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# 10

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## Finding stillness

5 steps to meditation



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# Why meditate?



## Why you should start meditation and keep to it. *By Susie Pearl*

**W**e've all heard about the benefits of meditation to health and wellbeing but finding the time to sit down and actually show up to meditate is sometimes hard to do, particularly with busy schedules of work, school runs and juggling the commitments of normal daily life.

**'Taking the time to meditate is as important as taking the time to breathe. One pumps oxygen into the body, the other pumps peace into the mind.'**  
**Marianne Williamson**

When I first start coaching a new client, we inevitably begin talking about self-care routines and how much time is spent in quiet reflection or in down time. When I ask if someone gives time daily to some sort of mindfulness, the comments back are usually along the lines of 'I know I should meditate every day, but I just don't have the time' or 'I simply forget – other things just get in the way and I end up shifting meditation to the 'non-essential' pile'.

It's good to have some strategies in place to make sure that we show up to a meditation or mindfulness practice.

Here are some great ways to help you show up regularly and get a meditation practice in place. The New Year is a great time to start with new routines and daily habits – make meditation one of your new habits and see what a difference it will make to you and how you feel.

### **1. Use a meditation app**

I have found some of the new apps that are available are really good quality and helpful in maintaining a regular meditation practice. My favourite apps to recommend are Headspace and Calm. Both offer some free content and are easy to use. Another,



Insight Timer, offers hundreds of guided meditations for free that will take you straight into the zone and help you sit still long enough to have a lovely meditation that will help you through your day.

## 2. Keep a record of your practice

There is an old saying, 'What gets measured, gets done'. I find this is true. Make a weekly chart and note on it when you meditate and how long for. You will soon get in the rhythm and be filling up the tick boxes with successful meditations and get into the habit of showing up. Go for 20 minutes twice a day if you can. Meditating once a day is better than none a day and don't beat yourself up if you miss one here or there. I find that once you begin to do it regularly, you will look forward to it and not want to miss it!

## 3. Use a timer

This is where the free app Insight timer (mentioned above) can be useful. It gives you a choice of Tibetan bells and sounds and allows you to set your own time length and records how often you complete a session. It's a fantastic app and it's free!

## 4. Get a meditation buddy

It helps to be accountable. Get a buddy to meditate with and this will increase your chances of sitting down to meditate and often takes us into a deeper state of meditation when sitting with someone else and doing it together.

**'You should sit in meditation for 20 minutes every day unless you're too busy. Then you should sit for an hour.'**  
Old Zen saying ॐ

## TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION

A good friend introduced me to Transcendental Meditation (TM) practice when I was going through a meltdown. I had a small baby, a lot of stress in many areas of life, and my mum was losing her battle against cancer. It felt like life was caving in. My friend suggested I go and learn TM meditation, which I did, and it was the best skill I have ever learnt. It's 15 years later and this is still part of my daily routine, helping me to keep healthy, calm and grounded.

### WHAT IS TM?

This is a simple mantra-based form of meditation. It's a simple, natural and effortless technique practiced for 20 minutes a day while sitting in a chair with eyes closed.

TM allows the active thinking mind to settle inwards and gets you to experience a naturally calm and peaceful level of awareness. I tried many different forms of meditation and settled on this one as it's the one that I found most comfortable, easy and effective.

Scientific studies show that meditation helps with reducing stress, controlling anxiety, promotes emotional health and happiness, increases attention span, helps with improved sleep patterns and increases self-awareness. It's good to learn from an approved meditation teacher and a good resource is the David Lynch Foundation website to find out more.

Enjoy your New Year with meditation. It will inspire you to new goals and new heights of being in charge of your life!

# Gary Carter's Anatomy & Myofascial Movement Course for Yoga Teachers

## A 10 WEEKEND COURSE Structural, Functional and Experiential Anatomy for Movement for Yoga Teachers

Gary Carter shows how a thorough knowledge of anatomy can help teachers to make intelligent choices about the way they teach their pupils. His workshops involve the use of props, illustrations, and hands-on work in class to help demonstrate the principles that underlie the practice.

These courses of experiential anatomy will run for ten weekends (approx. 1 per month), exploring the anatomy of movement in relation to asana practice and Pilates Practice, movement analysis and 3-D work. It will encourage teachers to "see" their students more clearly, thus helping with rehabilitative issues. The course aims to help teachers take a flexible, intelligent approach to Yoga, Pilates, Gyrotonics and other movement practices.

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