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## About the Author

Kevin Birch was skeptical about many of the claims he heard about meditation.

Kevin says, "They seemed to be too good to be true! I only tried it because a good friend told me it had helped her with stress and other problems."

"I will always be grateful for that suggestion."

Kevin said, "I was very discouraged with my work situation. The stress and uncertainty was affecting my personal and business relationships."

"Meditation helped me to improve my focus and reduce turmoil in my life."

"From that point, it became much easier to deal with the other challenges. It helped me to interact more positively with other people."

"Meditation is not the answer to every problem or situation. It is a tool which can help people reduce stress and improve their ability to deal with the bumps in life's highway."

"Because we are all different, each person will have a different experience. I believe that almost anyone will benefit from using simple meditation."

"You will need to practice regularly. But, the benefits I have seen are worth it a hundred times over."

## Introduction

Meditation has been practiced in various countries for hundreds of years. The methods were developed and used as part of different Eastern religious systems.

Today, many people use the techniques separately from those belief systems.



The goal of meditation is to improve our ability to focus our attention, reduce stress and other negative factors in our lives and improve our well-being.

Meditation is enormously popular. I'm just one person among thousands that benefit from meditating.

But, many people say they find meditation difficult to do. Others have reservations about its effectiveness.

I wrote this book to explain in simple terms what meditation involves, clear away some of the myths about it and help my readers to develop their personal meditation style. I want them to show them how to get the benefits of it without any large investment of time or money.

There are no age barriers to getting benefits from meditation.

It does not take a lot of time, cost is almost zero and you don't have to adopt any new beliefs or change any which you currently have.

I believe that this book can help you if you are new to meditation or even if you tried it before but were unsuccessful.

I am not an expert, just someone who has found meditation worthwhile and is ready to help you get started on your personal meditation experience.

You will find it easy to adapt my suggestions to fit more closely with your own needs and lifestyle.

Doing meditation is a simple process.

But, I wrote my ebook so that I could help you to get to where you can expect some results without spending as much time dealing with the side-issues which slow many people's early meditation sessions.

It's always easier to stay enthusiastic and focused when you have another person's experience with whatever you are trying to learn to do.

***Kevin Birch***

## Why Meditate?

Meditation has been part of Eastern philosophies for centuries. It has helped many people to become less stressed and more in tune with their environment and the people they share it with.

It spread around the world because it works. Meditation helps people to reduce stress, be able to focus better and sometimes relieve some symptoms or effects of some medical problems.

Meditation is attractive because it does not require much expense or time.

But, many people have been disappointed with their results.

I believe that reading this ebook can help almost anyone to successfully use meditation if they will give it a real chance.

The main benefits of meditation include better focus, improved ability to deal with negative thoughts and experiences and an improved sense of well-being. You can improve your general outlook and interactions with other people in all areas of your life.

I don't make any claims for specific results from meditation or how long it will take to see improvements.



Many people have felt some improvement after just a few weeks. Others have given up on meditation in about the same time. But, that is common with many new interests which people try but become disappointed.

The problem could be they were promised quick results and didn't get them as soon as they hoped.

Please give meditation a realistic trial. I suggest that a month of consistent, open-minded practice would be the minimum.

You don't need to invest in special clothing or equipment. I will tell you about some things which you may want to try such as recordings, candles and other items. None of them are essential.



## The Risks of Meditation

Few books or courses which I have seen discuss possible risks from practicing meditation.

But, anything we do that causes physical or psychological changes to our bodies or minds should be checked for possible negative, as well as positive, effects.

As a first step, always tell your doctor in advance about your intention to try meditation or any type of activity, so they can help you to be aware of any possible negative effects on you.

People that meditate may stay in one position for longer than they should. They may put strain on some injury which they have.

Research is being conducted in the U.S.A. to assess the effects of meditation. The researchers want a better understanding of how it affects us and which ailments it may have some positive effects on.

Some of the areas being investigated include:

- ▶ Reducing stress of caregivers who help patients with serious conditions
- ▶ Helping patients deal better with chronic pain
- ▶ Improving the ability to focus and organize work-flows and issues in our lives.
- ▶ Reducing hot flushes in menopausal women.

Many people have their own systems of doing meditation and some of the methods may involve some risks which are not always obvious.

Apart from consulting your doctor, always start a new procedure in gentle steps. Be mindful of any discomfort or other potential problems.

People who have any psychological conditions or concerns should discuss their situation fully with their doctor before starting any kind of meditation. More research is still needed to clarify what effects meditation has on our minds and caution is advisable.

People with some physical conditions should not do some meditation movements.

**Meditation is not a substitute for conventional medical treatment.**

## Are We There Yet?

Doing meditation does not make great demands on your time.

Most people find that thirty minute sessions are as long as they need to get noticeable benefits from meditation. You can start with sessions as short as twenty minutes.

If you feel you need more practice, I suggest that you do two sessions of



equal length at different times rather than one longer session.

They will be easier to fit in with your other activities.

A longer session may be harder for you to complete.

If one session is interrupted, you will still get the full benefit of the other one.

When you try a few sessions at different times, you may find the time of the new session works better for you.

Your meditation experience is a journey which never ends. You will probably never stop learning new things through your use of meditation.

That's not a problem. You will continue to gain benefits from the journey which will enhance other parts of your life. Few people decide to stop meditating after they learn the basics and started to feel the benefits.

If you feel a little stale, try a different type of focal point for your meditation or do it in another location for a while.

You can do your meditation in any way which suits you. But, I do emphasize that you will get less benefits if you miss too many sessions.

Missing one or two a month might be inevitable when you are particularly busy.

But, missing more than that could start a habit which will reduce the benefits you get. And, you may develop a habit of skipping sessions more frequently.

## Starting Your Meditation

Establishing a routine will help to keep you going through the first couple of weeks when you are still subject to competing demands on your time and may have doubts about the whole idea of using meditation.

Choose a time for your first meditation session which you can continue to use each day.

Just try for ten minutes as the length of the first couple of sessions. Five minutes is too short at the beginning because you will need a little time to mentally get ready and then refocus after the session.

You will be able to have five minute sessions (a sort of quick pick-me-up) after you are comfortable with the process.

Arrange that you will not be disturbed for about fifteen minutes which will give you a little leeway.

Set a timer on your phone or a clock to buzz at the appropriate time. A gentle buzz is much better than a loud alarm because it won't irritate you.



Put the timer where you can't see the face. Otherwise, you will feel a strong temptation to keep checking the time left in the session and that will distract you from your point of focus.

You can sit or lie down for the session. Most people will get better results with sitting on a straight-backed chair at this stage.

If you lie down and fall asleep, you will not do any damage, but you will need

to redo your first session.

Don't slouch. If you do, your breath will be restricted and you won't get full value from the session because of the discomfort.

Keep your feet flat on the floor. If you are going to focus on a candle or other object, set everything up.

Wear comfortable clothing because you will be sitting very still for several minutes and most people are not used to doing that.

Make sure there is no bright light which will interfere with your ability to relax.

Do a few stretches before you take position in your chair for the meditation.

## Follow Your Breath



This is a simple meditation technique which most people find easy to do right from the start.

It has an extra advantage. Focusing on your breathing will encourage you to adjust the way you do it so you breathe more deeply. Over time, that will have benefits for your health.

With all types of meditation, you should not try to push yourself. Relaxation is part of the process and also one of the goals of the exercises.

Sit comfortably and take a few deep, but gentle, breaths. You can then, gently close your eyes if you want to. Some prefer to keep their eyes open but it can be a little harder to focus on your breath that way. That will be easier when you get more experience and are more relaxed.

The best way is to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth but you do it however is most comfortable for you.

Take a deep breath. There's no need to overdo it.

Then, just focus on the breath as it passes from your nostrils, down through your throat and into your lungs.

When you focus on your breath, you will find that don't draw your breath the full depth into your lungs.

It's worth adjusting that when you have time. But, don't be sidetracked on your first breathing exercise.

Just focus on.

When you have drawn the air down to your normal depth, pause for a few seconds before you start to expel the air again.

Then, slowly let it out and follow its path up and out.

Continue to follow the flow for the full meditation session.

When your timer goes off, slowly move your focus from your breath pattern to your surroundings.

When you have made that adjustment, open your eyes and take a few minutes to sort out what you will do next.

### *Do a Quick Review*

Review the experience later that the same day, while it is fresh in your mind.

Don't dwell too much on it.

Was there any soreness or tension in your body after the session? If so, you should adjust your position to reduce the chance of a repeat. If it persists after each session, review your approach to that position with a more experienced meditation student.

If you still have trouble, ask your doctor on your next visit to check if it is a sign of some problem in your body.

You probably won't get it perfect the first or second time. But, what you may think are problems might just be minor stumbles because of your inexperience.

Don't worry. If you write some brief notes and then review them after a few more weeks of meditation, you will probably see that they were not major.

You will become comfortable with the process. But, having more reviews will just slow down your progress.

Just do your exercises the best way you can. Your confidence and ability will improve fairly rapidly.

## Can You Meditate Anywhere?



Being able to meditate without being affected by external sounds and other distractions is something which will come after you have the basic steps understood and practiced.

Anyone who is just starting to explore the techniques and benefits of meditation will find it easier if they have a private, quiet area for their sessions.

It can be more difficult to get started with your meditation practice if you have a lot of noise around you.

But, we know that many people with at least a few months experience can do it while living in very crowded and noisy areas. Some may have a strong belief that they can do that based on their faith and the experience of older family members for generations past. But, that's not the case with everyone.

After you have become used to the basic steps, it becomes easier to accept the noise and not let it put you off your session.

Think of it like you are listening to the silence and your mind will start to filter out the irrelevant sounds. Don't expect perfection. Just keep doing it the best way you can.

You might try do some early sessions with headphones. Either use them to reduce the level of noise or actually play meditative music or a recorded meditation to help with your session.

This could be a meditation you recorded yourself or a recording you bought.

At some point, you will find the confidence to deal with the noise without these support methods but try them if you feel that they help you.

I think you will get to a point where you decide to do most sessions without their support. Continued use might significantly delay your progress.

But, it's up to you to decide when you are ready to put them aside. Don't feel pressured before you are ready.



## **Keep it Simple**

We don't need to know the gritty details of what actually happens while the breath travels in and out again.

We are just following the path as we imagine it. We're using it as a point of focus for our mind.

Keeping it simple helps us to deal with the inevitable thoughts which come into our minds.

Gaining a level of control of your thoughts so that new ones don't cause you to lose your meditative state is one of the major problems which new students have trouble with.

Don't become upset if you get several other thoughts pushing in for your attention. You have not tried to keep control of your thoughts to this level until now.

It will take time.

You will soon improve your ability to notice those distractions and let them pass out of your mind just like they entered it.

You are improving your ability to focus.

When you do more meditation sessions, it will help you to focus on the most important matters in all areas of your life more easily.

## **Don't Expect Perfection**

I think the biggest problem that new meditators have is dealing with early disappointments.

We know that meditation is a simple process. When we have done our first few sessions and are getting some improvement, there is likely to be a small stumble.

Many people will let that throw them off course and increase their stress level. They can quickly lose the momentum which they started to build.

Some people will put off a session or two and may never get back on track if their commitment is not strong enough.

I think these people mostly take the stumble as some sort of personal failure. They put off the next session because they don't want to "fail" again.

Putting off the session for that reason conditions you to accepting the idea of failure and missing more sessions.

The reality is that everyone has occasions when they don't get something right, even though they may have done it many times before.

They forget that top-ranked athletes don't win every point even after years of practice and match-play.

Instead of focusing on the one failure, use the memories of your previous successful sessions to keep you motivated. If you've had, say, six good sessions and one bad one, the odds are that your next session will be successful unless you mentally start expecting another slip.

At this stage, you can stop which means you wasted the previous good progress you made.

Or, you can put a little extra effort in and take off to greater heights of success.

## Slow Down and Live!

The ever-increasing pace of daily life puts great strain on us all.

We need to improve our efficiency, keep up with technology changes that affect our work and still have time for our personal pursuits. We feel extra pressure because there is more competition for less jobs because of automation and economic pressures.

Many feel they are running faster, doing more and the rewards are less than before.



We are told to slow down and smell the flowers, find more time for our family and friends. But, we seem to have less time than ever for that.

We become envious of people that have the resources to still enjoy time with their families.

Then, we start to feel that we are somehow at fault.

Meditation can help reduce these problems. It helps us to concentrate on what is happening right now and to recognize things which are not really big problems, just distractions.

When we learn how to enjoy each minute, hour and day more by appreciating what it gives us, instead of dwelling on what we missed out on in the past or what we want but don't really need, our lives improve greatly.

That shift in our outlook is likely to give us more confidence and satisfaction.

Investing a few minutes daily in a meditation session can help you get more benefits from every day for the rest of your life.

The section on mindfulness covers this point in more detail.

## Binaural Beats

Recordings which contain binaural beats are claimed to help people relax, meditate and improve their creativity among other things.

The technique depends on the work of Heinrich Dove who put two clocks on a wall and noticed a change in the way the pendulums acted over a period.

Many people have produced recordings which use sounds that have similar properties to those Dove wrote about.

There are many reports of positive results from listening to those recordings on a regular basis.

You can make your own if you have a fairly recent computer. In the resources section at the back of this ebook, I listed a site which offers a free program for producing binaural beats. It will take some time to become experienced and make useful recordings with this or any other program.

I would first get some ready-made recordings and see if I got good results from using them.

There are many places which sell binaural beats and courses for using them. Some of the claims far exceed those I mentioned above.

You do not need special equipment to try binaural beats for yourself. The most important item is a good set of stereo headphones. The effect is not detectable if you do not use headphones.

I would try to get some recordings through your local library or from various sites on the Internet before I spent money on them.

The Monroe Institute <http://www.monroeinstitute.org/> was founded by Robert Monroe who did research in this area.

Good Listening!

**Always use a firewall on your computer and reliable security software. Treat all links as suspicious and don't download anything without scanning it with your antivirus program.**

## Mindfulness

Mindfulness is one of the most important goals of meditation.



It involves becoming focused on the present moment, appreciating it more fully and accepting what it gives you.

Developing mindfulness helps us to avoid the negative effects of common bad habits like thinking about past disappointments and regrets or developing fears about possible future problems.

Mindfulness will point us to "now". If we do our best in each moment by using what we have at the time, we can expect to be more efficient and successful.

This also brings us more calmness as we learn to accept the present without coloring our reaction to it with negative thoughts.

This state of mind also seems to have potential for helping people deal with pain, stress and possibly addiction. The researchers say more testing and fixing procedural weakness is needed but early research is encouraging.

You can try the concept easily.

Get a piece of fruit. Anything will do, even a single raisin or grape.

Focus on what you are eating and how you are doing it. Some people report that this helps them to appreciate the taste and texture of their food, their health and situation more than they ever have in the past.

## **Meditation Myths**

This chapter will deal with several factors about meditation which are misunderstood by many people who avoid trying meditation as a result.

As well as helping you with any questions, it will be a valuable resource when people ask you whether they could ever do meditation successfully.

### ***I don't have enough time!***

This is the most common statement I hear from people that are busy, stressed and desperate to get a better balance in their lives.

They need no more than thirty minutes a day at most to get benefits from doing meditation. They can reduce that to ten minutes when there are heavy demands from their work or other responsibilities.

There is no great learning curve and most people find that the investment of half an hour well worthwhile when measured against the greater enjoyment we get from every hour of each day.

Maybe, they can do meditation instead of a half hour with the television or the daily newspaper. Swapping media which is always full of death, disaster and destruction for a half hour which could give you some peace and renewal seems worth trying.

### ***I can't pretend to be happy all the time!***

You don't have to pretend anything ever. Just try the techniques and accept whatever results you get.

Meditation doesn't make us happy. It helps us deal with many of the challenges which prevent us finding more happiness in our lives. The happiness which we show is not a cosmetic cover. It is how we really feel.

We know that nobody can be happy all the time. But, our meditation helps us to be "in the moment" so we can enjoy it more, not feel gloomy about things which are beyond our control.

### *It's part of a Religious tradition*

Meditation has been used by people of various Eastern faiths for centuries. That shows they must be getting some value from it.

But, many people, including me, have been using meditation outside of any religious framework. There's no problem there.

All meditators do it because we get benefits for our emotional and physical needs.

### *My friend stopped using Meditation when he had fearful thoughts*

One advantage of meditation is that we learn to deal with our thoughts better, including fear and regret. I think your friend had those fears in his mind already. They weren't a result of him using meditation.

I hope he got help to deal with them. I believe that meditation helps us reduce that sort of worry and also to deal with them better.

### *Meditation takes years of practice to be useful*

This idea probably comes from knowing that many monks and other meditators study meditation through their whole lives and say they are still learning.

That's not unlike people who study many other topics. They may be experts, but just keep finding new facets of the subject which they can explore.

My expectation and experience is that most people will start to achieve some positive benefits after a few weeks, with about thirty minutes meditation each day.

You don't even need to do it every day and can shorten your sessions when you need to after you are comfortable with the basic method.

I think that being as consistent as possible is important in the early days of your meditation so that you get a firm grounding in the basic steps.

But, missing a day every now and again after that time is fine.

Try not to miss two consecutive days without good reason, because that will make it more likely that you'll miss more sessions and slow your progress.

***I haven't got thirty minutes to do it each day***

Okay, just try twenty minutes, or even ten, each day. I think anyone can probably find that long.

Some think that five minute sessions are okay to start with. But, I think you need at least ten minutes per session for at least the first week, because you'll take more time to settle and clear your mind when the whole procedure is new and just a bit uncomfortable for you.

***I can't stop the stray thoughts getting in the way of my concentration***

You need to try meditation or some other technique which has a track record of helping people to deal with those stray thoughts better. I think that few systems are as easy and make such small demands on you as meditation.

***It must be boring to just sit and think about nothing***

We are partly conditioned to equate busy with productive. But, being busy without getting the results we need is frustrating.

Meditation is a method achieving better outcomes in all areas of your life. There are studies which support the idea that the meditation process has beneficial effects on our mental and physical systems. Instead of taking tablets or having injections, we just sit and let our bodies rest. And many of us are living examples of the benefits from meditation.

***I keep thinking about when the session will end***

That's fairly common, like kids on a car trip asking their parents, "Are we there yet!!!" But, meditation will help you to overcome that fairly quickly so you can concentrate on things which you enjoy or that will make you more successful.

Meditation helps us learn to manage our thoughts better. You will learn to focus on what is important NOW and expel useless worries.

***My day is full of interruptions***

I can sympathize. So is mine! But, I deal with them more effectively since I learned to meditate. And, most people give me some space because they



know I will I call them or even go to see them as soon as possible after my session.

*Meditation is an escape from the real world*

It is the exact opposite. Meditation helps us learn to deal more efficiently with all aspects of our daily lives, reduce stress and errors and enjoy every day more as well.

## Time

Time is one of the most important aspects of our lives. Yet, most of us do not put much value in it.

Often, we only start to value time when we are older and see limits on how much more we may have.

When we are young, we think we have forever and act like it is true.

We also expect things to take less time than may be required for best results. That applies to meditation in a couple of important ways.

We may think that we don't have enough time to do meditation. But, after the initial period when we are getting used to the procedures, we find that meditation does not take much time at all.

Meditation also helps us make better use of our time.

When we start to focus our minds on the present, we avoid wasting time worrying about the past or the future.

We also learn to appreciate each day and hour more than before.

If we cannot do our sessions of meditation every day, we can still benefit from doing them as regularly as possible.

## Meditation for Children

Meditation is being researched for any potential to help treat conditions such as autism. This is only a theory at this point.

But, there are many studies into the possible benefits of teaching children simple meditation techniques.

Many schools have programs which incorporate aspects of meditation like mindfulness. Some may have titles including the word, while others use more mainstream terms such as stress management.

My belief is that meditation has benefits for children to help them deal with the frantic pace and pressures of our world.

Meditation gives us a way to focus more closely on what is going on right now.

How many teachers say something like, "Please pay attention!" several times a day?

Many parents who use basic meditation techniques with their children find them effective at reducing stress.

Most young children cannot grasp the ideas behind the strategies.

But, you might try making a game of it.

Ask your child to fold their hands in their lap like a rabbit with its front paws and close its eyes for one minute.

Then, gradually increase the period up to five minutes. Consider giving them a reward when they achieve each level.

Adapt techniques like, "Follow Your Breath" to a game format. Ask them if they can feel their breath coming into their stomach area.

Another technique is to ask them to breath in through their nose, hold the breath for about thirty seconds and then breathe out while making a noise like their favorite animal. This gives them some breathing practice and also lets them have a little fun.

## More Meditation Points

There are many ways to meditate.

Focusing on your breath, which I described earlier, is easy for most people, even older children, to use. And, you can feel some benefits from that method fairly quickly.

This section explains the basic steps of some other methods of focusing your meditation which may better suit you.

You don't have to stay with one type of focus. Each one has different potential benefits.

Trying different types can make your sessions more interesting.

### *Aural Meditation*



This has a few different forms. You might listen to a recorded meditation or just repeat a word or phrase yourself while you meditate.

Whether you use headphones to listen to your recorded meditation is entirely your choice. Headphones will make any background sounds less distracting.

But, I would try it without them so that you can judge if you are able to focus on the sound you want without being distracted.

That is a goal you should be able to reach after some practice.

You could use a simple word or phrase, such as the traditional, "Om".

Some people suggest that you could just think it. My experience suggests that it is much more effective to say it.

You could try both ways. Stick with each of the methods for more than a week of sessions because you will need to become comfortable with that method before you can accurately judge which works for you.

Some alternative sounds you could use include devotional or other soft music, or sounds of nature such as birds or rain.

There are many recordings of these types available. Your public library may even have some you can try before you decide to buy those which seem to work best for you.

Any other basic sound could be used. A friend uses "Abba" even though she is not especially enthusiastic about the group's music.

It won't make any difference what term you use as long as it won't distract you from the meditation experience.

The important thing is to do your sessions on a regular basis.

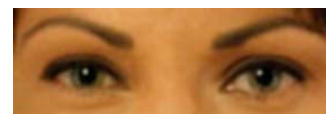


These meditation balls can be useful for some people. They can be rolled around in your hands so you hear the gentle tones from within them.

They are a handy item when you want to ensure you don't disturb others with louder sounds or just find the balls very relaxing.

### *Visual Meditations*

Visual focus points include actual or mental images of peaceful scenes such as pools of water, quiet beaches and fields of flowers, the light of a candle or anything which encourages you to feel comfortable and peaceful.



You can always add other things which may heighten your experience, such as scents, but, they aren't essential.



I will use a river as my example. That works for me because I have fond memories of a river near where I spent

some wonderful holidays when I was younger.

Fix the image in your mind. It does not have to be a completely still image. Most rivers are in motion or the surface is broken often by fish, birds and other creatures, or even driftwood floating through your area of vision.

Sounds can help to establish the mood you want also. Birds, rain and the creatures which live around the river bank all can help you to fix the image in your mind. They are not distractions.

Inhale the sounds and the peaceful atmosphere. After a while you may feel you are actually there.

This indicates that your ability to concentrate is improving as you become better at excluding distractions.

That will help you with your other activities through the day.

Your improving ability to see mental images will mean that you can bring back that image of a river to help you relax at any other time.

But, it also will help you when you need to recall other pictures more clearly.

### ***Body Meditations***

The meditation focused on your breath was an easy one for anyone to use and benefit from. There are other parts of your body which people use as meditation points. These include the nostril or the navel.

A simpler method is to just focus on each area of your body in turn.

Start with large areas and then focus on different parts where there seems to be any stress or pain.

This exercise can help you discover and ease any tension or other problem which may not be noticed when you are engaged in your normal daily activities.

## What is the Best Method?

This is a very common question you may get about meditation. The same question is asked about every other subject but it is not possible to give an answer which will satisfy everyone.

I don't know enough about you to be able to tell you with any certainty.



Any of the methods I've mentioned here will work to a satisfactory level for almost everyone that puts some time and sincere effort into trying them.

But, each of us has different expectations, life experience and abilities.

Each of us will react differently to different stimuli.

You may get more from sounds while your partner may react more to visual signals.

There is no way to be sure which is the ideal method for a particular person.

You won't be able to try every method which is available. That would be a mistake anyway, in my opinion.

You could try at least a couple of methods after you have used your original choice for at least a month.

It's better to find something you like and learn to use so that you can see benefits sooner rather than later.

But, you will have gained a lot during the time you used that other method and you might be able to help someone else with your knowledge of it and any potential problems.

There's no problem with changing your current meditation routine if you have given it a fair run. You will probably be able to evaluate and even start to get benefits from whatever new method you try much more quickly than you did with your first routine.

Before you make the change, ask yourself these questions:

1. Is the problem in the meditation or is it being affected by a problem you are having in some other aspect of your life?
2. Is the discomfort you are feeling having a significant effect on your life in some area? If you answer, "Yes" to this, you probably should take action to change the method you use to something more comfortable.

There is nothing stopping you from re-using that method at another time when you feel it would not have the previous negative effects.

Remember that we all keep growing and changing through our lives. So, you may want to review other methods if the one you have used for a while is no longer as comfortable for you as it was before.



## Don't Just Sit There

You will probably be most comfortable sitting down when you are just starting to meditate.

But, you don't have to restrict yourself to that posture.

This section is based on various people's comments on the benefits or drawbacks of using different positions when you meditate.

It can be worth trying some others to see if you get better results.

Stop any which make you feel uncomfortable because that is likely to prevent your meditation being successful.

Before you start to move into your meditation, think about each part of your body. Relax each area so there is no tension or pain which could affect your session.

Keep your sessions short at first.

**Don't take risks. Avoid any positions which might be bad for you because of some physical or medical condition which you have.**

Whatever position you try, should have you well-balanced so you don't need to interrupt your meditation to make adjustments. Choose a surface which will not cause you discomfort or possibly cause you to feel cold. A thin mat and a small pillow can be very useful.

### *Laying on Your Back*

This position is familiar and easy to maintain. A possible drawback is that you may start to feel too comfortable and sleep instead of meditating. The sleep will probably have benefits anyway, but you should try to fit in another meditation time so that you continue to get the benefits from it.

### *Standing*

Some people are wary of trying to meditate while upright. But, it is unlikely that you will fall as long as you are well-balanced on both feet. Most people will find setting their feet almost directly below their shoulders works best. Don't lock your knees.

I suggest you try it. The experience may also help build your confidence a little so that you are more willing to try other new experiences.

Some people don't know where to place their hands. You can just have them at your sides or clasp them in front of you.

Find what's comfortable for you so that you can concentrate on your meditation. But don't put them in your pockets because that might interfere with your balance and concentration.

## Quick Tips

- 1.** put your meditation time in your calendar. It is important to stick to a regular time when you start because there are always competing interests which will tempt you to skip one or two sessions.

Then, it becomes more likely that you will drop meditation "until you have more time".

- 2.** Since you will be sitting still for a period of time, do a few gentle stretches before you begin to ease any tightness in your body before you start.

Deal with any impulses to stop sooner than you intended.

- 3.** Taking that easy option will start a habit of avoidance and keep you from achieving much with meditation.

These impulses will be less frequent and easier to deal with when you have been through the first couple of weeks and start to feel some benefit from your efforts.

- 4.** Meditation is basically very simple, but sticking to the routine is never easy in that early stage. A good way to improve your meditation experience and ability is to share it with your partner. You might want to ask them to start learning about it when you do or wait until you have a little experience and can help them through the first few weeks.
- 5.** You have a "built-in stress reliever" which can be as effective and safer than almost any medicine..

Many people use a sigh to signal that they are unhappy about something someone else has done. That doesn't help the situation - it just creates tension between them.

They could use a few sighs to reduce their own stress and increase the oxygen in their system. That would be more productive.

They would probably be able to help the other person fix the problem too. Anytime you are stressed or feeling unhappy with a family member, just take a deep breath. Hold it for a few seconds and then release it slowly.

A yawn will often have the same effect and the extra oxygen it draws into your system will make you feel much better.

- 6.** If you miss a session, don't increase the length of your sessions to make up the time. It's likely to result in a less satisfactory session because you are not used to meditating for that length of time.
- 7.** Focus on the positive aspects of your day. That includes your meditation experience. There is a lot of negativity in the mix of information and opinion which is thrown at us each day. Your sessions will help you to improve your sense of well-being and share it with other people. That will inevitably attract more positive-minded people to you.
- 8.** When you start to feel the benefits of the time and effort you put into your meditation, you will want to tell other people about it. That's an easy way to make the world a better place.

## Resources

### *Gnaural Binaural Beat generating Program.*

<http://www.gnaural.sourceforge.com/> This is a free program which can be used to produce binaural beats. The producer gives his views about binaural beats on the page. There is also a link to a tutorial on Youtube.com for using the program.

The Monroe Institute <http://www.monroeinstitute.org/> was founded by Robert Monroe who researched binaural Beats and related topics.

### *Studies of meditators under scientific conditions.*

<http://brainimaging.waisman.wisc.edu/~lutz> This is the website of Antione Lutz, an associate scientist studying brain imaging and behavior at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The reports are interesting but not conclusive.

They emphasize that the work is ongoing and it is too early to make definitive pronouncements about the results. Worth watching if you are interested in the research on meditation and possible new ideas.

## **Your Better Life Starts Now**

Thank you for buying my first ebook.

I hope that the information and experiences I share in it will help you have a more joyful and successful life.

I know from my experience and discussions with many other people who meditate that you can look forward to some wonderful discoveries.

For me, the reduction in stress and elimination of many unnecessary worries and doubts from my life has been wonderful.

But, the best part is that I enjoy good experiences much more than I used to before I started meditation.

It will take time for you to get comfortable with the process. You will probably find things that you change to better suit your own situation.

From now, you will never stop learning and enjoying life more.

***Kevin Birch***

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