



MEDITATION GUIDE

Why Meditation?

I was like you: sceptical about meditation.

Actually, I had been sceptical for a long time. My Dad has meditated for 50 years (not continuously – lols) and always raved about its benefits.

I had dismissed it for years, thinking it wasn't for me, wouldn't benefit me, and that I didn't have time for it.

I can't say what it specifically was that triggered me to try it – potentially a bad bout of sleepless nights – but the idea entered my head to try it for 10 days, to see what everyone was banging on about. Sorry, whispering on about.

I started setting my alarm 10 minutes earlier and seeing what it would do for me, and before that, *if* I could do it.

I had been reading about using it to clear your mind, so knew I had to focus on my breathing and started with just five minutes at a time.



Why Meditation?

Modern life can be amazing and empowering and wonderful but it can also be stressful, traumatic, surprising, anxiety-generating and more.

Meditation devotees say it can help with all of these:

- Calming anxiety
- Improving body confidence and confidence in yourself in general
- Improving sleep
- Improving patience
- Improving awareness
- Helping you see the big picture

All of these sounded like they could actually be useful, so I began.



Here's how I do it

On waking, I drink a large glass of water (this is just a nice way to wake up!).

I do my necessary ablutions.

I go and sit, upright, in my living room.

I set a timer on my phone – in case I fall back properly asleep.

Then I shut my eyes, and try to just focus on my breathing, steadily in and out.

If thoughts come into my head – which they did lots when I first started – I use a number of techniques to get them to go as quickly as possible – these are detailed later on.

Sit quietly, look inward, focus on your breathing and get through it.

It will seem like much longer than two minutes the first time you do it, but that sensation changes with practise.



Thought techniques

1. When a thought appears, imagine it as a bubble, then as it gets closer to you, pop it – this is my preferred option that I find easiest to stick to.
2. Imagine yourself in a river. The water is everything that you're thinking about/is going on in your life and you're swimming through it (with or against the flow might depend on how busy your mind is). You get to an island or the riverbank and climb out with ease, turn around and watch the water (containing all your thoughts busying your mind) flow by. Acknowledge them as they flow past and let them go.
3. When a thought comes into your mind, visualise it on a screen. Let it start small as it comes to you and get bigger as it gets closer, when it's in front of you acknowledge it and virtually swipe it away – very Minority Report. Alternating swiping the thoughts left and right can also be a way of self-hypnosis to a calm state too.

With all of these, moving the thoughts away in time with breathing (watching each one flow by in the river or swiping or popping) will help bring you nicely into the right meditative state ready to focus more and more deeply on your breathing



Thought techniques 2

Equally, just sitting with your thoughts is useful, and can be powerful too.

As opposed to trying to clear your thoughts – which may not be humanly possible anyway! – try one of these approaches (or both within the same session!)

1. Count your breaths, either counting the in and out breath as the same , or in as 1, out as 2, in as 3 out as 4 and so on
2. Try scanning down and through your body – I literally imagine a neon green laser (!) scanning me slowly from head to toe; connect with each area of the body as you scan down and see how each area *really* feels



Guided Meditation

There are a number of apps out there to help – and many people (me included, sometimes) find them useful.

Headspace – The biggie, they have a free 10 day trial and having tried the paid subscription service too, there is a wealth of stored meditations to try, some on specific topics like sleep, confidence, anxiety, happiness, focus – you won't run out of their courses.

Waking Up – I've moved onto this now, there's a bit more science behind it than Headspace and it starts with a free trial too – if you're sceptical about guided meditation, this might be the one for you

Calm – Similar to Headspace, I haven't tried it, but hear good things about it



How to start

Following the previously laid-out points, start with just two or three minutes a day.

If you can do that successfully for a five day run, increase the time.

If you're feeling comfortable with it, start increasing it, one minute at a time.

10 minutes is the most I ever do in one go, and its been very helpful to my state of mind.

I aim to do it at the same time every day (early morning) but find a time that suits you – that way you'll be more likely to stick to it.

From personal preference, I would recommend not showering or eating beforehand, but that's just me. You may prefer to get these done first, if that's the case, not a problem.

What I also now do from time to time, is a 'top-up' during the day. Even just sitting in my car for five minutes (when parked, ho ho ho) can really help me feel like I can get stuff done.



Breathing techniques

Focusing on my breathing distract me from thoughts in my head.

This additional technique helps to take me out of the real world and into the meditative one:

- Breathe in for a count of five through your nose
- Hold it for one beat
- Breathe out for a count of seven through your mouth
- Hold it for one beat

In fact, a slightly longer out breath (whether through nose or mouth) has been proven to help slow breathing and calm heart rate, so don't worry if the 5 in/7 out doesn't work for you



What you will experience / feel

Not everyone will have the same experience from meditation.

It also isn't a 'quick fix' to anxiety and mental health issues.

However, gradually over the first two weeks, I began to notice a positive, calming change to how I was. Little annoyances bothered me less.

I felt more capable in general & I was calmer throughout the day. I had a greater sense of confidence in me and who I was.

I realised I was being kinder and less judgmental to other people, and in turn, kinder to myself.

You may experience these or different sensations and feelings – let me know, I'd be really interested to hear from you about how its helping.

Print the next page off and use it to keep track - good luck!

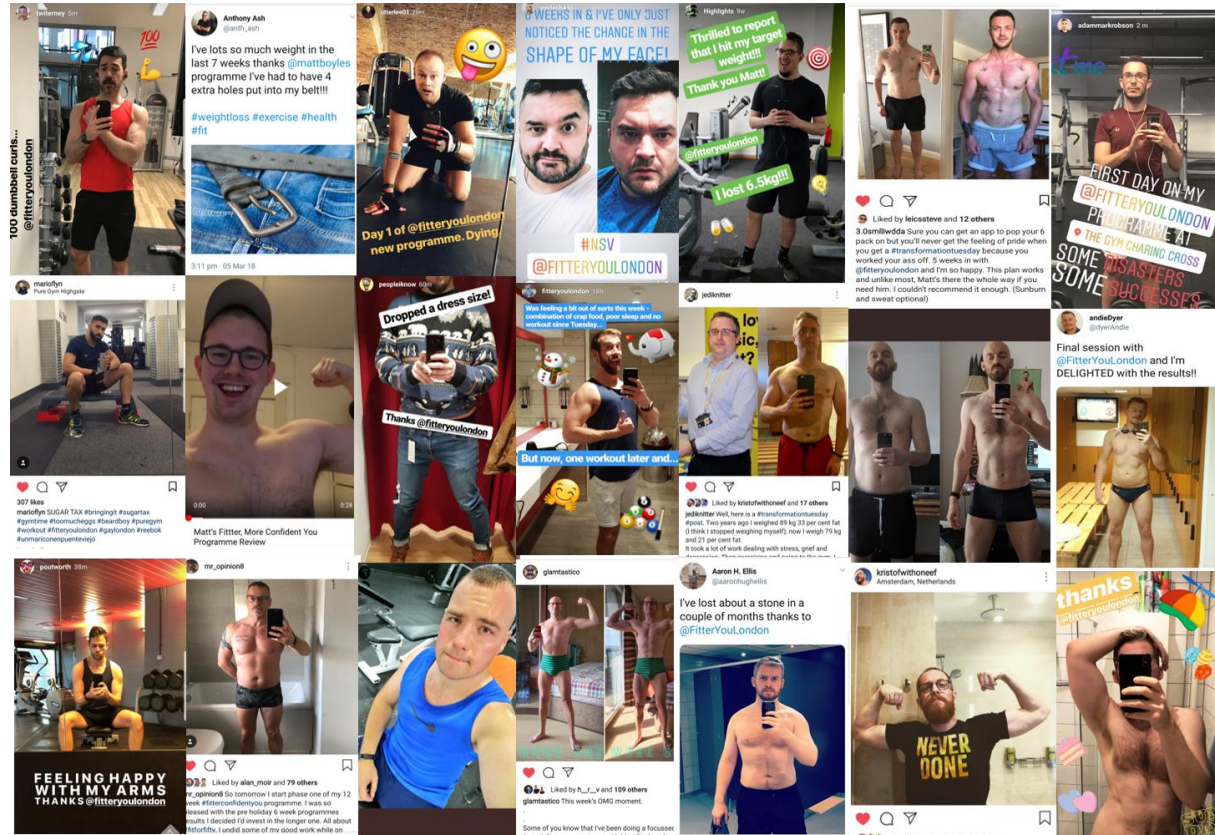


Fitter Confident You – Meditation Planner

Days	Duration – 2 mins is fine to start	How was it?
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		
Day 4		
Day 5		
Day 6		
Day 7		
Day 8		
Day 9		
Day 10		



I've worked with more than 700 guys, all around the world... and I would love to work with you.



Build strength of mind
and body on my
handy, easy to follow,
12 week training plan,
Fitter Confident You

This is just a snapshot of some of my clients; if you'd like help with your health and fitness this year, head to www.fitterconfidentyou.net/onlinetraining to book a free call with me – thanks!

