



Meditation at your desk

- **Clear your desk. Clear your mind and breathe deep.**
- **Breathe slow.**
- **Smile. Sprinkle happiness right there in front of you, maintain it, remember it, bask in it.**
- **Return to your work refreshed and renewed.**
- **Have a peaceful day.**

We are all familiar with stress, anxiety, and the need for peace and calm in our hearts. What we do not know is that it only takes a few minutes during the day to stop what we are doing, slow down and focus inward.

Employing self-care through meditation is not taking time out to laze around, it is rather a necessity in order to give your mind, body and spirit tranquility, light, and peace of mind.

You are not ignoring your job and meditating all day. Just 4 - 5 minutes at a time, will send you back to work fresher, newer and with a recharged mind. It will help you be content and productive. Your office is probably not the most peaceful place but your desk is the space where you tend to feel both productive and stressed. The following are techniques that can be done at your desk, in the library or even at the bus.





Preparing to meditate

Make sure the room temperature is suitable for you, open the window for fresh air. Empty your bladder, wash your hands and remove your shoes, watch and jewelry. Drink a glass of water. Try not to meditate on a full stomach.

Sit on a chair with your spine straight.

With your feet centered, shoulder width apart, **close your eyes and take 3 deep breaths**. It sounds cliché, but you'll be surprised what happens when you stop what you're doing, close your eyes and breathe. Probably the easiest meditation technique to do at your desk, it takes little to no time and results in no attention being directed at you. Afterwards, you'll be surprised at how clear everything seems.

Focus on your breathing moving in and out.

Come back to your center. If you are having trouble, work on being in the moment. You can put something on your desk to focus on, a candle, a plant, some flowers or even a juicy fruit sliced in the center: an orange. Do not use your screen saver; it signals the past or the future. You want to **"be in the moment"**, without judgment, without wandering away mentally.





Know the Facts

Mind & Spirit



3. Do some exercises at your desk.

Movement may help you “be in the moment” more than just breathing. Keeping in mind Pilates Principles:

center, control, concentration,
precision, breathing,
flow of motion

keep movements gentle and unhurried and repeat 1-3 times depending on how you feel.

Notice how wonderful your back feels when you sit straight and tall, and how much more centered you feel, keep your hands on your thighs or desk for support.

Stretch out your legs in front, and rotate your ankles, one at a time, clockwise and counter-clockwise a few times. If you can manage it, wiggle your feet or shake them out. Then push the bottoms of your feet into the floor. Release.

Let your arms hang at your side, close and open your fists a few times.

Look to your right; gently turn to look forward; look to your left; look forward. Now, look up to the ceiling; look forward; look down toward your chest; then look forward. Repeat. Lean your head to the right (ear toward shoulder), then upright, and lean to the left (ear toward shoulder).

Now, close your eyes and go back to breathing evenly in and out such as this: **counts 1, 2, breathe in; counts 3, 4 breathe out; counts 1, 2, breathe in; counts 3, 4 breathe out**, and continue for a minute, letting stress melt away.



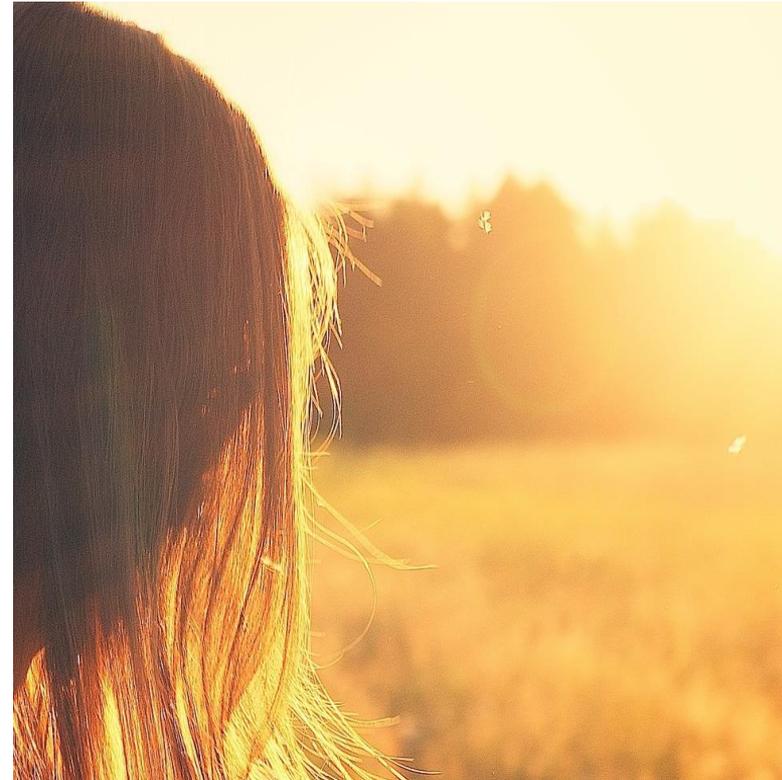
5 minute meditation

1. Observing the Breath Meditation. Rest your feet flat on the floor. With eyes open or closed, slow your breathing. When you breath in your diaphragm presses down, notice your chest expand sideways and your abdomen muscles push out or expand. When you breathe out contract your abdominal muscles, naval to spine, deflate your lungs and the diaphragm returns back to its original position. Watch it. Shoulders do not rise and fall.

2. Dream Place Meditation. While breathing evenly, take a minute to **let your mind travel to a warm sunny meadow**. Visualize yourself sitting on a blanket, quietly enjoying the sounds of a spring day – birds chirping nearby, bees buzzing in the distance, the whooshing sound of grasses brushing together in the wind.

3. Walking Meditation. If you can get out of the office for a break, steady your breath and begin to walk. The trick in this meditation is to pay attention to your feet as they meet the ground. If you have to step up, notice the knees and how they work. Move your thoughts to your hips. Then go back to your feet. You'll see how you never noticed walking and contact with the ground this way before.

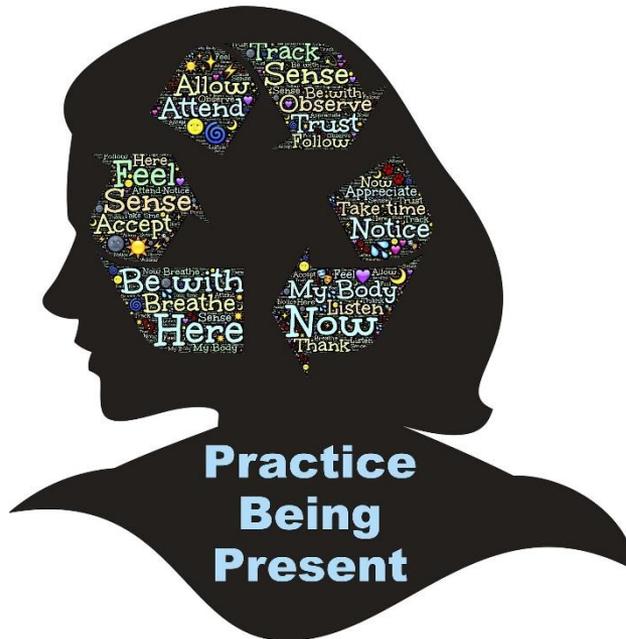
4. Smiling Meditation. It sounds silly, but at work we are focused, tense and sometimes even scowling. For just one full minute stop what you are doing. **Set your feet flat on the floor, breathe, ... then smile.** It's kind of funny. Don't force it. When it feels unnatural, pause. Try it again.





Know the Facts

Mind & Spirit



5. Mantra Meditation. Pick a word: **Forgive, Peace, Love, Light.** Calm your breathing. At least for one minute say the word in your mind. Pause for a second. Repeat. The mind will wander. Let it wander. Start again.

6. Musical Meditation. Pick a tune that you like. It does not have to be nature sounds! Let your mind check out. And observe the harmony, beats and lyrics. You have just meditated.

7. Body Focus Meditation. This meditation is a right-where-you-are scan of the body. Put your focus on the crown of your head and observe that area. Move your attention down to the upper neck, throat shoulders, upper arms, hands, fingers, chest, solar plexus, hips and groin, (even the hind quarters), thighs, knees, lower legs, ankles, toes. You're done. If you have time, go back up. You could tense each muscle group for a more intense relaxation technique.

8. Observe The Noise Meditation. **Sit still and take at least two minutes to listen to the office.** You may hear the hum of the computer, cars on the road, Dimitris playing with his pen, a dog barking and the helicopter overhead. You've just practiced mindfulness, "being in the moment". You meditated at work.

9. Naming Meditation. With practice and with sincerity it gives nice results. Once you're settled into deep breathing, go around the office/room mentally and name your coworkers/classmates in your thinking. After you say their name attach a wish of wellbeing or success: "Gianni Papadopoulos. I wish him success in his project. Maria Papas. I wish her health and freedom from her anger." **It is not a sure fact that sending good thoughts will help your colleagues and friends, but without a doubt, this changes you and over time you may start to be less bothered by the tension they bring into your world.**



Know the Facts

Mind & Spirit



Use your senses to meditate

Taste

A slice of orange or a piece of dark chocolate, allows one's taste buds to turn on and bask in a renewed sense of presence. [Tasting is a delicious way to help you BE-IN-THE-MOMENT.](#)

Sight

We tire our eyes by using the computer and focusing on small phone screens. Staring at a candle flame can help relax the eyes. Gaze at the flame for up to 7 seconds without blinking, and then slowly close your eyes for the same amount of time before opening and repeating the cycle for about 2 minutes.

Hearing

Play 3 -10 minutes of inspirational music that you do not use as part of your normal relaxation playlist. Turn off the lights and sit in a comfortable position so that you can focus your attention on your breathing. Sometimes new age or ambient music with no beat proves better for such an exercise, allowing you to concentrate on deeper breaths that do not match the speed of the music.

Smell

Aromatherapy can assist us to either to feel rejuvenated or relax. [For rejuvenation use scents such as: citrus, bergamot, mint or basil.](#) [For relaxation use lavender, rosemary or sandalwood.](#) You can use fresh produce like orange, lemon, mint, basil or essential oils. To prepare a mist, use 5 drops of essential oil per ½ cup of water and store in an atomizer. Spray a few pumps in the air and breathe deeply for 30 seconds. Repeat 3 more times for 2 minutes total. If you have any medical condition or are pregnant consult your physician before using aromatherapy.



... and silence is the mother of all skills. Silence this chattering mind with a few minutes of deep meditation then you will see everything changes.

Sri Sri Shankar
Humanitarian, Spiritual leader,
Ambassador of peace

Authored by Sophie Themelis, Wellness Coordinator, Pilates Instructor, ACG Health & Wellness Center.
Edited by Christina Drakonakis, Associate Dean of Students, Office of Student Affairs, ACG Health & Wellness