

28 Day Meditation Challenge

Discover How 10 Minutes A Day
Can Change Your Life

Clare Josa



28 Day
Meditation
Challenge

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Welcome to the 28 Day Meditation Challenge. This Welcome Pack includes everything you need to get started.

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Welcome to the 28 day Meditation Challenge



My name is Clare Josa and I am going to be guiding you through the next 4 weeks.

Before we start, I'd like to say thank you for choosing to join in with this challenge. I really hope it brings you whatever you are looking for.

If you have any questions at all during the 28 days, you can ask them – and get answers – via the online group forum (see below), or by replying to any of the emails.

Let's get started!

It Doesn't Matter Where You're Starting From



Whether you're a newbie to meditation, or an old hand, wanting to rekindle the habit, the 28 Day Meditation Challenge is a great place to start.

We'll be covering the basics of how to meditate, how to make it comfortable, how to overcome the common hurdles and how to avoid the problems that sometimes cause people to give up. Some of it may be familiar to you; some of it may be new. And I don't ask you to believe everything I say! I'll be sharing with you the techniques and strategies that I teach my face-to-face students and – as with them – all I ask if for you to 'try things on for size'. If it works for you, great. If not, how about tweaking it, so it does?

It is my deepest wish that you find this 28 days really makes a difference to your life.

Many people who have made a commitment to regular meditation say that it helps them feel more calm; it helps them create a little sanctuary in their day, no matter how stressful life is. And whatever it is you want from the next 28 days - and you will be finding that out and getting quite clear on it by the end of this welcome pack - I really, really hope you achieve it.

My Number 1 Piece Of Advice

Don't make a big deal out of meditating! Don't stress about it. Just do it. That makes the whole process much easier! 😊

What Is Meditation?

Well, the answer often depends on your culture, your religious beliefs and even the influence of the media, wherever you live.

There is no one-lined answer to that question, because meditation is such a personal experience.



However, in general, **meditation is about finding inner stillness** – about letting go of the drama and stresses of everyday life and re-connecting with the part of us that contains our deeper wisdom. It is about being fully aware in the present moment – truly living life, rather than just living a ‘version of life’, as narrated by our unconscious mind.

People who meditate regularly experience less stress, more calm, more happiness and a sense of being present in every moment.

I don’t want to tell you what to expect over the 28 days of this challenge – the best thing you can do is to expect nothing! Suspend all assumptions. Let go of all expectations. Allow yourself to enjoy the process, without judgement.

I’ll be asking the question, “what is meditation?” again at the end of your 28 days. That way, you can find your own answer.

The Benefits Of Meditation

The benefits of meditation are well documented. Even scientists are now agreeing with what meditators have known for centuries.

- It is common sense that sitting quietly for 10 minutes or more each day will help us feel more calm and help us to de-stress.
- It can also give us more clarity in life, because we are training our mind - the monkey mind - the chattering mind - to concentrate, to relax and to focus. It can help us have more clarity, in everything else that we do.
- It can help us feel happier, because we are learning to accept life as it is and understanding how we impact our experience of life.
- We are practising exercises that help us to let go of the things that cause us pain and the things that stress us.
- Scientists have now proven that meditation makes your brain grow! They have studied people who do simple mindfulness meditation exercises, even for a short period of time each day, and they have found that it physically alters your brain. It helps you to feel happier.
- Doctors are even using mindfulness meditation to help people suffering from depression.

Regular meditation helps you feel less stressed; it helps you enjoy life more and, whatever your reason for meditating, regular practice is likely to bring you the benefits that you are hoping for.

What Are We Going To Do For 28 Days?

What will we be covering over the four weeks?

It is not my intention to provide and produce the world's definitive guide to meditation and then force you to read it!

That's not what you need right now, as you set off on your meditation journey.

However, I am a meditation teacher and an NLP trainer, so this 28 day challenge is intended to be a kick-start for you. It will help you to get started with your meditation practice - or re-start it. Overcoming the common hurdles, creating a little piece of calm in your day and, if you enjoy it, moving on to longer meditation periods, is the aim of the next few weeks.

Four Types Of Meditation

We will be covering four types of meditation over the four weeks, to give you an experience of how different types of people like to meditate; at least one of them will resonate for you. Often, if people have tried meditation in the past and given up, it's because they were trying a kind of meditation that didn't work for them. So each week you'll get an audio recording and you'll also get a transcript of that audio, to help make meditating easier for you.

You don't have to use these audios, if you don't want to. You can do a meditation of your own, if you like. But I invite you, just for four weeks, to go with the process and see what happens.

The reason I am giving you the transcripts as well is that you might want to record the meditations in your own voice (or even your own language!), and I wanted to make that option easy for you.

Although you'll get a new meditation each week, you are welcome to use just one for the whole of the four weeks, if that works for you. However, I invite you to try out each week's audio, before you decide.

The idea is to help you find out how meditation can work for you, with your personality, with your preferences and with your lifestyle.

Daily Emails

I'll be sending you daily emails, to help keep you on track. Sometimes they'll be motivational; sometimes they will be applying psychology and common sense to help you overcome hurdles that have been faced by thousands, if not millions, of meditation students across the world; and sometimes there will be a bit of a

‘butt kick’, in case you have lapsed, to help you really find out how you can commit yourself to carving out just ten minutes a day for your meditation time!

The emails are designed to be quick to read.

Some days there will be an optional exercise for you to do, if that day’s message resonates for you and you want to go deeper. It is up to you; nobody is going to be checking up on you.

Videos

I encourage you to watch the videos, too, as I send them through. They will be dealing with the typical problems that meditation students face and, again, they are short and sweet, so won’t take up much of your time. They can really help make a difference for you.

Moral Support

There is also moral support and fun in the online forum on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/326283737411182/>



It is a closed group, which means that whatever is shared within the group stays within the group. It’s not publically searchable by Google (unlike a Facebook page), so your privacy is protected.



The online

forum is a really important aspect of your 28 days, because having people to share your experiences and questions with can help keep you going, if you reach a stage where you find that you need that extra bit of encouragement.

- If you have an insight during a meditation you can share it with the group.
- If you have a question or something that you haven’t quite sussed out how to make it work for you, you can share it with the group.
- It’s really important to have others to ‘buddy’ us, when we are making changes, and also to hold us accountable, if we’re tempted to drop our practice for a day or two.

So I strongly encourage you to join in with the online forum and perhaps make new friends on your meditation journey, as well.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/326283737411182/>

What Do I Need For The 28 Day Meditation Challenge?

What equipment will you need?

Well, unfortunately, you can't use the equipment as an excuse for not meditating, because all you need is a chair!

We won't be meditating lying down – that's a better posture for deep relaxation and it's also the position we choose for falling asleep!

One of the key things with meditation, as we will discuss in some of the daily emails, is posture.

Meditation is not about turning your legs into a Pretzel and it's not about being uncomfortable.

Good posture can make all the difference for your meditation practice.

If it is, say, a dining room chair and you have got little legs like me, you might want a copy of the Yellow Pages to put under your feet, so they don't dangle. If it's a comfy arm chair, you might want extra cushions behind your back, to help keep your back straight and stop you slouching.

You'll need a computer or an MP3 player, if you want to listen to the audios, and that's it.

As optional extras, you might want:

- Headphones. Sometimes it's nice to cocoon yourself in the sound of the meditation.
- You might want extra cushions if that helps you with your posture.
- You might want to wrap something around your shoulders, as you meditate. Sometimes when we sit still, relax and meditate our body can cool down, so having a shawl or a blanket wrapped around your shoulders can help. It is also a way of giving your unconscious mind a signal of "I am now in my meditating zone - and I want my monkey mind to relax and let me do this". It's entirely up to you.

What You Won't Be Getting Over The 28 Days

Before we go any further it is worth me mentioning what you won't be getting from the 28 Day Meditation Challenge.

Elevator Music

The first thing that you won't be getting is tinkly music in the background of the meditation audios.

I found, over the years, that most of the 'meditations' I had listened to had music in the background. It took 20 years of doing these before I realised, when I started training to become a meditation teacher, that I had never actually meditated before!

I had never really reached that still point.

I had done some amazing deep relaxations and guided visualisations, but I had never actually got to that space of quiet and calm.

And to be honest, it's tough to get there with 'elevator music' in the background.

*The music – though often beautiful - is a way of
distracting our mind. It can turn our meditation into a
guided deep relaxation instead.*

So don't be surprised to hear periods of silence on the meditation audios.

What is the difference between meditation and deep relaxation?

A deep relaxation is about relaxing the body and mind - and re-energising. Meditation is about being awake - alert - focusing and concentrating, in order to reach a sense of stillness and wellbeing. Often, the real insights that arrive from meditation happen during the stillness. How can I ask you to quieten your mind if I am playing music in the background?!

There is nothing wrong with background music, but it can be a real distraction from the process of meditating.

Those of you who are used to doing deep relaxations and guided meditations with background music you might find it a little disconcerting, sitting in silence.

Sitting in silence is something many of us find challenging. That's why we tend to drown out the silence with TV and radio on in the background all day.

My invitation to you is just to suspend how you would normally react to this quiet time, for ten minutes a day. You never know, it could make a huge difference for you.

A New Religion

The next thing that you won't be getting is a new religion.

There are no required beliefs or thought systems, religious practices or spiritual ideas you have to suddenly start doing to enjoy this course.

*You don't have to take on any new beliefs to be able to
meditate.*

Pretty much every spiritual tradition in the world includes meditation in it, in some form, whether it's prayer, silent sitting, some kind of ritual or even sequences of movement like Tai Chi. Meditation can be about sitting still or it can be about consciously moving.

The idea behind the 28 Day Meditation Challenge is that it's accessible and open to everyone.

Whatever you believe, if you are able to sit still in a relaxed and alert way, you can be guided through a simple meditation process that will help you de-stress, gently quieten your mind and reach a space of inner calm.

Meditation is really a natural thing to do for human happiness and your meditation practice doesn't care what you believe.

Meditation is a personal thing and I hope that the next 28 days will help you discover how to let it work for you.

One of the side effects of regular meditation, though, is that it often allows you to become who you really are; it often removes the illusions; it often helps you release the baggage and the habits that have kept you stuck. It can set you free from those old blocks and fears.

Although meditation has the power to change your life, you don't have to change your life to meditate.

Judgement

The other thing you won't be getting during the four weeks is judgement; this is not a competition, not even with yourself.

Some days your meditation might feel great; other days you might wonder, "Why did I do that?"

If your meditation goes well one day but not the next, the only person that needs to know is you. Nobody is going to be sitting there telling you off. It's ok. It's part of the process. There is no critique here. There is no feedback. You won't be judged; you won't be scored. And if you catch yourself judging yourself, please just laugh and let it go.

Expectations

Having expectations of yourself – or your meditation experiences - can be the biggest barrier to successful meditation.

So if you find you're criticising yourself and thinking 'I am rubbish at meditation' because a day's practice didn't go as you had expected - believe me, we have all been there and it's not true – just smile and move on.

Meditation is a skill that needs gentle, consistent practice.

Some days it will go really well some days it might be less so. It doesn't matter.

What matters is your consistency and that you let go and trust the process; trust that your inner wisdom will guide you, if you need to make adaptations to the practices.

Please don't judge yourself! You won't be getting judged in the online forum; you won't be getting judged in the daily emails and judging yourself is the least useful thing you can do when you are learning how to meditate.

What To Do If You Miss A Day?

If you miss a day, please don't beat yourself up.

I'm not encouraging you to miss days – seeing results from meditation is about regular practice - but it's not a disaster if a day slips by and you didn't get to meditate. If you get to the end of the day and realise that you haven't done your meditation, sit on a chair and do it.

Acceptance is one of the keys of meditation.

This 28 Day Meditation Challenge is about creating a new habit - and the worst (and most painful) way to create a new habit is to punish yourself, if you don't get it right first time. As a human being we work much better with encouragement than with criticism. If you miss a day, just pick your practice up again, as soon as you realise. However, it is worth spending a few moments looking at the day you missed:

What was it that caused you to miss a day?

- Did something come up? Did your meditation get de-prioritised because something else was more important? Maybe you could take a moment to reflect: was it really more important? What could you change about your response to mean that today you do get time to meditate?
- Maybe you need to change the time of day you are meditating? Perhaps trying to fit it in at a time when interruptions are common isn't going to work for you?
- Did you forget why it was that you wanted to meditate? We will be covering that in the next section.
- Was it that something got in the way? What could you change today that means that is less likely to happen?
- Sometimes we forget - so how are you going to remind yourself today?

If you miss a day it can actually be useful, because it helps you work out what your unconscious blocks (or excuses!) might be.

Maybe you need to change the time of day that you are meditating? Maybe you need to ask your family for more support? Maybe you need to delegate something?

You'll know what it is that caused you to miss that day. Looking at what it was, without getting defensive or judging yourself, allows you to take action to do something about it.

Please don't get annoyed with yourself. Meditate today; tomorrow meditate that day; the day after meditate that day. Let go of the idea of 28 days in a row. Don't put yourself under pressure - really let yourself just flow with this and enjoy the process.

Why Are You Doing This?

Before we start any journey - any challenge - any change - it is really important to know why we are doing it.

Knowing our 'why', what is motivating us, helps keep us going.

So, before you start, I invite you to take a few moments to do the following exercise. Grab yourself a piece of paper and something to write with and allow yourself five or ten minutes just to think and write down your answers to these questions:

1. Why have you signed up for the 28 Day Meditation Challenge?
2. What do you hope that meditating every day for 10 minutes going to do for you?
3. How are you going to notice that it is working for you? Which behaviours, which signs, which emotions are you going to be tracking to feel the progress you are making?
4. What kinds of barriers can you foresee already that might get in the way of you finding 10 minutes a day?
5. Before you even start this challenge, what are you going to do about those barriers?
6. What time of day do you think might work best for you?
7. Do you need to clear anything out of your schedule? Or ask for help? Or delegate something to create that time, 10 minutes a day?
8. And let the answer to this next question bubble up gently for you – don' rationalise it. Complete the following sentence: **I choose to meditate for 10 minutes a day because.....**

And when you are ready, write that whole sentence up somewhere. Pin it up around your home or around your office, so that if you notice distractions getting in the way of your meditation during the 28 days, you can remind yourself:

I choose to meditate for 10 minutes a day because.....

You might be surprised how often that allows you to prioritise your meditation over the distractions.

(Exercise continues...)

9. And finally, decide when and where you are going to meditate each day.

It can really help to choose a particular place, because you will be anchoring your body into the habit of remembering that you are about to sit down; you are about to relax; you are about to meditate; you are taking time for yourself.

And, if you can, **choosing the same time each day** will condition you to expect to meditate. That makes it so much easier to create the habit.

If you need to get support to clear time, now is the time to do it, before you start the challenge. Tell your family:

“I choose to meditate for 10 minutes a day because...”

The word ‘because’, as we will be discussing during some of the daily emails, has an amazing power to get people to listen and help you. When they understand **why** you want their help and **why** you want them to support you, it makes it much easier for them to buy in. You might be surprised how friends, family and co-workers **do** want to support you. Some of them might even want to join in the 28 Day Challenge with you.

***The key is to decide when you are going to meditate,
where and what you need to clear out of the way to allow
you to do that.***

How To Get The Most From The 28 Days

Read The Emails

It really is worth reading the daily emails.

They are written to be quick to read and they are designed to lead on from one another, as well. They are part of this short course in meditation and they will help you deal with your blocks, barriers, concerns and your questions; keeping you motivated.

Join In With The Forum

It is also really worth joining in with the online forum, if you can.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/326283737411182/>

It helps you to connect with other people who are taking part in this challenge at the same time as you. You might be surprised that the questions you're asking are coming up for them too. You can find out how they solved the problems or share your ideas and suggestions to help others. Also, if anything on the 28 Day Meditation Challenge isn't clear, that's your ideal place to ask your questions and you'll get answers fast.

Keep A Journal

You might also want to keep a journal during the 28 days.

This means scribbling down your thoughts, as they come to you, each day – noting what you have learned and experienced.

*One of the things that stops us meditating is if we feel
that we're not seeing results – but results take time.*

... and sometimes we're too busy to notice the progress we're making.

We wouldn't expect to buy a pair of running shoes and suddenly be in the Olympics a week later!

Meditation is a skill, just like any other we choose to develop, and we often don't notice the improvements we have made and the changes that it has brought to our life until we re-read things that we wrote several weeks or months before.

So you might want to get yourself a notebook and a pen and spend some time each day - or every few days - writing down what your experiences have been; any suggestions; any insights. Keeping a journal is a really useful practice for marking the progress you are making on your journey. It can make a huge difference to your motivation.

Summary

How about filling in the answer to the following questions, as a useful reminder?

I choose to meditate, because...

I will meditate for 10 minutes each day:

At (time):

Place:

I will make the following changes, to create the time I need:

This is how I will remind myself to meditate:

Let's Get Started!

That's all for now. I look forward to catching up with you with the Day 1 email and I really, really hope that you enjoy the 28 Day Meditation Challenge. I hope that it really helps you make subtle shifts in your life, so you can feel calmer, happier and healthier – and whatever it is that you are aiming for with this challenge.

With love, Namaste,

Clare Josa