

How to Create a Great Meditation for You



Cynthia Sue Larson

HOW TO CREATE A GREAT MEDITATION FOR YOU

Meditation Tips and Ideas for RealityShifters®

"The twenty-first century will be remembered as the era in which quantum physics, biology, and consciousness started shaking hands. We now know that 'quantum' is no longer limited to the invisible, subatomic realm, but involves our everyday world and our own mind. Cynthia Sue Larson's QUANTUM JUMPS is a daring, adventuresome, delightful romp in this territory. This book proves that physics can be fun. Written in sparkling, clear language, QUANTUM JUMPS will inspire anyone toward a more fulfilling, effective, and happier life. Highly recommended!"

– *Larry Dossey, M.D. author of Power of Premonitions and One Mind*

"The word 'quantum' was coined in 1900 by the German physicist Max Planck who clearly understood the implications of this scientific breakthrough. It has taken a century for the rest of the world to catch up with him, but the 'Quantum Age' has finally arrived. Cynthia Sue Larson understands its implications for our everyday lives--for how we can make wiser decisions, how we can relate better to other people, how we can manage our careers more effectively, how we can use our dreams to provide insights, and even how we can use 'quantum jumping' for self-healing. Larson's readers might start reading this remarkable book thinking that theoretical physics is beyond their comprehension. But the examples, the exercises, and the lucid writing style will not only prove them wrong but will shift their view of reality and the role they can play in constructing it."

– *Stanley Krippner, co-author Personal Mythology*

"Ever wondered where that missing sock went when you last searched the clothes dryer? Thought about why those keys you so carefully tucked into your jacket pocket suddenly disappeared only to be found underneath the cushion of your favorite television sofa? If so then you have experienced what Cynthia Larson calls a *Reality Shift*. In her book of that title subtitled *When Consciousness Changes the Physical World*, she explains in clear and unambiguous language just what these reality shifts are, why they occur, and how they can be used to influence and change your life for the better. Larson even goes into how the latest ideas from quantum physics can help us understand these shifts and most importantly believe in them as part of our reality, not just our imagination. No, Martha, you are not going crazy, just witnessing the reality shift around you. I recommend this book for its clarity and for its message of hope. Readers will be encouraged to enjoy reality shifts both literally and in actuality—when they occur—and will be taught how to make them happen more often."

– Fred Alan Wolf, Ph.D., National Book Award-winning author of *Taking the Quantum Leap* and many other books, including *Dr. Quantum's Little Book of Big Ideas*, and *The Yoga of Time Travel*

"Modern science has now addressed the problem of consciousness. We each experience consciousness every day, in some of the myriad and fascinating ways described in REALITY SHIFTS. But no one yet quite understands why this is so. Speculations, theories and experiments from quantum science have now been entered into the debate which suggest that our world is far more mystical, complex, interactive and even humorous than the sterile, mechanistic dogma of classical scientific thought. Read, enjoy, be amazed, ponder REALITY SHIFTS."

– Edgar Mitchell, Sc.D., author *Psychic Exploration*, *The Way of the Explorer*, Institute of Noetic Sciences Founder, Apollo 14 Astronaut

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About the Author

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A Brief History of Meditation

The history of meditation as a form of contemplative thought and reflection goes back thousands of years, before the time of written historical records. Many indigenous peoples the world over have relied upon meditation, in order that they could find the plants and animals they gathered and hunted in order to survive, as well as best receive intuitive guidance and inspiration allowing them to communicate across great distances with others.

Shamans in ancient civilizations accessed altered states of consciousness—in deep states of meditation—in order to reach the spirit world for information about things like healing qualities of plants and minerals, for example. In this way, ancient peoples have historically had immense bodies of knowledge regarding healing herbs and treatments.

Some of the earliest written records of meditation can be found in the Hindu traditions of Vedantism dating back to around 1,500 BCE. Around 600 to 500 BCE, other forms of meditation are described in written records in Taoist China and Buddhist India. Meditation has been described in many other eastern and western cultures over the centuries, with western intellectuals beginning to take strong interest in the topic around the 18th century, when western scholars began to study Buddhist meditation. While many meditation traditions originally sprang forth from spiritual practices, western scholars increasingly focused awareness on secular meditation, emphasizing practical benefits from meditation in: stress reduction, relaxation, and self-improvement.

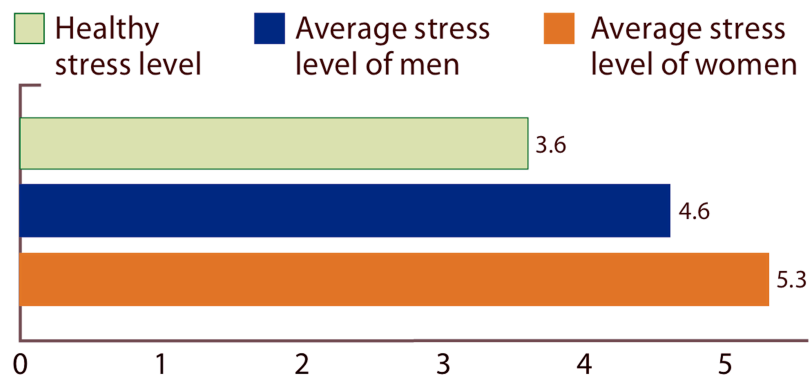
Despite the fact that no known mechanism by which meditation is associated with physiological benefits has yet

been identified—as consciousness itself continues to elude scientific measurement and prediction—meditation has increasingly become the subject of intense scientific scrutiny. In recent decades, a scientific fascination with the study of meditation has come from increasing awareness of some extraordinary benefits that can be clearly seen in those who adopt even relatively simple, easy and short meditations on a daily basis for just a few weeks.

A Cure for an Epidemic of Stress

A recent survey conducted by the American Psychological Association indicates that as many as 8 in 10 Americans report feeling stressed about money issues, and a recent Harvard study shows that 78% of hospital visits are directly linked to stress. The “Stress in America” survey conducted in 2012 by Harris Interactive on behalf of the American Psychological Association (APA) indicates that American men and women’s average stress levels are significantly higher than what they consider to be healthy.

Average Stress Levels vs. Healthy Stress Levels



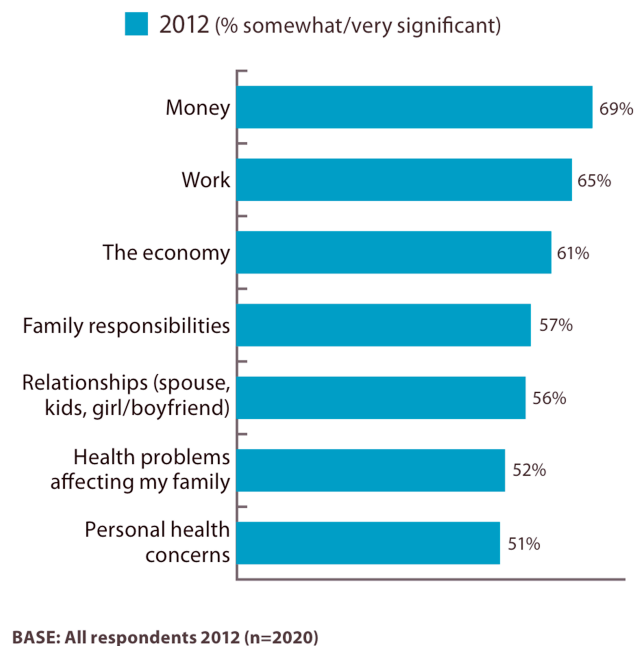
BASE: All respondents (n=2020); Male (n=929); Female (n=1091)

Q605 On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 means you have little or no stress and 10 means you have a great deal of stress, how would you rate your average level of stress during the past month?

Q610 On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 means little or no stress and 10 means a great deal of stress, what would you consider a healthy level of stress?

Most of us know what kind of situations are most stressful in our lives, and that same 2012 “Stress in America” survey shows that Americans are feeling most stressed about money, work, and the economy. Americans are also feeling stressed about family, relationships, and health.

**Sources of Stress:
Percent Somewhat/Very Significant**



Time magazine recently featured meditation with its cover story, “The Mindful Revolution: The Science of Finding Focus in a Stressed-Out, Multi-Tasking Culture.” When we investigate what kind of mindful revolution is underway, we discover the concept of “mindfulness,” and are introduced to what mindfulness means, and how it can help us in our daily lives.

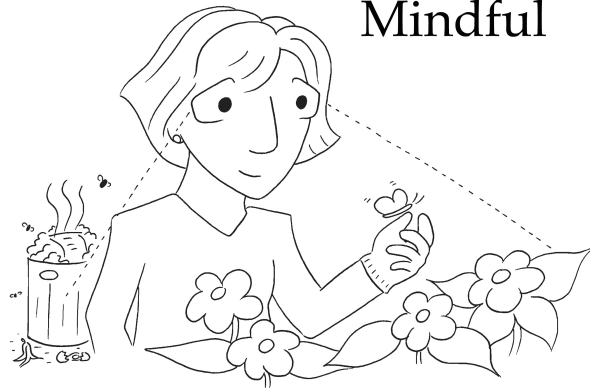
Mind Full vs Mindful

The definition of “mindfulness” is being engaged in the present moment without evaluating or emotionally reacting to whatever appears to be going on. This type of detachment may sound a bit strange and unfamiliar, but when you see what it involves, you can appreciate how simple it really is.

For example, you can set aside a time of fifteen minutes in which you bring your attention to your breathing, as you slow your breathing down lower in your body, so that your belly (near your stomach) rises and falls with each and every breath as you inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth.

Such a simple meditation focuses your attention on one simple activity – breathing – and gives you the opportunity after focusing your attention to bring your attention back to your normal state of awareness after fifteen minutes of being present, receptive, and attentive to your breath.

Mind Full VS Mindful



There is an advantage through meditation of recognizing the presence of free choice in what we choose to pay attention to. Meditators learn this through repeated practice of meditation, in which regardless what might be happening, some time is taken and maximum attention is focused on beingness.

During such meditations, one can find that one learns new ways of focusing attention that are positive, constructive, and life-affirming – rather than dwelling on what seems to be going wrong.

Meditators find that the benefits of attaining states of mindfulness continue long after the meditations end, often gaining a sense of having a calm center to their being that becomes stronger with continued meditation practice. It is then possible to be “the calm at the center of the storm,” with the ability to more clearly focus on aspects that matter in stressful situations, and on what can most effectively be done to address perceived problems as they arrive, rather than feeling confused, overwhelmed, or helpless.

Examples of Meditative Success

The Seattle Seahawks' Super Bowl 2014 win has been attributed to mindfulness meditation. Offensive tackle Russell Okung was quoted by ESPN as saying, *"Meditation is as important as lifting weights and being out there on the field for practice."*

As an athlete who practices the martial art of Kuk Sool Won, I have found Okung's statement to be true. Thanks to my regular meditation practice, both at home and often when studying my martial art, I gained the ability to remain 100% focused on what I am doing, regardless what may be going on around me. I was thus able to win a gold medal in staff spinning at a martial arts tournament, despite a fellow competitor hollering, "Good luck!" at me as I began to spin my medium-length staff above my head. My ability to retain total focus on what I am doing despite nearby noises or distractions benefits me in all areas of my life, as I am not so easily thrown off balance when the life's inevitable "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" come my way.



The kind of meditative practice the Seattle Seahawks enjoy starts off with short six-minute sessions that began as an entirely optional exercise – with no players forced to participate. As players gained meditation experience, their meditation sessions become longer and more individually tailored to their unique needs. Yoga classes are also taught to the Seattle Seahawks, with the idea that happy players make for better players. In addition to basic breathing, meditation, and yoga, the Seahawks coach Carroll regularly reminds team members to “Do your job better than it has ever been done before.”

I coincidentally happened to see the Seahawks in Seattle in Nov 2013, before their big win when I was in Seattle on tour for my book, *Quantum Jumps*. I noted how the team seemed relaxed, energized, and confident as they boarded their tour bus. I was impressed to observe a kind of serene grace to their presence, and even a kind of positive energetic glow. The Seattle Seahawk's success has been remarkable in terms of what some observers called near-flawless performance, and it's plain to see that this kind of coordination of players being in the right place at the right time starts from serenity and feeling tuned-in within.

Following the impressive success of the Seattle Seahawks, which has been at least partially attributed to their meditative practices, The Miami Herald has reported how the UM football team is participating in a research study for the US Army to see what difference mindfulness meditation makes on the field providing people with mental skills to make good decisions under high stress and seemingly impossible circumstances by studying "high-stress, high-stakes civilian groups" such as the Miami Hurricanes. One of the benefits that players are reporting is improved ability to stay focused on the moment, without ruminating about past mistakes.

Search Inside Yourself

Google's most popular internal course for employees — with a six month waiting list — is called "Search Inside Yourself." You might well wonder what this class is teaching that Google employees, who are mostly engineers, are so excited to learn. Much of what comprises this course has to do with the relatively new field of Emotional Intelligence, which is a field of Psychology that has strong connections to meditation. Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been called more important than IQ in determining peoples' financial success and life satisfaction, and it appears to be something people can improve.

A definition of Emotional Intelligence provided by Salovey and Mayer (1990) is: "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions."

Part of the evidence for meditation's connection with Emotional Intelligence, aside from case histories, comes from evidence of lasting physical changes to peoples' brains following meditation. Whereas meditation skeptics have sometimes suggested that people simply feel better after meditating because they took a relaxing break from all the stress, scientists have recently reported medical evidence of growth of brain cells and gray matter in the brain stem, hippocampus, and brain that occur even after a short time after a person has started regular meditation practice.

The Wharton School of Business was recently in the news for conducting a study to investigate the effects of meditation

on financial decision-making. This Wharton study found that study participants who meditated for just fifteen minutes performed significantly better than members of the control group, who did not meditate, in a financial choice exercise. This exercise consisted of people envisioning being business owners in a sunk-cost situation, and making a decision after receiving and evaluating a business opportunity. Those who meditated were not distracted by irrelevant details, that non-meditators were apparently swayed by.

Can Anyone Meditate?

Yes, the good news is that meditation is something that anyone can do – even you! In fact, chances are excellent that if you’ve ever daydreamed, you’ve meditated!

I’ve enjoyed including “one minute meditations” at the end of self defense classes that I’ve taught to grade school children from around the world at summer classes at UC Berkeley. The meditations really were just sixty seconds – one minute – long, and my directions to my students was that they close their eyes, become quiet and still, and either focus on clearing their thoughts, or focusing on one new thing they are learning. On those rare occasions when the class came to an end and we didn’t seem to have even one minute at the end of class to sit in quiet contemplation, I was amazed to find that without exception the children would insist that we take one minute for meditation anyway – agreeing they would be happy to leave class and get to their lunch break a little bit later!

Teachers I’ve known who have taught classes in ‘troubled’ areas have similarly noted how their students crave a few daily minutes for closing their eyes, breathing deeply, and clearing their minds. Not only are the students subsequently better focused on class assignments, but they also score higher on standardized tests – sometimes so much higher than school administrators have asked to find out “what’s going on?”

If meditation is so effective at increasing brain power, assuring success, and managing emotions, why aren't more people doing it? You've most likely seen reports listing many benefits from meditation, which has recently been scientifically proven to produce long-lasting improvements in mental cognition and problem-solving. Meditation has even been found to increase brain cell growth after just a few weeks of meditating for twenty minutes a day.

Further advantages of meditation include: reduction of stress which in turn boosts the immune system, energy levels, and sense of wellbeing and equanimity; growth of gray cells in the brain and hippocampus, contributing to better cognitive functioning and problem solving; lengthened telomeres, contributing to greater longevity and overall health. Scientific interest in this topic has been steadily growing with no slowdown in sight; a search on Google scholar lists over 5,000 studies citing benefits of meditation that were published in the first seven months of 2015.

In addition to these and hundreds of more proven benefits of meditation, people who meditate also find themselves surrounded by happy coincidences and delightful synchronicity. Things just seem to go their way.

Some common reasons that people don't meditate is that they believe they don't have time, can't sit still, can't turn their mind off, find it boring, or don't know how. In most cases, the real issue is that people haven't made time to give meditation a try – or realized that there may have already been times when they were meditating.

Overcome Inner Resistance

As in all matters of health and wellbeing, we can be our own best friends and supporters on a path to improvement, or we can be self-saboteurs. Since meditation is turning out to be as important to good health as sleep, diet, and exercise, it's important to find ways to ensure we make time for it in our daily lives. And just like choosing diet and exercise programs that work best for you, a meditation program will be most rewarding and effective when it's well-suited to your individual strengths, style and preferences. And when it's fun!

I've found that one of the best ways for me to stick with my commitment to daily meditation is to practice the types of meditation I most enjoy. There are so many types of meditation to choose from – yet I know I'll actually do the ones that feel just right for me, because I feel like they're actually fun! This tactic is a bit like “whistling while you work,” but it's actually even better than that, because when I choose types of meditation I like to do, meditation isn't a bit like work!

Create Your Favorite Meditations

You can combine a favorite physically relaxing activity with a favorite mental focus of attention, and Voila! You've got an instant customized meditation that is just right for you.

To get started, honestly complete these two sentences:

One of my favorite ways to relax is: _____

I most enjoy focusing my attention on: _____

It's helpful to take a look at examples of some different ways people might answer these questions, to give you an idea of how to construct personalized meditations, starting with the idea of taking a look at your favorite way to relax. And yes, simply doing whatever activity you find most relaxing can count as a form of meditation!

One of my favorite ways to relax is to:

Listen to music
Work in the garden
Close my eyes and breathe deeply
Watch clouds go by
Take a hot bath
Go for a walk
Massage my face or neck
Brush my hair

People who enjoy walking can develop their own form of walking meditation. Some people count their breaths as they walk, others simply let go of their worries with each deep breath, and still others observe their thoughts go by without pursuing them. What sort of mental focus appeals to you?

I most enjoy focusing my attention on:

Letting go of all thoughts
Breathing deeply to lower abdomen
Observing the patterns of thoughts
Feeling energy flowing through my body
What I'm grateful for
Something new I've learned
Feeling blessed

Whatever mental focus most appeals to you is the one to try. Some people prefer to mull over various thoughts of the day, while others find a sense of nirvana in getting to a place of inner harmonious peace in which thoughts and feelings are cleared away as soon as they show up. Some people feel relaxed by paying attention to bringing awareness to physical activities such as breathing, and take care to breathe more slowly and deeply to the lower abdomen. If you don't know what you prefer, then try out various ways to focus your attention until you find one that's best for you.

From the examples shown here, you can now create various combinations of meditations to try by mix in and matching favorite activities with favorite focuses of attention. You can thus get some marvelously fun sounding meditations to try, such as:

Letting go of all thoughts... while taking a hot bath.

Breathing deeply... while going for a walk.

Feeling energy flow in my body... while listening to music.

Massaging my neck... while focusing on what I'm grateful for.

Observing thought patterns... while watching clouds go by.

Thinking about what I've learned... while gardening.

Brushing my hair... while feeling blessed.

Which of these sounds like something you'd most like to try? This is a great time to choose one of the above and give it a try, or come up with something better suited to your own unique favorite relaxing activities and ways to focus your attention!

This really is all there is to meditation. Simply combine one of your most relaxing activities with one of your most relaxing mental focuses, and you are meditating! You can even come up with a few favorite meditations, such as one that works best when first awakening, another one to do while showering or brushing your teeth, and yet another to do while taking a walk.

If you try one meditation and find you don't like it, then try another one. You can find something you like, so don't give up!

And if getting started seems like the hardest thing to do — and often the biggest hurdle can be taking that first step — there are ways you can get started meditating with a little help.

Listen to recorded meditations

For a little extra help getting started with meditation, or assistance at times when meditation is more challenging, some people find it's helpful to meditate with assistance from recorded meditations. My *Aura Healing Meditations* can be played to create a positive healing environment any time you wish to reduce stress, enhance your energy field, improve your health, and increase your effectiveness. It is available as an autographed or non-autographed CD through the www.realityshifters.com website, and also as MP3 audio tracks through iTunes and amazon.

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About the Author



Cynthia Sue Larson is a best-selling author and intuitive life coach who helps people visualize and access whole new worlds of possibility. Cynthia hosts *Living the Quantum Dream* on the DreamVisions7 radio network. She has been featured on the Discovery Channel, the History Channel, Coast to Coast AM, One World with Deepak Chopra, Midnight in the Desert with Art Bell, and BBC, and has presented papers at international conferences on science, spirituality, and consciousness. Cynthia's articles have appeared in journals ranging from *Cosmos and History*, to *Magical Blend*, to *Parabola*. Cynthia has a degree in physics from UC Berkeley, an MBA degree, and a Doctor of Divinity. Cynthia's best-selling books include: *Quantum Jumps*, *Reality Shifts*, *High Energy Money*, and *Aura Advantage*. Cynthia reminds us to ask in every situation, "How good can it get?" Her popular *RealityShifters* ezine can be read and subscribed to at: **www.realityshifters.com**