

THE QUICKSTART GUIDE TO MEDITATION

BODHI HEART

STEP 1

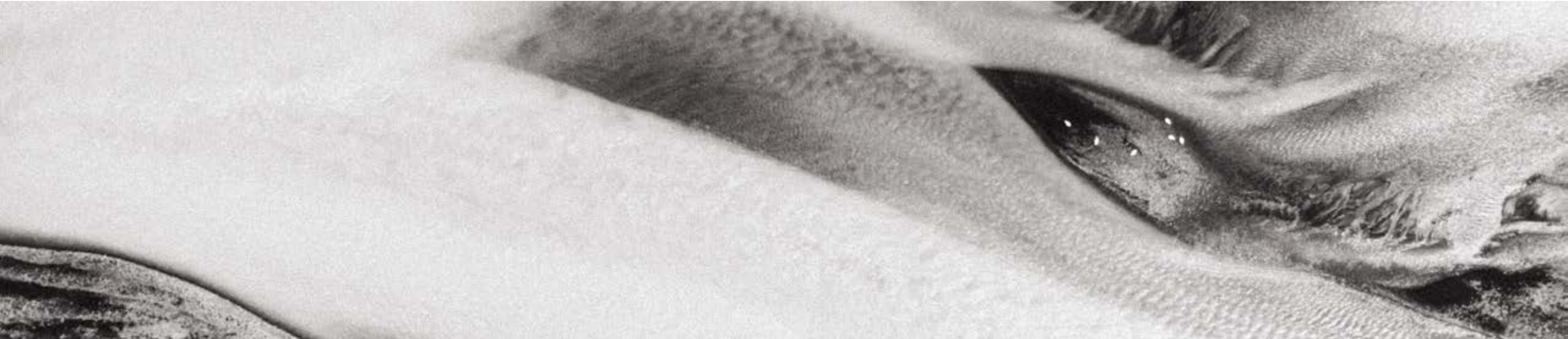
UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS

Meditation vs. Technique:

Know that meditation is more than a technique. Techniques such as so-called “mindfulness meditation” prepare your mind for the true process of meditation. Meditation is to see life, the self, and the world as they are. This guide will help you get started.

Essence of Meditation:

This guide is designed to help the beginner. The essence of meditation at the beginner level is to be able to observe life with non-judgmental awareness, to gain insight that allows you to craft a life-purpose, and to guide your life in a meaningful way.



STEP 2

SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS

Create a Quiet Space:

Find a calm, comfortable spot where you won't be disturbed.

Allocate Time:

Dedicate a regular time each day for meditation, even if it's just for a few (8-10) minutes.

STEP 3

CHOOSE YOUR MEDITATION
STYLE

Loving Kindness Meditation:

Cultivate loving-kindness toward yourself and others.



Mindfulness of Breathing:

Notice what it feels like to breathe. Bring your attention to each inhalation and exhalation and find a place to rest in your body's natural—un-thinking—breathing activity.



STEP 4

PRACTICING MEDITATION

4.1 Get Comfortable:

Sit or lie in a comfortable position. If you are sitting, make sure that your hips are slightly higher than your knees. Rest your hands in your lap or in a comfortable position. If lying down, put one or both hands on your abdomen. Feel your stomach rise and fall with your breath. Close your eyes to minimize distractions.

4.3 Focus Your Mind:

Gently focus and start your meditation (Loving Kindness or Mindfulness of Breathing).

4.2 Start with Breathing:

Begin by taking deep, slow breaths. Feel your chest and belly rise and fall. If your thoughts wander, gently return your attention to your breath.

4.4 Let Thoughts Pass:

If your mind wanders, acknowledge your thoughts and feelings, and let them pass through your awareness as you gently remain focused on the feeling of your body breathing.

STEP 5

CONCLUDE YOUR SESSION

Gently Wind Down:

After 5-10 minutes (or more as you get comfortable), slowly bring your attention back to your surroundings. Listen to the sounds around you.

Reflect Briefly:

Take a moment to acknowledge how you feel and the thoughts you experienced. Keep a notebook and jot down anything you feel is important. Even if it seems silly or outrageous.



STEP 6

INTEGRATING MEDITATION
INTO DAILY LIFE

Regular Practice:

Aim to meditate daily.
Consistency is key.

Apply Insights:

Use the insights and calmness
gained during meditation to
approach daily life with a
clearer, more balanced
perspective.

STEP 7

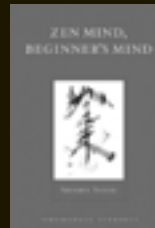
EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Read and Listen:

Explore talks and books on
meditation to deepen your
understanding and practice.



BOOKS



Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind
by Shunryu Suzuki

is an impressionistic, poetic guide to meditation and Zen life written in tiny sections with simple, down-to-earth, everyday language that stresses the importance of adopting a beginner's mind for spiritual and self renewal.



Living Everyday Zen
by Charlotte Joko Beck

explores how to cultivate mindfulness and inner peace in the midst of everyday life's challenges and chaos.



The Zen Eye
by Sokei-An

offers a profound exploration of Zen Buddhism, providing insights into its philosophy and practices for both newcomers and experienced practitioners.



Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree
by Buddhadasa Bhikkhu

presents a deep and accessible exploration of Buddhist philosophy and practice, emphasizing the essence of Buddhism as a practical path to inner awakening. Illuminating discussions about Buddhism's notion of 'Self'.



Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself
by Kristin Neff

offers meditations, practices, and scientific insights that support anyone who wants to take the profound, transformative journey through self-compassion, emotional well-being, healing, and growth.



Mindfulness in Plain English by
Bhante Henepola Gunaratana

is a practical and straightforward guide to meditation, focusing on the development of mindfulness and the awareness of one's thoughts and actions in the present moment, free from judgment or distraction.



The Mindfulness Solution
by Ronald Siegel

introduces readers to the practice of mindfulness and its applications in reducing stress, managing emotions, and enhancing overall well-being through a combination of mindfulness techniques and psychological principles.



A Path with Heart
by Jack Kornfield

offers insightful guidance on integrating spiritual practices into everyday life, emphasizing the importance of compassion, mindfulness, and the journey toward inner peace and enlightenment.

VIDEOS



Why Mindfulness
Jack Kornfield, Ph.D.

Buddhist monk in Thailand, India, and Burma. Founding teacher of the Insight Meditation Society, and Spirit Rock Meditation Center.



Mindfulness and Self Compassion
Kristen Neff, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Educational Psychology Dept. University of Texas at Austin.



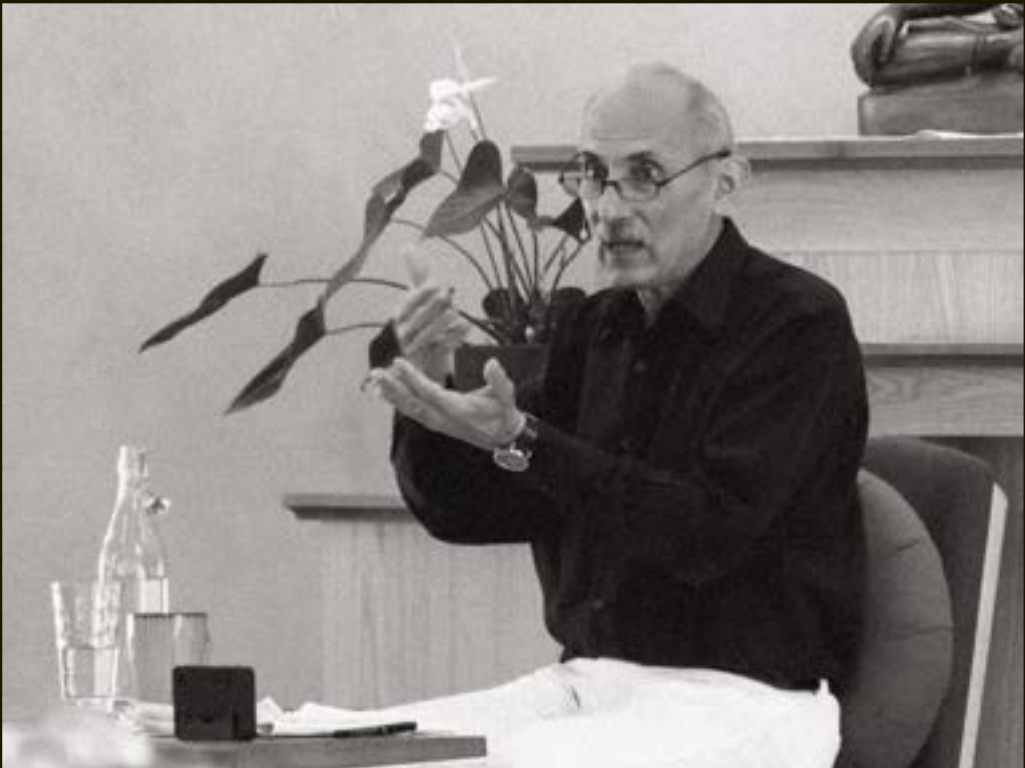
The Power of Mindfulness: What You Practice Grows Stronger
Shauna Shapiro, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Counseling Psychology, Santa Clara University.



Mindfulness in Plain English
Bhante Henepola Gunaratana

Bhante Henepola Gunaratana is a Sri Lankan Theravada Buddhist monk. Bhante Gunaratana is currently the abbot of the Bhavana Society, a monastery and meditation retreat center that he founded in High View, West Virginia, in 1985.



REMEMBER

- Meditation is a personal journey; so it's important to know what your intention is when you sit down to meditate.
- Be patient with yourself. The benefits of meditation usually become apparent with regular, consistent practice.



CONTACT US

IN CONCLUSION

- Traditionally, meditation is taught directly from teacher to student. There is not a single example in any serious spiritual tradition in which meditation was practiced alone without beginning instruction.
- It's highly advisable to find someone trustable, or a good group or a good class to begin to meditate with.
- The best place to start is here — do the meditations, read the books, and watch the videos. We also offer classes and coaching for beginners and people who want to maintain and deepen their existing practice. If you want more direction, support, or have a question, contact us.



