy it is and learn what works best for you.**

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#### Sources:

<sup>1</sup>10 science-backed benefits of meditation, [Forbes Health](#), May 2023 (last accessed 16/02/2024)

<sup>2</sup>How to meditate for beginners, [NHS](#), April 2023 (last accessed 16/02/2024)

<sup>3</sup>Benefits of meditation, [Art of Living](#), September 2023 (last accessed 20/02/2024)

<sup>4</sup>How to meditate, [Mindful](#), February 2024 (last accessed 16/02/2024)

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