



**Step One
Breaking Ground
21-Day Meditation Practice**

Instructions

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Welcome to Meditation Village.

Where you will learn to calm your mind, concentrate your mind and focus your mind on positive and uplifting thoughts that will help you to live consciously, connected and happy. This is a step by step program with a great support network to help you achieve the continuity and consistency needed to be truly successful.

Three Secrets to Success

Practice Daily

The first secret to success is consistency and continuity. If you really want to make change, break a habit, or create a new behaviour, you need to do it consistently, daily. The same applies to the practice of meditation. A successful practice requires daily practice. Listen to the audio each day, it will guide you. Meditate with us at 7:30 am PST, or find a time that works best for you.

Use your Motivation and the power of the group to create a daily practice. Knowing very clearly why you are meditating, which we will refer to as your motivation (podcast # 2), will help get you to your cushion. Also know that we are a group and doing this together. Rely on the power of the group. Know that we are all here working at it, all of us with the same crazy mind that we are trying to master. This is a method that has been practiced successfully for thousands of years, it has lasted the test of time.

Work the Steps

The second secret to success is to work in progressive steps. Master each step before you go on. To meditate; and one our first goals, is being able to hold your mind in one place for an extended period of time on an object of your choice. We use the breath as our object of focus to begin. The goal of step one is the ability to hold our focus on the breath for two to five seconds without being swept away by a thought or emotion. If you are not able to do this, then your meditation sessions are filled with your same old thoughts. However, try not to be oriented toward the end of each step. There is no hurry, work each step to it's completion before you move on. Meditate every day until you reach the goals of each step.

Practice not Perfection

The third secret is to know that meditation is a process. Relax and try to enjoy it. A happy relaxed state of mind is more malleable, trainable than a state of mind that is frustrated or angry. Try not to be goal oriented. Just be present. There is nothing more to do, you are already here and doing it and that is perfect. If you apply yourself to the practice, you will naturally reach the goals of each step on the path toward having control over your thoughts and emotions, rather than the thoughts controlling you.



Step One: Breaking Ground 21-Day Practice

Before You Start

The format is simple. Choose a time to meditate and the audio files will guide you from there.

Audio Files: In **Step One, Breaking Ground**, download all of your 11-minute audio files (6) to your mp3 player (computer, ipod, CD, etc.) and simply play **Day 1** on the first day you choose to start your 21-day meditation practice. Play **Day 2** on your second day; use **Days 3-6** for the remainder of the week and **Week 2** for your second week and **Week 3** for your third. **Day 21** is your last day and can be used a maintenance meditation for any amount of days. Day 40 is your last day and can be used a maintenance meditation for any additional days you need. Feel free to read the instructions here but the audio files offer all of the guidance you will need.

Before you begin create a calendar of your meditation days, so you have a quick reference and reminder to know when to move on from day to day, week to week.

Audio Files

Track	Day/Week	Meditation Practice
Track 1	Day 1	Introduction
Track 2	Day 2	Shamatha Meditation
Track 3	Day 3-6	Calm Focused Mind
Track 4	Week 2	Centered
Track 5	Week 3	Strengthening Focus
Track 6	Day 21	Strengthening the Mind

Time: Try to find and then schedule 11 minutes at the same time every day for your meditation. Use a calendar to keep track of the days. Don't forget at Meditation Village we meditate every morning at 7:30am PST with you and hold the space for the group. Please join us.

The Meditation Program

What are we going to learn?

In Step one we are going to learn how we can get the mind quiet, calm, centered and to develop the skill or quality of attention. In Sanskrit this is called Shamathata Meditation, or "calm abiding." This is the foundational practice for all other meditations. This practice teaches us how to calm and manage the mind. One of the first things that you will notice is how much you are thinking and that you have very little control over what



pops into your mind and when. This practice is all about learning how to calm the mind and find some quiet space between those thoughts.

Goals:

1. To develop a habit of meditation. We do this by mediating for a short time every day.
2. To be able to place your mind in an object of your choice for a short period of time (2-5 seconds). In this practice, the object we will use is the breath.

What you will notice

Your Mind is Distracted & Bored

First, you will notice how distracted your mind is in meditation. *This is completely normal.* It is just the first time that you have actually sat down and watched. In fact our minds have been distracted for a very long time. Our minds tend to jump from thought to thought like a monkey jumping from branch to branch. When meditating, we should not follow a thought; just relax and leave them alone by not following them one way or another. Note, the thoughts are not the enemy; it is perfectly natural to think. During meditation we are training the mind to focus on only the object that we choose, not the random thoughts that disrupt our meditation time – no matter how interesting or brilliant they might be.

You may notice that your mind does not know how to remain watching something as simple as the breath. The habitual nature of our untrained mind labels this as boredom. We often feel bored with something so simple. The mind is accustomed to being distracted by activities that are grand and exciting. These are only distractions. Our goal is to bring the mind into stability, gain control of it, rather than the other way around. You will find once you pay close attention to the breath, the mind will happily rest within and it will become quite relaxing.

Your Body is Distracted

Second, you will notice how distracted your body is in meditation. At first, it is quite difficult to sit still. Perhaps, you will be distracted by a sore back, sore shoulders, sore knees or hips – or maybe all of the above. Do your best to sit still; try not to fidget. When you do move, move slowly, keeping your mind on the breath. Please listen to **Podcast # 1 The Body in Meditation** and/or read *The Body in Meditation* for a full description and illustrations of postures that may work best for you.

Week 1. Getting to Know the Breath (Day 1, 2, & Days 3-6)

The Practice

(Use Podcast # 1, The Body in Meditation, for detailed posture instructions)

Sit with the body at ease and the mind present. Listen to the audio each day, it will guide you:

1. Take 5 breaths (With the lips gently shut, take a few breaths through the nose. (Read or listen to “The Breath in Meditation” for full instructions) to settle the mind, move into meditation.
2. Scan the body for tension and with the mind relax any area that you find tight or tense.
3. Relax the mind.
4. Place your awareness on the breath. Follow the breath as it goes in and out of the body. Do not change or alter the breath in any way. **Observe the sensations of the breath as it enters and permeates the body and observe the sensations of the breath as it leaves the body.** Thoughts will come, do not engage them, do not follow their story, gently bring the mind back to the breath. Do this patiently, do this again and again.

At the end of 11 minutes, gently begin to lengthen and deepen your breath, bring your mind back into the room, flutter your eyes open.

Post Meditations

Post meditations are very short exercises or awareness techniques developed to improve your practice and increase the integration of meditation’s many benefits into your everyday life.

Week one post meditation; at different times throughout the day, maybe once in the morning, afternoon and at night or before each meal, close your eyes and watch your **breath** for 10 seconds or so, balance your attention and focus on the breath. Relax your mind and your body. Use the attention skills you cultivate during meditation. Doing this again and again throughout the day will greatly benefit your practice and increase your ability to focus without distraction. It is living present.

Week 2. A Calm, Focused and Centered Mind (Days 7-13)

The Practice

This week we will work with the qualities of the breath to develop a calm focused and centered mind. Sit with the body at ease and the mind present. Listen to the audio, it will guide you.

1. Take 5 breaths (With the lips gently shut, take a few breaths through the nose. (Read or listen to “The Breath in Meditation” for full instructions) to settle the mind, and to move into meditation.
2. Scan the body for tension and with the mind relax any area that you find tight or tense.
3. Relax the mind.
4. Place your awareness on the breath. Follow the breath as it goes in and out of the body. Do not change or alter the breath in any way. **Notice the qualities of the breath.** Is the breath deep or shallow? Is the breath smooth or rough? Is the in-breath the same as the out-breath? Does it take the same amount of time to breathe in as it does to breathe out? Is there a break after the in-breath and before the out-breath? Is there a break after the out-breath and before the in-breath? Thoughts will come, do not engage them, do not follow their story, gently bring the mind back to the breath. Do this patiently, do this again and again.

At the end of 11 minutes, gently begin to lengthen and deepen your breath, bring your mind back into the room, flutter your eyes open.

Post Meditation

Post meditations are very short exercises or awareness techniques developed to improve your practice and increase the integration of meditation’s many benefits into your everyday life.

Week two post meditation: continue to cultivate the attention skills you are learning. At different times throughout the day, maybe once in the morning, afternoon and at night or before each meal, close your eyes and watch your breath for 10 seconds or so, observe the **qualities of the breath** (deep, shallow, smooth, rough). Relax your mind and your body. Use the attention skills you cultivate during meditation. Doing this again and again throughout the day will greatly benefit your practice.

Week 3. Strengthening Focus (Days 15-20)

The Practice

This week we will work on fixation and strengthening focus. Fixation is when the mind is continually on the breath without distraction. Sit with the body at ease and the mind present. Listen to the audio, it will guide you:

1. Take 5 breaths (With the lips gently shut, take a few breaths through the nose. (Read or listen to “The Breath in Meditation” for full instructions) to settle the mind, move into meditation.
2. Scan the body for tension and with the mind relax any area that you find tight or tense.
3. Relax the mind.
4. Place your awareness on the breath. Do not change or alter the breath in any way. **Now, focus only on the breath as it passes in and out of the nose. Do not follow it into the body.** Observe each aspect of the breath at the area of the nose:
 - as it passes out of the nose
 - the pause at the end of the exhale
 - as it passes by the nose on inhale
 - the moment that there is no breath passing by at the end of the inhale and then again as the air passes by on the way out of the nose.

The mind is fully focused from moment to moment rather than being whisked away by thoughts or emotions. Of course thoughts will come, do not engage them, do not follow their story, gently bring the mind back to the breath. Do this patiently, do this again and again.

At the end of 11 minutes, gently begin to lengthen and deepen your breath, bring your mind back into the room, flutter your eyes open.

Post Meditation

Post meditations are very short exercises or awareness techniques developed to improve your practice and increase the integration of meditation’s many benefits into your everyday life.

Week three post meditation: take a quiet moment alone and try to find out what really makes you happy. Where does your happiness come from? Does happiness come from your state of mind or from something outside of you? Can you find a time when something that usually makes you happy does not make you happy. Is this because of your state of mind? How long does your happiness last? Is it stable or is it fragile?

Week 3. Strengthen the Mind (Day 21)

The Practice

Sit with the body at ease and the mind present. Today's audio can also be used as a maintenance meditation to help you reach the goal of step one, to be able to hold the mind steady on your breath for two to five seconds without distraction. Listen to the audio, it will guide you.

1. Take 5 breaths (With the lips gently shut, take a few breaths through the nose. (Read or listen to "The Breath in Meditation" for full instructions) to settle the mind, move into meditation.
2. Scan the body for tension and with the mind relax any area that you find tight or tense.
3. Relax the mind.
4. Place your awareness on the breath. Do not change or alter the breath in any way. **Now, focus only on the breath as it passes in and out of the nose. Do not follow it into the body.** Observe each aspect of the breath at the nose.

Post Meditation

Post meditations are very short exercises or awareness techniques developed to improve your practice and increase the integration of meditation's many benefits into your everyday life.

A note before you move on to *Step Two*. Each of us comes to meditation from a different place, each of us with different histories, temperaments, and of course each with a unique mind. Let's take a moment to talk to about progress. How do we measure our progress? This program has been designed in steps. Before moving to step 2, please make sure you are ready; that you have established the habit of daily meditation and that you can focus on your breath for 2-5 seconds. Feel free to do *Step One: Breaking Ground* for as long as you like or use Day 21 until a daily habit and focus as been established.

Progress is not measured by advancing quickly or by comparison with others, it must come from within. It takes time to transcend your thoughts, their stories, and the resulting behavior. Take your time, remember your motivation ... Enjoy the process.

See you at *Step Two: Building the Foundation*



Meditation Resource Material

With your login, you have access to the Library that contains some great supplemental material that will help you practice more effectively. Meditation Resource Materials are in audio and pdf formats for listening, reading or both.

Meditation Resource Topics (3-5 minute podcasts)

1. The Body in Meditation
2. Motivation and Meditation Why are you meditating?
3. The Mind in Meditation
4. The Breath in Meditation
5. Meditation Setting and Approach