

Do you need to calm your mind?

As humans, we spend a lot of time in our heads. Worrying, replaying, speculating, rehearsing. We're almost always thinking about the past or the future.

Even when we think we are in the present, we get caught up wondering about how we are seen by others or what they make of us. All of this uses up a great deal of our mental energy. We rarely experience a moment as it is. Without judgment. Without commentary. Just purely as it is. This is what meditation or 'coming to your senses' is all about.

The benefits of meditation include:

- lower blood pressure
- improved blood circulation
- lower heart rate
- increased immunity to infections
- less perspiration
- slower respiratory rate
- less anxiety
- lower blood cortisol levels
- more feelings of well-being
- less stress
- deeper relaxation

In meditation we unveil the treasure of our human 'being' beyond our human 'doing'. Meditation is like relaxation for the mind. It is very simple. Observe and let go. Not holding onto thoughts or feelings, not adding to them, not resisting them, just observing and letting go.

As we quieten the chatter of our minds we discover an inner wellspring from which insight, joy, inspiration, imagination, wisdom, creativity and contentment can effortlessly flow. Meditation becomes a sacred space in which we replenish and refresh ourselves.

The practice of coming to our senses can become a way of life, a way of being in the world that gives us access to our intuition, creativity, clarity, humour and more. It's simply about coming to our senses, wherever we are, in whatever activity we might be engaged. It is worth remembering that our bodies are always in the present. One of the most effective ways of bringing our minds to rest is to focus on the senses of our body.

Do this simple practice now while you're reading:

Take a couple of long, slow, deep breaths. As you exhale, feel your body soften and relax. Become aware of your weight and posture. Feel the pressure of the chair against your body, the floor against your feet or whatever is supporting your body. Become aware of the space between your feet and the floor.

Feel the touch of your clothing against your skin. Notice its texture, the temperature your clothing helps create. Feel the touch of the air against your hands, your cheeks. Become aware of all the sounds within and outside the space you're in – not judging, labelling or resisting anything, simply allowing every sound to be heard – letting them come, to pass. Let your listening travel right out until you hear the silence beyond all sound. This state, where the mind is at rest is what we're aiming to achieve by focusing it in the present moment.

Doesn't that feel better! You can listen to this practice free of charge by going to **www.questforlife.com.au/meditation-practices**.

The richness this practice brings to our everyday experience is a treasure beyond words.

