

When is the Best Time of Day to Meditate?

The truth is that there is not one correct answer regarding the best time for everybody to practice meditation. Each person is different and looks to meditation to help with their particular life in their own way and in their own time.

So, the answer to: what is the best time of day to meditate?
Is: It depends on you!

What are you looking to get out of meditation?

Let's review some reasons why people are drawn to meditation and consider the best time of day for each of these reasons to practice meditation. Then you can decide for yourself the best time of day to practice based on why you want to meditate.

For Increased Focus and Concentration

If you are using meditation to boost your focus and concentration for the day ahead, the best time to do that is first thing in the morning. Ideally, you wake up, use the restroom, then sit to meditate. Before coffee, eating, and especially social media. These first minutes of being awake is when you are most in tune with yourself and the universe. When you start your day with meditation, it sets the tone to remain throughout your day of being more mindful, focused, and relaxed.

For Falling Asleep

Most methods of meditation are inherently stimulating, thus create a more alert and focused mind. Additionally, the reduced stress caused by meditating generally alleviates difficulty in falling asleep. But we all have our moments when we just can't turn off the brain, and need a particular type of meditation to help with that. Most obviously this

meditation will take place at night just before you intend to fall asleep. You can either sit away from your bed to do such a meditation, such as a visual meditation, or a mantra meditation. Alternatively, you might do well to lie in bed and listen to an audio recorded guided meditation to help focus your monkey mind and fall asleep more quickly and more relaxed than in the silence of the dark.

For Acute Stress Relief

There are times when you are in a social (or worse, work) situation that creates a high level of stress and you just need a minute to look inward. These situations can be really challenging, because you *want* to maintain your composure, but it seems impossible when you are irritated by someone or something. It helps to have completed a few sequential days of regular sitting meditation practice, but when even without, you can use your breath to tap into your center, to find a tiny piece of appreciation in the moment you are in (and even for the irritant when possible), and let go of the stress. This can be difficult if the conflict is happening during a conversation. When time allows, find a moment alone, close your eyes, and for 10 long breaths, inhale gratitude and relief and exhale any tension or negative emotions. These stress-filled times can happen at any time of day, so practice a similar meditation technique whenever you need a refuel.

For Dealing with General Stress

Often times general stress is caused by working a 9-to-5 job and fulfilling familial duties. Sometimes taking “time out” after work is just what is needed to allow yourself to be most mindful with your family! If this is the case, meditating at 6 pm might suit you and your family best. And remember – even 5-10 minutes of meditation can give you amazing gains in many areas of your life. If you need a few minutes to “destress” from the day at work, or if you are

overwhelmed by having to cook yet again, GIVE YOURSELF that gift! At any time of day that it suits your hectic life.

Meditation is the answer to so many dilemmas and questions. It can reduce anxiety, help with sleep, keep the mind focused, and allow space for more love, to name a few things. Don't be intimidated by it, try it at different times of the day, and try different ways of meditation. Find what is right for you.

Start small with a few minutes a day and build up the minutes as the weeks progress. Sit once a day or twice. Sit on the floor or on a chair. Sit outside or in the closet. Be comfortable, embrace it, and choose the time of day that resonates most with you!

Namaste.