

Wellbeing in the workplace,
thriving business.

Introduction to meditation

Ripple&Co

Bolton
Council

What is meditation?

Meditation is a practice that focuses the mind for a period of time, in silence or with the aid of chanting as a method of relaxation.

Meditation comes in many forms - breathing, posture and in some cases, chanting these are all the techniques used to become calmer, more self-aware, aid relaxation, conscious of what's around you and mindful of others.

It can help improve psychological balance, your ability to cope with illness, and enhance overall wellbeing.

There are four main elements to all meditation: a quiet area to practice, a comfortable posture, attention focused on a stimulus and an open attitude.



The benefits of meditation

- ✓ Healthier immune system.
- ✓ Higher levels of attention and concentration
- ✓ Reduced stress- and anxiety and elevated emotional health
- ✓ Increased mindfulness and self-awareness
- ✓ Better sleep and reduction in muscle tension
- ✓ Greater ability to manage pain.

Focus Meditation

This form of meditation involves focusing on a single specific stimulus.



Sit comfortably in a relaxed posture and take deep and slow breaths whilst focusing on a sound, sight, feeling, taste or smell.

Focus solely on the breath and how the body expands and scales back down.

Focus meditation helps you learn to ignore all the other stimuli around you and focus solely on the one object, sound or sensation.

This method is transferable to many environments. All that is needed is a comfortable place to be, quietness and a sole focus. It's a good if you need to take a break if experiencing stress at work. Simply sit back in a chair or find somewhere comfortable to sit during a break.



Taking measured breaths and learning to focus on one thought at a time helps to categorise our thinking and prioritise work responsibilities rather than worrying about them all at once.

Learning to be fully focused on one thing at a time, without distraction will also increase our productivity and quality of work.

This technique doesn't need an instructor or lessons on how to do it.

It's simply just setting aside time and training ourselves to remain focused on a specific stimulus and blocking out any distractions.

Mindfulness Meditation



Mindfulness is a practice and quality within itself. It is about achieving a state of being consciously aware. It is a 'formal practice of sitting and observing the breath (or an object).'

The difference between mindfulness and meditation is that the former is quality of mind, whilst meditation is a specific practice. These two qualities can be combined to form mindfulness meditation.

After meditating, mindfulness can maintain the calming effects of meditation, reminding us of the inner peace we can achieve. It's training us to observe thoughts, rather than judging them.

Mindfulness helps bring the focus back to the breath when distracted

Mindfulness allows the acknowledgment of thoughts before then letting go of them

Mindfulness develop an understanding and awareness of thoughts

Mindfulness encourages less judgement of thoughts, avoiding labelling them as good or bad which can bring negative significance in to the way you think

Mindfulness is remaining in the present and being more aware of the signs of stress and anxiety which can start to change a bad habit of overthinking .

A mindfulness meditation study found that the technique helps increase the brain's grey matter, the area linked to memory, emotion and a person's sense of self. It is a process of teaching the brain to observe thoughts, become more in-touch with the emotional self and live more in the present.



Mantra Meditation

This form of meditation is a great practice for helping develop attentiveness and composure. A mantra is a word or phrase chanted (repeated) to oneself during meditation to help relax the mind and body.

It can help reduce negative thinking and negative perceptions of oneself. The practice requires concentration and focus on the mantra, blocking out any distractions as it is said repeatedly .

Choice of mantra is important. Choose a positive mantra that encourages hope, self-confidence, and determination.

Pick a mantra that reflects a personal vision and aspiration in life. Focus on a positive goal which gives you motivation and a belief in your ability.

Example mantras:

- 'I am successful'
- 'I am limitless'
- 'I am calm, relaxed and peaceful'
- 'I believe in myself'
- 'I can achieve anything'
- 'I believe in my dreams'



According to 2017 research, chanting certain mantras may stimulate these changes, since chanting can help synchronise the left and right sides of the brain and promote relaxing (alpha) brain waves.

This synchronisation has been linked to the improvement of brain functions over time and slowing down cognitive decline.

These changes also appear to reduce fatigue, stress, anxiety and can help with verbal memory, components that can really help elevate productivity, communication, confidence and energy at work.

Visual Meditation

This type of meditation can bring us a lot of joy and happiness if we really immerse ourselves into the technique. Like mindfulness meditation, visualisation meditation is a combination of quality and practice blended together. Visualisation can be done without using meditation, but combined with the use of meditation it can really help us imagine and envision.

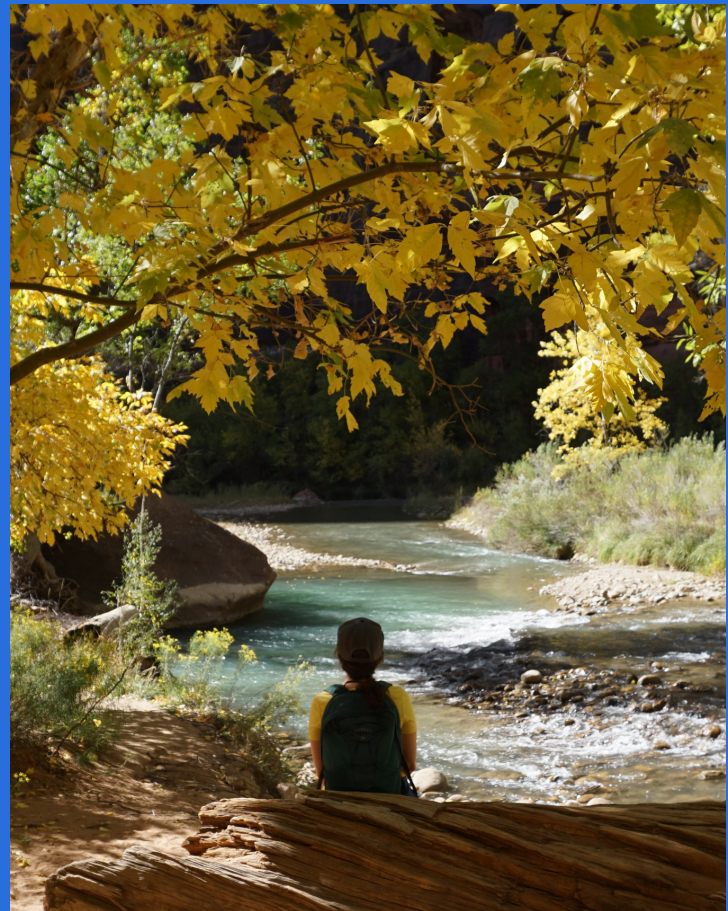
Meditation relaxes your mind and body, allowing you to think clearly and really detail the visualisation you're focusing on. Visualisation meditation can really help us visualise challenging scenarios in a positive light.

Combined with meditation, we will also learn how to remain calm and composed during times of stress. We learn how to control our breathing, posture and mind when meditating. These skills can really improve our mindset when dealing with stressful situations. It helps you feel as if you have all the tools to cope.

Find an image that has positive connotations. It can be a memory that brings great pleasure, a vision of success or envisioning the positive reaction of other people within our presence.

Alternatively, create a picture of an ideal future. Think about what is needed to achieve it and what needs to change in order to make it become a reality.

Take 5-10 minutes a day to practice this technique. Develop a very detailed vision of happiness and pleasure



The key to this technique is to focus on one particular picture and give it all your energy. Of all the meditations types this technique gives you the most freedom. It can help improve work performance, increase happiness and relaxation .