

Mindful Mental Training

“It clears and sharpens my mind so I can be kind to myself and useful to others. Most important, it creates a buffer between me and reactivity.”
— Dr. Philippe Goldin
Psychologist & Neuro Scientist UC Davis

Mental Training, Mindfulness & Meditation are all somewhat interchangeable, and fundamentally they are all forms of mental & emotional hygiene. Similar to brushing our teeth, it's important to take some time every day to “clean” the debris that can fester and get rotten over time leading to poor wellbeing of mind, body & spirit.

Meditation has been getting a lot of attention over the last several years because of the very real mental & emotional health crisis affecting the world. Many scientists believe that a great deal of the suffering people are experiencing is driven by the very busy & hectic lifestyles we live, amplified by technology (smart phones) and social and regular media and a hyper monetized marketing based economy trying to get your attention. The research is showing that our 10 million-year-old nervous systems just aren't compatible with the world we are creating.

The great news is that we can do something about our experience with stress by using scientifically proven techniques that are actually thousands of years old, Mindfulness, Meditation and other forms of mental training are part of the antidote.

This resource will help support you in creating a personal mental training practice that can reap amazing health benefits and literally level-up our quality of life and personal performance.

Here are 10- scientifically proven benefits of having a regular practice:

1. **Reduced stress:** Meditation may decrease stress. It also can improve symptoms of stress-related conditions, including irritable bowel syndrome, post-traumatic stress disorder and fibromyalgia.
2. **Improved memory:** Better focus through regular meditation may increase memory and mental clarity. These benefits can help fight age-related memory loss and dementia.
3. **Increased attention:** Meditation helps with attention span.
4. **Enhanced will power:** Meditation develops the mental discipline needed to avoid bad habits.
5. **Better sleep:** Meditation can shorten the time it takes to fall asleep and improve sleep quality.
6. **Less pain:** Meditation can reduce pain and boost emotion regulation. Together with medical care, this may help treat chronic pain.
7. **Lower blood pressure:** Blood pressure decreases during meditation and over time in people who meditate regularly. This can reduce strain on the heart and blood vessels and help prevent heart disease.

8. **Less anxiety:** Regular meditation helps reduce anxiety and related mental health issues like social anxiety, fears and obsessive-compulsive behaviors.
9. **Less depression:** Meditation can help reduce the occurrence of depression.
10. **Greater compassion:** Meditation can help you better understand yourself, find your best self, and increase positive feelings and actions toward others.

These are just a handful of health benefits that have been clinically proven to come from mental training.

It is important to find a type of mental training that you connect with and works for you. There is no perfect or better way to train. The key is to find something that works for you and be consistent. It works exactly like physical exercise, one training has great benefits, but the biggest impact comes from being consistent. Here are some exercise that you can explore as you establish your personal training routine.

4 Steps for Basic Breath Meditation

- Assume a Mindful Body posture, straight spine, sitting or lying down.
- Eyes closed, or slightly open with a soft focus few feet in front of you.
- Bring all of your attention to the physical sensation of breathing, notice where you physically feel your breath the most (nose, chest belly).
- NOTE-this is the most important part! Notice when your mind wanders from the focus on your breath, and then gently bring your attention back to the sensation of breathing. Repeat this as many times as often as necessary during the time you have dedicated to your meditation.

Loving Kindness meditation (Metta)

- Begin by assuming a mindful body.
- Connect with your breath anchor and focus on your breath for a few moments.
- Then in the following order picture these people and offer them the following kind words, picture them receiving the kind words like a text, noticing how it makes them feel and how you feel offering the kind words.
 - First picture yourself
 - Then picture someone you love (friend, parent, pet)
 - Someone you are having conflict or difficulty with
- **KIND WORDS:**
 - **May you/I feel loved**
 - **May you/I be healthy**
 - **May you/I be free from worry**
 - **May you/I be happy**

4-7-8 Counting Meditation-This form of meditation can help us stay focused on our breath.

- Begin by assuming a mindful body.
- Connect with your breath anchor.
- Counting meditation:
 - Begin by counting to 4 as you breath in through your nose
 - Hold your breath for a count of 7
 - Then let your breath out through your mouth for a count of 8
 - Repeat this cycle as many times as you like. Try doing 4 cycles to begin with then move to a simple breath meditation. You can experiment to see what works best for you.

Take 5-breaths Meditation

- When you wake up in the morning take 5-Mindful breaths
- Right before you go to bed take 5 mindful breaths
- Try to fit in 3 times during your day to stop and take 5 mindful breaths

Additional Resources

Copy & paste URL's to view the videos below:

Mindfulness is a Super Power:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6T02g5hnT4>

What do we all Have wrong about mindfulness:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BM2CP7A3HKk>

Mindfulness 101:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rqoxYKtEWEc>

Two apps that can help you get going:

Headspace - use the Take 10 free portion to get going and do some great learning.

Insight Timer - use this app to continue and grow your practice. i can help you find some great guided meditations. Ask questions when they come up!

Watch the movie- "the Connection"

Great film, available on iTunes for rent

<https://www.theconnection.tv>

Forbes articles:

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/insead/2014/01/28/how-meditation-can-make-you-a-better-leader/#2bd5088d6bd2>

http://www3.forbes.com/leadership/7-ways-meditation-can-actually-change-the-brain/?utm_campaign=ways-meditation-change-brain&utm_source=yahoo-gemini&utm_medium=Referral

Google:

<http://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/google-meditation-mindfulness-technology>

Research:

<http://www.futurity.org/mindfulness-meditation-inflammation-1101762-2/>

BOOKS:

Altered Traits-by Dr. Richie Davidson

Full Catastrophe Living-by Dr. John Cabot-Zinn