

Clearing Your Mind for Successful Leadership

5 Minutes to Positive Meditation

Thinking about beginning a meditation practice? Wondering if it is hard to get started or even really worth the effort?

Actually, meditation is simple and easy to do in only five minutes each day so you can effortlessly incorporate meditation into your daily routine.

The five-minute *investment* you make in meditation will reap *benefits* far greater than you might imagine, too.

Meditation has been proven to boost performance and improve your ability to focus attention. And you know what? More and more leaders are taking a few minutes each day to take advantage of meditation's many valuable benefits.

Ready to learn more?

To understand how meditation can help you as a leader, consider the clarity you sometimes get when "all of a sudden" you solve a problem you've been thinking about for days. Have you ever noticed that the solution occurs to you when you're NOT thinking about it at all? You're in the shower, driving in your car or walking to your next appointment instead. Now imagine *practicing* that ability so you can experience more clarity more often. That's what meditation can do.

Let's get started:

First, pick a space and time in your schedule that you can reserve for five minutes uninterrupted. Select a time in your current routine that works best for you... in your bedroom, as soon as you wake up in the morning; sitting on the train or subway on your way to work; first thing in the morning, sitting at your desk; on a plane, after you've settled in for the flight; or maybe at the gym, as you cool down at the end of your workout. The key is to find some time that works best for you.

Now here's your simple five-minute meditation system:

Sit comfortably in a chair, seat, or on the floor in a relaxed position and check the time.

Close your eyes and take a moment to bring yourself to the present moment. Listen to the sounds around you. Feel alert to any physical sensations you are experiencing.

Bring your attention to your breathing. With each breath think "in" as you inhale; think "out" as you exhale.

Notice your thoughts. Become aware of thoughts like you would notice credits at the end of a movie, getting a glimpse of them as they go by. As your thoughts wander -- and yes, they certainly will -- simply acknowledge the thought, and bring your attention back to your breathing.

Repeat the process till five minutes are up. Notice your breathing. Become aware of your thoughts. Start to notice your breathing again. The more you practice, the longer the pause between thoughts. The more you notice exactly what you are thinking, you'll feel clearer. More present. More available in the moment.

Repeat each day. Make it a practice to take five minutes each day for you. Like an oxygen mask in a plane, you've got to take time to breathe first to best support those who depend upon you to be in the best shape to lead.

Simple Five Minute Meditation System Summary Checklist

- Sit comfortably
- Close your eyes
- Bring your attention to your breathing
- Notice your thoughts
- Repeat the process till five minutes are up
- Repeat each day

You've learned how to meditate in five minutes flat.

If you enjoy the clarity and increased performance meditation brings to you as a leader, you may want to create a sustainable meditation practice for even longer periods.

Here's how:

- Continue to meditate for at least five minutes each day.
- Notice the difference it makes in your own peace of mind.
- Take note of any reactions of your colleagues and family.
- Keep building your practice and the amount of time. Add one minute to your meditation practice as you are ready.

Additional Resources for Meditation

How can you easily and effortlessly build a longer practice and explore different techniques?

It's simple. Here are a few of my recommendations to help you learn more:

1. [Meditation for Beginners](#) by Jack Kornfield
2. [Insight Meditation: A Step-By-Step Course on How to Meditate](#) by Sharon Salzberg and Joseph Goldstein
3. [How to Succeed in Business: Meditate](#) by Oliver Ryan, Fortune magazine, July 20, 2007.
4. [Feeling Transcendent in 10 Minutes or Less](#) by Alina Dizik, *Wall Street Journal*, October 27, 2011
5. iTunes Search for words or phrases like meditation, guided relaxation, Christian meditation, chant meditation, Buddhist meditation – or whatever appeals to you most. Check out this iTunes app I especially like: [Simply Being: Guided Meditation for Relaxation and Presence](#) By Meditation Oasis.