

# *5 Meditation Myths*



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As I interact with my clients and also reflect on my own journey I am very present to the importance of beginning. Taking that first step that can propel you on the journey of a lifetime. Often the simple act of beginning is not so simple after all. There are many beliefs, or myths that we choose to lend credence keeping us from beginning something we know would be beneficial.

I have compiled the most common myths I have heard that prevent people from beginning a meditation practice. Regardless of the reasons for wanting to meditate, I have found that one or more of these myths are often present and hinder individuals from even starting.

There are two main reasons why people begin meditating. They are not mutually exclusive.

1. To have some time to yourself. Away from phones, emails, tv, work, family, etc. Simply carving out that precious time for you to regroup, breathe, get grounded and centered.
2. The desire to cultivate a sacred connection. Be that with Spirit, God, Inner Wisdom, etc.

No matter the motivation for wanting to begin, the important thing is to start and take the step. I have laid out the 5 biggest myths around meditation so that you can bust through anything that might be holding you back. If you are a seasoned meditator this may allow you to take your practice to another level of depth.

### **1. There is one right way to meditate!**

This one always cracks me up. I say this now because several years ago I believed this. I believed there was a “right” way to meditate and I didn’t know it. I thought that if I wanted to learn the right way it would take years and I would have to totally change my lifestyle and hang out with weird people. Of course, these are rules I made up in my head to keep me from actually doing it. Does this ever happen to you? Having rules or beliefs around something preventing you from moving forward? I know I have certainly heard similar things from my clients and friends.

I also heard the disdain from friends who were so enmeshed in their specific meditation practice that anything other than *their* practice was crap and certainly not going to lead to enlightenment.

I remember a specific conversation that I had with a dear friend of mine about her practice, Vipassana Meditation. She does a ten day silent retreat at least once a year, and does her individual practice throughout the year. We were talking and she was getting so down on herself for not fitting in the right amount of time for her meditation. For her, at the time, the “right” amount was an hour daily. This led to her berating herself about the fact that anything less than one hour was insignificant and did no good. This then led her to call people who meditated by chanting either a word or a mantra were copouts and that they weren’t really meditating. In fact, those people were all “pansies” because they couldn’t handle really getting inside of themselves and being *ok* with silence.

This became quite the heated conversation...well, actually it was more of a monologue since she was the only one talking.

The point is this. There are many wonderful specific meditation practices: Vipassana, Transcendental Meditation to name a couple. Beyond a specific practice there is also just wanting to meditate. Whether your intention is to give yourself the time to quiet down from the day, get centered, and grounded, or if your desire is to connect with something higher than yourself, tuning into your own sacred connection, give yourself permission to discover what is “right” for you. Know that this way might change as your individual practice develops and evolves. Be open to that. The only “right” way to meditate is YOUR way.

## **2. I’m supposed to have a profound experience *every time* I meditate.**

Good luck with that! My experience is that there is often a gradual progression of opening and unfoldment as you begin to *consistently* meditate. This gradual unfoldment happens so that you can maintain balance in your life.

I will admit that having those profound experiences during meditation are very cool. However, don't expect them every time. You may have to meditate a while to get to that point where you are ready to receive your experience. Even then, will you accept it?

I hear friends talk about their amazing meditation adventures and I find myself thinking, "Gosh, I wish I could experience something like that." As if discounting all of the wonderful things that have come to me. Here it is important to note that we all have a unique way of connecting, receiving and interpreting profound experiences. Some people might hear sounds, others might see light, others still might have a knowingness or different sensations. They are all real and unique to you. Give credence to what you are experiencing whether big or small.

There are profound messages in the subtleness of life, so pay attention and be the observer. Be gentle and kind with yourself, trusting that things are happening even if every time you meditate it doesn't look like the 4th of July.

### **3. Meditation takes a long time.**

When I first started looking into meditation I figured I would have to meditate for an hour at a time or else it wouldn't work. I could barely sit still for 10 minutes let alone one hour. Just one more reason why I couldn't meditate.

Eventually the desire for connection became greater than any myths I was choosing to believe.

I finally relaxed and started with 5 minutes then moved to 10 minutes. Then I tried doing it in the morning right after I woke up. Then I switched to taking some time just before going to bed. I would listen to soothing music, chant a word like Love or HU, or just sit perfectly still. I gave myself permission to find out what worked for me. How long it would be varied, somewhere between 10 and 20 minutes. I would simply notice how long I had been sitting, quietly taking note for myself.

Consistency is more important than time spent. That means that even just 5 minutes every day is more powerful and more productive than 1 hour once a week. You are creating the habit to take the time for yourself and your individual connection. Small things done consistently over time lead to spectacular results. With meditation, it leads to a truly enriching and amazing journey.

#### **4. My mind must be still.**

This myth speaks for itself. Whether you are just beginning with meditation or if you have been meditating for years, it's pretty safe to say that the stillness of the mind is not an easy feat.

I remember initially starting with guided meditation. Soon I would hear the soothing voice say, "Clear the mind and let your thoughts just fall away..." This usually brought me into a panic because my thoughts weren't just falling away and my mind was anything but clear. So I tried to bring myself back by focusing on my breath, and bam another thousand thoughts would come in and I became so frustrated that I stopped. Thinking to myself, "My mind will never be still. I guess I better quit while I'm ahead."

The more the focus goes to the thoughts and how you should really let the thoughts go, the more thoughts come in about how horrible it is that you can't let them go, and why are you thinking those thoughts anyway when all you really want is some peace from the thoughts. And not only that but if you are having these thoughts that won't go away then you're not doing it right and instead of finding a calm and peaceful place, there is anxiety and frustration with yourself because the thoughts are getting more intense.

What I came to realize is that I am not my mind, or my thoughts. Nor are you. The thoughts can be going through but you don't have to put your attention there. That's why, for me, initially it was important that I chant a word. This allowed me to keep my focus on the word, without just sitting there focusing on my thoughts.

Sometimes you just have to let the thoughts run around while you put your attention elsewhere. With time the mind and its thoughts will calm down. Though even after years of meditation and contemplation those thoughts will still occasionally get going like wildfire. That is when I simply smile and be as gentle with myself as I can.

## **5. I must be in the lotus position to meditate.**

As I was in the process of writing this article I sent out, through twitter, the title, “5 Meditation Myths”. I got an immediate comment from a friend which was, “Is one of the myths that one needs to have their finger and thumb in a circle sitting cross legged and say OM?” I had a huge laugh because this indeed is myth number 5.

There is no specific position that you must be in in order to meditate properly. Unless you are following a specific practice I suggest that you get in a comfortable position either sitting or lying down. Comfortable enough so that you aren't in pain and yet not so comfortable that you doze off after 30 seconds.

There are also those individuals that use activity as their way to connect. Whether it be through gardening, hiking, walking, or just being in nature. It is about finding your time to connect and whatever facilitates that the best.

For me, I like to switch it up. Sometimes lying down, sometimes sitting up. My focus when I connect is opening my heart to love and whatever position facilitates that the best in the moment is the one I am going to take.

There you have it. The 5 meditation myths revealed. I encourage you to discover what works for you. Play around and have fun with it.

Here is something for you to try. Find a comfortable position, either sitting or lying down. Close your eyes and put your attention on your third eye, that spot just above and between your eyebrows. Begin spelling the word L-O-V-E. Keep repeating this. You can sing the

letters, or just say them, whatever feels good to you. Do this for 10 to 20 minutes. Maybe even try it over a week and see how you feel.

Life is truly amazing! Just begin. It is the adventure of a lifetime.

If you have any questions or want to know how you can awaken to your individual connection and clear the path to an amazing life call or email me directly:

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Or go to [www.justaskdramy.com](http://www.justaskdramy.com) and submit your question. You will receive an answer within 48 hours.