

Mediation And Meditation (Part II) How To Meditate

by [Linda Lazarus](#)
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Mediators must have the ability to be calm, present, grounded and flexible in order to help resolve conflict. Meditation is a tool for developing these qualities, and practicing meditation often enables a mediator to help “bring peace into the room.” See Daniel Bowling & David Hoffman (editors), *Bringing Peace Into the Room: How the Personal Qualities of the Mediator Impact the Process of Conflict Resolution* (2003).



There are many different types of meditation. When we practice mindfulness meditation we learn to be fully present in the moment. We normally start the practice of mindfulness by paying attention to our body. This grounds us in the present. In the next stage, we focus on our breath and let go other sensations. This focuses and calms the mind. In the final stage, we are still grounded in our body and our breath, but we enlarge our awareness to be present for whatever occurs. By enlarging our awareness, we expand our ability to see clearly – to see things as they really are.

Meditation Instructions

1. Please direct your attention to your body. Please sit on the edge of your chair with your spine straight and both feet grounded on the floor. Let your head balance gently on top of the spine. Let your feet be heavy and your head be light. Place your hands on your lap or on your thighs, and allow them to be comfortable and soft. Please shut your eyes gently or look down. Please place your tongue on the roof of your mouth. You should feel both alert and relaxed.
2. Please direct your attention to your breath. When you breathe in, your belly should fill with air. When you breathe out, your belly should flatten. For the first few breaths, think about breathing in calmness and breathing out tension.
3. Then let go of these words, and just be present with your breath. As you inhale, experience the breath as it enters your body – is it warm or cool, soft or harsh? See where the breath goes in your body – does it go to your chest, your belly or your feet? As you exhale, experience the breath as it leaves your body – is it warm or cool, soft or harsh? Simply continue to focus on the sensation of each breath as it unfolds.
4. If a thought occurs to you – don’t try and stop it. Just say to yourself – “there’s a thought” and gently bring your mind back to the breath.
5. As the mind becomes tranquil, you may enlarge your awareness. Just sit, breathe, and be present with whatever arises. Do not try to control your sensations or thoughts to increase that which is pleasant and decrease that which is unpleasant. Do not judge, simply accept whatever occurs. Treat your own thoughts as if they are objects with an independent existence that will come and go in their own time. Permit your thoughts and other sensations to come and go.
6. If you find yourself becoming involved with the content of your thoughts or overly involved with a sensation, please bring the attention back to your breath until your mind becomes calm. 7. Do this practice 15 minutes every day for a month, and before every mediation.

(These meditation instructions are based on the instructions given by many meditation teachers, including Jon Kabat-Zinn, Jack Kornfield, Larry Rosenberg, and Joseph Goldstein.)

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