

Meditate

A guidebook for developing a right-for-you meditation practice



The benefits of meditation are many.

Greater self-awareness
More compassionate with others and self
More moments of joy
Improved physical health
More easeful decision-making
deeper relaxation
Increased attention span
Reduced stress, anxiety, and depression
being kinder
Improved memory
befriending yourself
wisdom
better sleep

We created this journal to set you up for success in beginning (or expanding) your own personal meditation practice. Like any habit, it requires a mix of intention and practical action, and an understanding of where you are right now and what you need to be supported. Together, we'll make it doable.

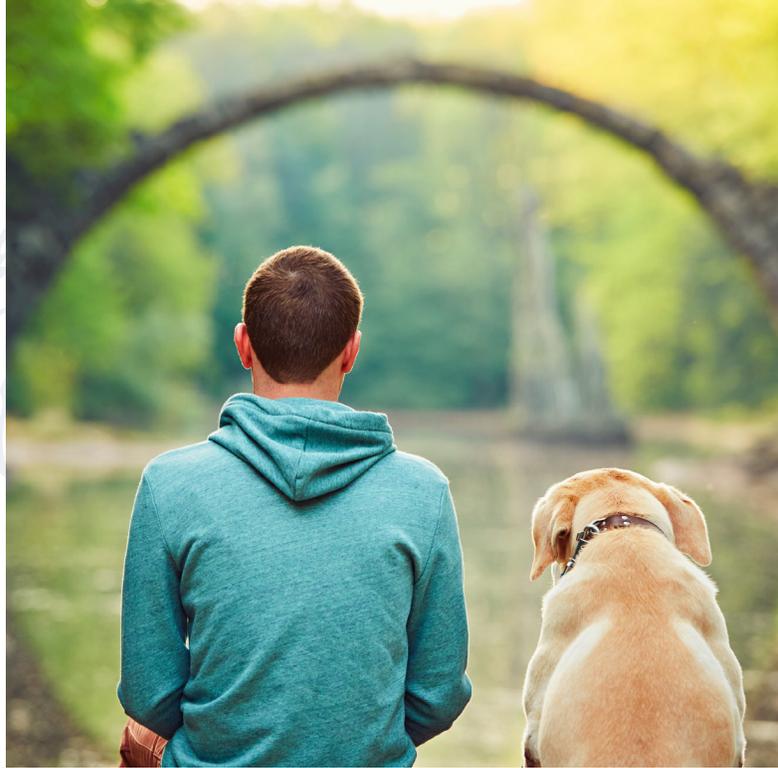


“Meditation practice isn't about trying to throw ourselves away and become something better. It's about befriending who we are already.”

— PEMA CHÖDRÖN



Mindfulness in practice



Meditation and mindfulness practices can look many ways. Here are some of the ways people meditate.

- Guided audio meditation
- Walking without earbuds or technology, noticing the sounds and sights around you
- Eating mindfully
- Sitting in silence, letting thoughts go
- Breathing exercises
- Doodling
- Hand on heart, paying attention to breath
- Mindful movement
- Repeating a word or phrase or sound
- Deeply studying a flower or leaf
- Mindful activities (some people find knitting or dishwashing meditative when done with intention)

Take a moment to reflect on anything else that might feel like meditation for you. When have you experienced a feeling of being grounded, centered, or calm (or, said another way, you were deeply focused and aware of distraction)? (You're not committing to anything yet. This is just about exploring possibilities and connecting with your own experiences.)

Checking in

We live in a culture of busyness and speed. We are so productive. We are praised for doing. We have become very good at long to-do lists. We don't, as often, prioritize time for being and self-reflection. Let this be a brief pause for that. Check in right now with your mind and body.



How often are you aware of what's arising for you physically, emotionally and mentally?

Very often Occasionally Rarely Never

How often do you experience moments of inner mental quiet?

Very often Occasionally Rarely Never

How often do you experience moments of peace and calm in your body?

Very often Occasionally Rarely Never

When you consider the current pace of your life, what comes up for you?

**What is your current
emotional landscape?**

How do you most frequently feel?

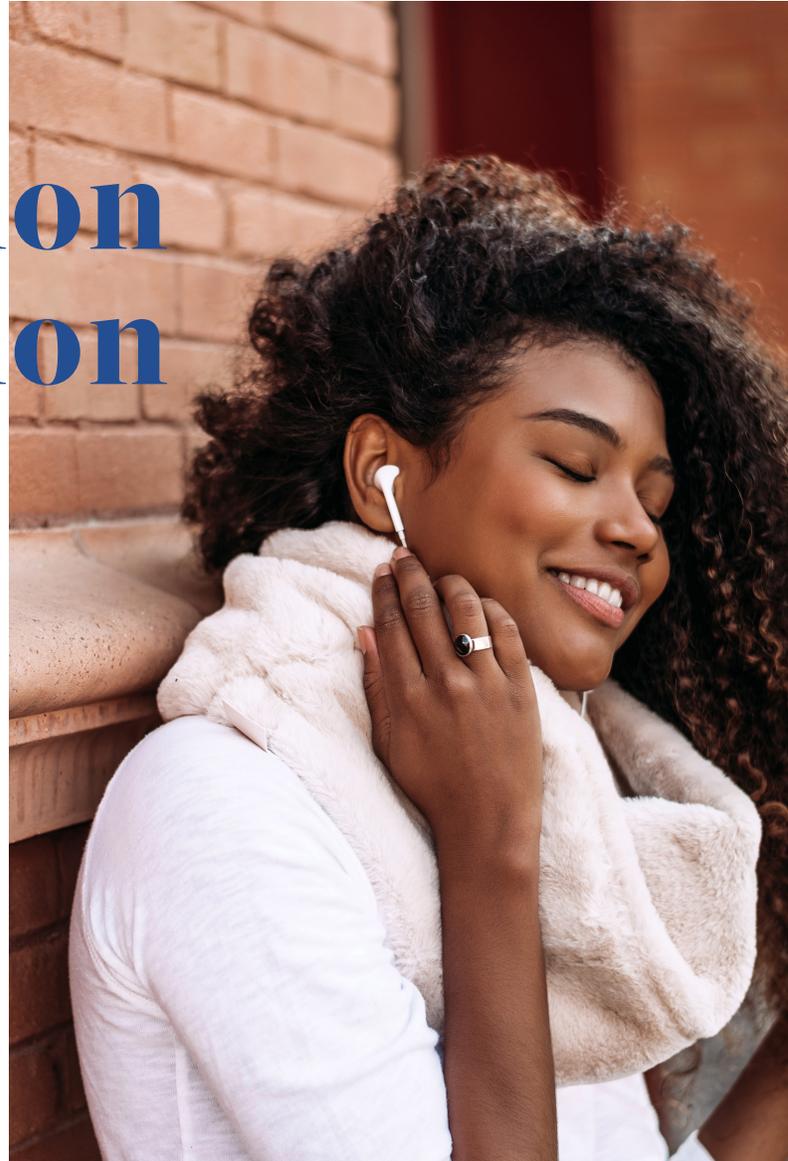
Refreshed	Calm	Numb
Recharged	Enthusiastic	Hopeful
Drained	Resentful	Cheerful
Compassionate	Content	Confused
Anxious	Grateful	Bored
Tired	Amused	Withdrawn
Happy	Tender	Serene
Sad	Affectionate	Depressed
Lethargic	Annoyed	Centered
Energized	Angry	Worried
Peaceful	Comfortable	Frightened
Irritated	Relaxed	Restless
Frustrated	Outraged	Loving

How would you like to feel more often?

Meditation Exploration

Some people have already discovered a practice that is exactly right for them. Others are still investigating. This mindfulness experiment is for all of us. It's a structured way to connect with our emerging and established practices, and with ourselves, in ways that can't entirely be predicted. If you've always meditated in the morning, you might be surprised to find an evening session improves your sleep. If it's difficult to stay awake during meditation in the evenings, a walking meditation at lunch or mid-afternoon may give you more energy.

Listed on the next few pages, each week for five weeks, is a new (very gentle) challenge to experiment with. If you're motivated by checking boxes, you'll find a checkbox for each week, too.





WEEK ONE

DO THE BREATH
BUBBLE TWICE A DAY
FOR 30 SECONDS.

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	S
<input type="checkbox"/>						

What worked for you about this practice? What didn't?



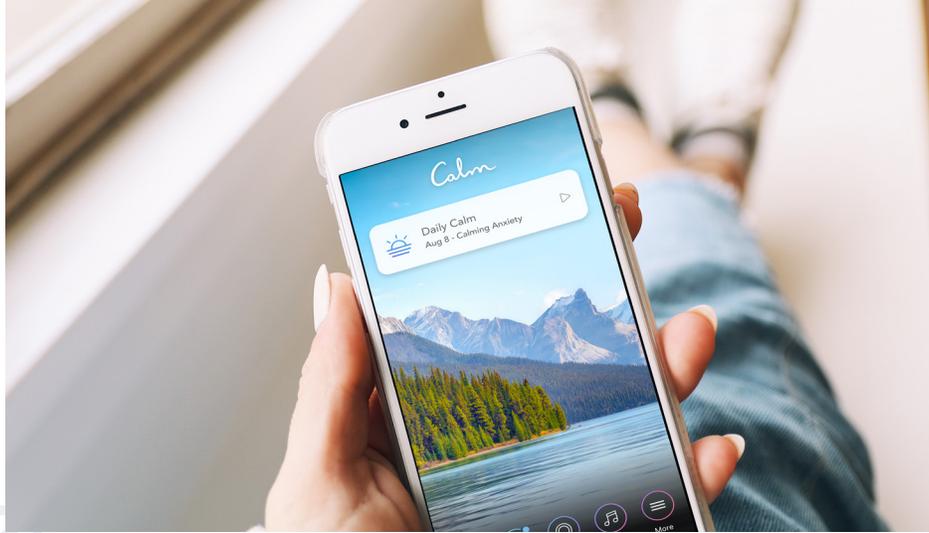
WEEK TWO

DO A 3-MINUTE MEDITATION EVERY DAY.

(Options in the Calm app include: Calm Light, Loving-Kindness, Body Scan, Calming Anxiety, Commuting, Returning to Now ...)

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	S
<input type="checkbox"/>						

What worked for you about this practice? What didn't?

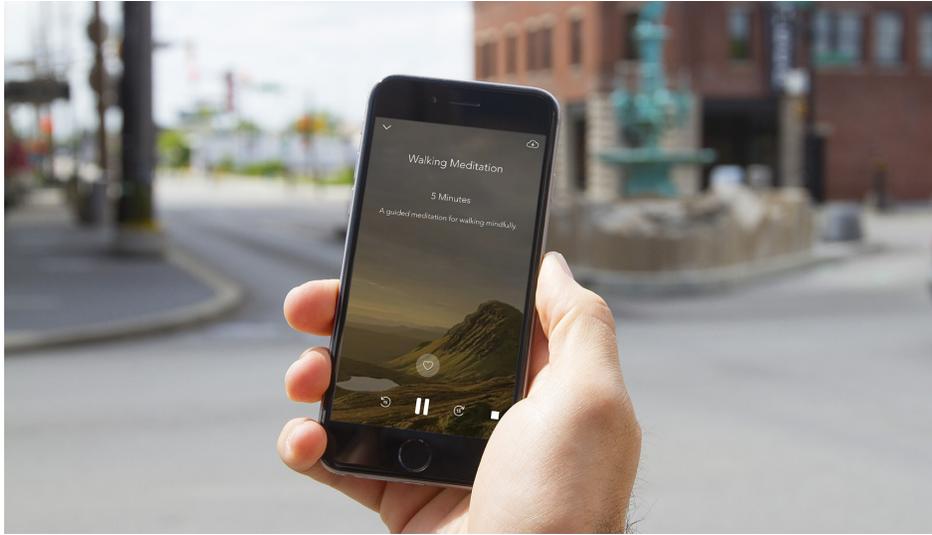


WEEK THREE

DO THE DAILY CALM,
a 10-minute meditation with a different
mindfulness teaching to contemplate each day.

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	S
<input type="checkbox"/>						

What worked for you about this practice? What didn't?

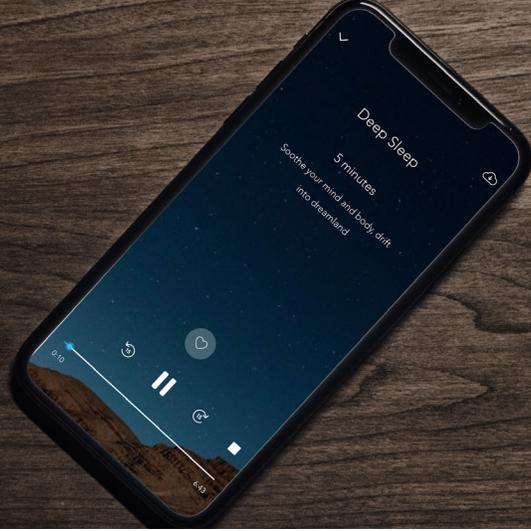


WEEK FOUR

**DO A WALKING MEDITATION
FOR 15 MINUTES EVERY DAY.**

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	S
<input type="checkbox"/>						

What worked for you about this practice? What didn't?



WEEK FIVE

DO A 20-MINUTE SLEEP
MEDITATION EVERY EVENING.

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	S
<input type="checkbox"/>						

What worked for you about this practice? What didn't?



What did you learn about yourself?

Whether you were able to check every box, or only a few, we hope you gained new insights into yourself and your own approach to mindfulness.

Which mindfulness practices did you most enjoy?

Was there a time of day when meditating best fit?

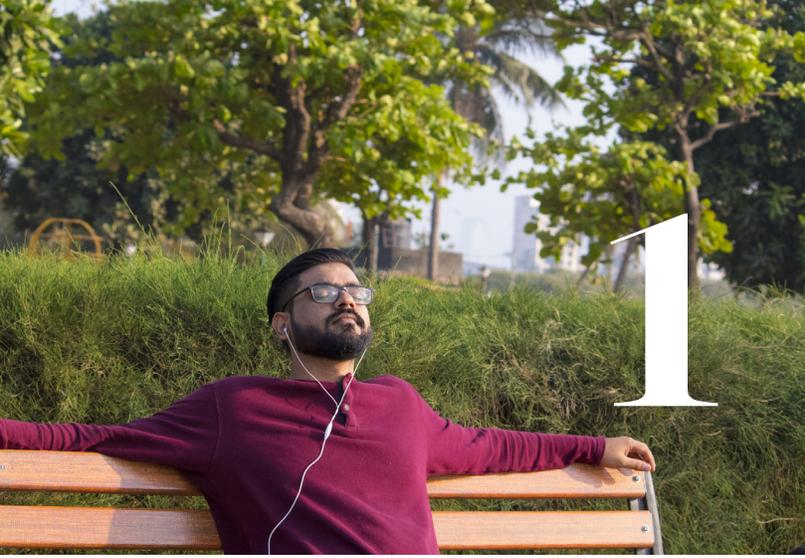
Would it be easier for you to maintain a consistent practice with a variety of meditation approaches, or one?

A woman with long, wavy hair is seen from behind, looking out at a sunset over a city skyline. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow that fills the sky and reflects off the buildings. The woman's hair is dark and appears to be blowing in a light breeze. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

Developing a meditation practice takes ... practice.
We need to rewire our brains – an entirely doable,
worthwhile, and not-exactly-simple thing. It helps to
have a plan, just as you might with any new habit.

Let's approach this mindfully with

Calm's 6 Golden Rules of a Mindful Intention



MAKE YOUR INTENTIONS SMART

Specific

For example, “I want to meditate more” is a powerful declaration but it is not a specific intention or goal, but “I will listen to a new guided meditation daily” is specific.

Measurable

When we have a goal in mind, we tend to want to achieve it right away. And if there is no objective way to track progress, then anything less than perfection (which is impossible, of course), disappoints and discourages. But if we set intentions that are measurable, it's easier to see the small shifts that are happening, and we feel encouraged. Let's say you set an intention of doing the Calm 3-minute Loving-Kindness meditation in the app as part of your morning routine. It's easy to measure how many days a week you manage that.

Attainable

Now it's time to be honest – and compassionate – with yourself. If you're not already a regular meditator, it might be too much of a stretch to say you'll meditate for 60 minutes, daily. Look for ways to make the shift more gentle and manageable for yourself. Would 5 or 10 minutes a day be more realistic for right now? Once you're doing this with consistency, there's nothing stopping you from setting a new intention.

Relevant

Make sure for each intention – whether it be about your meditation practice or any other hope you have for yourself – that it inspires, excites, or motivates you, and that it directly connects to what you hope to feel and experience for yourself.

Time-bound

Of course we want our new habits to last, but forever is a long time, and it can be demotivating or hard to begin when the goal ahead is so big. Instead, pick an amount of time to try on your intention. For example, “I will try to complete the 21 Days of Calm meditation series over the next three weeks.” Now it's an experiment and that's an amazing way to learn about yourself. Once you've completed your intention, you can decide to keep going or shift the plan.

Write down your specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound intention or intentions for your mindfulness practice.



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MAKE IT VISIBLE

Ideas can float around in our heads for a long time. Writing it down, which you just did on the previous page, makes it real. Making it visible, which is the next step, is what keeps you mindful of it. We all need reminders. Take your intention and put it somewhere you'll see it often, like on your mirror, on the back of your phone, on your computer's wallpaper. If the whole intention feels too personal to post where someone else might see, you could shorten it to a single word: calm, breathe, pause, stillness ... whatever word might be a meaningful shorthand reminder for you.

Where will you post your written intention for yourself?



MAKE A PLAN

Now that you know the what (your intention) and the why (all the benefits of a consistent mindfulness practice), it's time to figure out the how. What do you need to do in order to stay true to your commitment? It's helpful to think about what might get in your way. For example, if you want to begin meditating first thing in the morning

but your child is an early-riser who can't wait for breakfast and needs your help dressing, it could be hard to manage. You might decide that evening is a better time for your practice. Or you might do one of the Calm Kids meditations together after eating and before dressing (they're appropriate for adults too). If you find you can become distracted by social media scrolling, you could plan to download meditations to listen to offline, and then set your phone in airplane mode during the time you will meditate. If it's uncomfortable for you to remain still, you might consider making Walking Meditation a core of your practice.

Fill out the table below.

Possible obstacles	How to handle

DO IT

Once you've set yourself up, using the steps above, whatever you've planned for yourself? It is doable. Maybe not easy, but doable. Don't wait for circumstances to be ideal; just give yourself permission to imperfectly begin.



Take a moment to reflect on what you have noticed or become more aware of in yourself and in your life since beginning your new mindfulness practice.

PRACTICE AWARENESS

Pay attention. Get curious. Notice how you're feeling. This is how to nurture mindfulness in any practice. If what you are doing feels good, soak up that feeling, so that your mind and body can integrate this new information, and form new neural pathways connecting the activity to pleasure and wellbeing. If what you're doing feels off, that's important personal data. As you continue to practice, explore what comes up for you and use it to learn about yourself, and adjust your plan.

If it feels like you took on too much, it's okay. This is often the point where people just give up instead of modifying it to work for where they are at and who they are. Think of it like choosing a weight that was too heavy to lift. You could just give up on lifting weights and never build muscle, or you could scale down and build muscle in a more practical way. Let go of any all-or-nothing failure narratives you might have and work towards your goals in a more sustainable way. Ten minutes of meditation not so practical? 5 minutes might be just right. This is self-compassion in action. (If you could benefit from more self-compassion, the Calm Relationship with Self Series includes a [guided meditation called *Self-Compassion*](#) you may find really supportive.)



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CHECK IN WITH YOUR FRIENDS AND COMMUNITY

It can be tempting to keep your goals and intentions to yourself out of fear of failing, but then you rob yourself of accountability, support, encouragement, and connection. Find people you trust and support each other. Share your stories, offer solidarity, cheer each other on, and tap into the strength of community.

If you're looking for mindful online connection, join us in the Daily Calm Community on Facebook. We'd love to meet you.

Take a moment to write out who you'd like to share your intentions with and what kind of support or encouragement you'd like to ask of them.



Creating a meditation routine

You can meditate anywhere and anytime. You don't need to buy a special cushion, or be on a hilltop, or fill your room with incense. There is nothing you need but your own breath and space to pause.

But if it would bring you pleasure to create more of a routine around your meditation practice, it could enrich your experience.

IDEAS FOR ADDING TO YOUR MINDFULNESS ROUTINE

You might do any of these before, after, or during meditation.

Circle any that appeal to you.

- Drape your shoulders in a soft blanket
- Sit on a beautiful blanket
- Dance for one minute
- Light a candle
- Stare at a leaf on one of your house or office plants
- End with your hands on your heart
- Make yourself a cup of tea afterward to transition gently from meditation to everyday life
- Stretch your body
- Read a page of an inspiring book
- Close by writing in a gratitude journal
- Set an intention



**“Mindfulness isn’t difficult,
we just need to remember to do it.”**

— SHARON SALZBERG

You are everything you need.
Wishing you a peaceful 2019.

