

Interested in meditating?
Here are a few

MEDITATION TIPS

for calming your monkey mind
and creating a regular
meditation practice.

By Deanna Nikirk

Random thoughts dance around your head all day. You have trouble finishing one thought before you are distracted by the next, like a monkey swinging from branch to branch. Your emotions are dictated by your surroundings.

If any of the above statements apply to you, you are a victim of what we fondly refer to as the “monkey mind” in the yoga community. But fear not, meditation is only an inhale and exhale away to save you from your errant thoughts.

Here are some tips to get you on your way to becoming a bit more zen as you move through your every day affairs.

1. Create a calming space for your meditation practice, free of distractions (this is definitely a no cell phone zone).
2. Try to do it first thing in the morning, so it doesn't get put off until the end of the day (or until tomorrow). Plus, morning meditation starts your day on the right foot.
3. You don't have to sit cross-legged. Sit in a way that is comfortable and does not distract you.
4. Try to focus only on your breath, but continue to breathe naturally. We use the breath as an anchor for our attention, but try not to manipulate it. Just focus on the rise and fall, the inhale and exhale.
5. When you become distracted by your monkey mind (and you will), don't be hard on yourself. Just bring your attention back to you breath.
6. Start small. You'll feel the benefits with just five minutes a day, and when you are ready you can try to sit for ten or fifteen minutes.