

Meditation

Rationale

Reasons to meditate include lowering your stress, increasing your focus, and understanding your pain. Meditation may help with many aspects of your life.

Method

There are many ways to meditate but this is a popular method:

1. Find somewhere calm and quiet.
2. Set a timer. Use a short period like ten minutes at first.
3. Sit or kneel comfortably on the floor or a chair with your back straight.
4. Close your eyes and notice your body. Try to keep your body still.
5. Focus on your breath. Inhale, exhale. You might focus on the breath at a particular spot, like the rims of your nostrils.
6. Notice when your mind wanders. Make a mental note, like “wandering” or “thinking” or “hearing”. Let go of the distraction and return to the breath.
7. Close with kindness. Open your eyes and take a moment to notice your sensations.

Variations

Counting. Count each breath up to ten and then start at one again.

Phrases. Repeat a favorite phrase over and over again until you fall into a pleasing rhythm.

Walking. Walk naturally. Pay attention to the lifting and placing of your foot. Notice the movement of your legs and body.

Body scan. Close your eyes and scan each part of your body, moving from your toes to your head. Register how each part of the body feels. When your mind wanders, pick up again where you left off.

Long term

Some long-term meditators seek a deeper understanding of life, even a transformative understanding of life and of the self. If you are to get deeper into meditation, then you will need to devote significant time to your practice. Consider working with mentors who have been practicing for a long time, going on a meditation retreat, or reading books about meditation.