



**Shery Clein brings a wealth of
knowledge and expertise to
MindfulLiving™.**

Drawing from extensive research and a deep understanding of mindfulness and meditation practices, Shery meticulously curates articles, studies, and resources to ensure MindfulLiving™ offers the most relevant and up-to-date information.

As a seasoned meditator since 1995, Shery's personal experiences provide firsthand insight into the transformative power of these practices.

Her dedication to sharing the profound benefits of mindfulness with others is reflected in her journey with MindfulLiving™, guiding participants towards greater peace, clarity, and well-being.



Module 1: Simple Awareness Chapter 7: 7 Myths of Meditation Adapted by Shery Clein from Deepak Chopra

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In the past 40 years, meditation has gained widespread acceptance in modern Western culture. Doctors have recommended it, and a diverse range of individuals, from business leaders and artists to scientists, students, and even politicians like Ohio Congressman Tim Ryan, have embraced it. In his book "A Mindful Nation: How a Simple Practice Can Help Us Reduce Stress, Improve Performance, and Recapture the American Spirit," Ryan champions mindfulness and meditation as transformative practices.

Despite its popularity, misconceptions about meditation persist, deterring many from exploring its profound benefits for the body, mind, and spirit. Here, we debunk seven common myths surrounding meditation.



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Myth #1: Meditation is difficult.

Truth: This myth stems from the perception of meditation as a practice reserved for spiritual masters. Meditation is accessible and enjoyable, especially with guidance from an experienced teacher. Techniques can be as simple as focusing on the breath or repeating a mantra silently. The difficulty arises when we strive too hard to concentrate, fixate on outcomes, or doubt our abilities. Working with a qualified teacher ensures an enjoyable experience and maximises the benefits of your practice. They provide insight, help overcome obstacles, and establish a sustainable routine.

*Believe
in
Yourself*

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Myth #2:

You have to quiet your mind to have a successful meditation practice.

Truth: This myth is a common misconception about meditation and often frustrates beginners. Meditation is not about forcibly stopping our thoughts or emptying our minds, as these efforts can create more stress and mental noise. Instead, meditation teaches us to observe our thoughts without judgment and to choose how much attention we give them. While we cannot control our thoughts, we can learn to find moments of quiet and stillness within the natural flow of our minds. This quiet space between thoughts, often called "the gap," is a realm of pure consciousness, silence, and peace that meditation can access.

Myth #2. Continued/page 4

Life is good

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Myth #2:

You have to quiet your mind to have a successful meditation practice.

Truth: Contrary to popular belief, meditation is not about forcefully quieting the mind. Instead, it involves using an object of attention, such as the breath, to gently guide the mind into a state of awareness and relaxation. When thoughts arise during meditation, as they inevitably will, the key is not to judge or push them away but to gently redirect the focus back to the chosen object of attention. In every meditation session, there are moments when the mind naturally settles into a state of pure awareness, even if only for microseconds. With regular practice, these moments become more frequent, leading to an increased experience of expanded awareness and inner silence.

Myth #2. Continued/page 5

Keep it up

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Myth #2:

You have to quiet your mind to have a successful meditation practice.

Truth: The idea that meditation requires a completely quiet mind is a common misconception. It's normal for thoughts to arise during meditation, and having a busy mind doesn't mean you're doing it wrong. Even if it feels like you've been thinking the entire time, you're still benefitting from your practice.

As my friend and colleague David Simon (a neurologist and mind-body medicine expert who co-founded the Chopra Center with Deepak Chopra, shaping its programs and promoting integrated healthcare) told his meditation students, "The thought 'I'm having thoughts' may be the most important thought you've ever had. Before that realisation, you may not have even been aware of your thoughts. You likely identified with them completely.

Myth #2. Continued/page 6

BE HAPPY

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Myth #2:

You have to quiet your mind to have a successful meditation practice.

Truth: The notion that meditation requires complete silence of the mind is a common misconception. In fact, simply becoming aware that you're having thoughts during meditation is a significant breakthrough. This awareness shifts your internal reference point from the ego mind to a state of witnessing awareness. As you detach from your thoughts and stories, you begin to experience greater peace and openness to new possibilities.



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Myth #3:

It takes years of dedicated practice to benefit from meditation.

Truth: The benefits of meditation are both immediate and long-term. You can experience benefits the first time you sit down to meditate and in the first few days of daily practice. Scientific studies have shown that meditation can profoundly affect mind-body physiology within weeks of training. For instance, a landmark study led by Harvard University and Massachusetts General Hospital discovered that just eight weeks of meditation reduced anxiety, increased feelings of calm, and led to growth in brain regions associated with memory, empathy, self-awareness, and stress regulation.

Myth #3 Continued/page 8

FOLLOW
YOUR 
Heart

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Myth #3: It takes years of dedicated practice to benefit from meditation.

Truth: At the Chopra Centre, we commonly hear from new meditators who can sleep soundly for the first time in years after just a few days of daily meditation practice. Other expected benefits of meditation include improved concentration, decreased blood pressure, reduced stress and anxiety, and enhanced immune function.



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Myth #4: Meditation is escapism.

Truth: The real purpose of meditation isn't to tune out and get away from it all but to tune in and get in touch with your true self – that eternal aspect of yourself that goes beyond all the ever-changing external circumstances of your life. In meditation, you dive below the mind's churning surface, which tends to be filled with repetitive thoughts about the past and worries about the future, into the still point of pure consciousness.

In this state of transcendent awareness, you let go of all the stories you've been telling yourself about who you are, what is limiting you, and where you fall short. You experience the truth that your deepest self is infinite and unbounded.

Myth #4 Continued/page 10

enjoy

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Myth #4: Meditation is escapism.

Truth: While some may try to use meditation as a form of escape, aiming to bypass unresolved emotional issues, this approach goes against the essence of meditation and mindfulness teachings. Meditation techniques are specifically developed to identify, mobilise, and release stored emotional toxicity. Regular practice cleanses the windows of perception, expanding clarity. If you're coping with emotional upset or trauma, working with a therapist is recommended. They can help you safely explore and heal past pain, allowing you to return to your natural state of wholeness and love.

*Never
STOP
Learning!*

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Myth #5: I don't have enough time to meditate.

Truth: Busy, productive executives who haven't missed a meditation in 25 years prove you'll find the time to prioritise meditation. Even a few minutes of meditation is better than none. Don't talk yourself out of it because it's late or you feel too sleepy. Paradoxically, regular meditation creates more time. In meditation, we enter a timeless, spaceless realm of consciousness — the source of all manifestation. Our bodily functions slow down, stress hormones decrease, and we no longer feel like time is slipping away.

Myth #5 Continued/page 12



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Myth #5: I don't have enough time to meditate.

Truth: In meditation, we enter a state of restful alertness that rejuvenates the body and mind. Those who commit to meditation find they can achieve more by doing less. Rather than striving relentlessly, they enter a state of flow where they are aligned with universal intelligence, effortlessly navigating life's challenges.



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Myth #6: Meditation requires spiritual or religious beliefs.

Truth: Meditation is a practice that transcends religious or spiritual affiliations. It takes us beyond the restless chatter of the mind into stillness and silence, offering numerous physical and mental health benefits. Many practitioners, regardless of their religious background or lack thereof, find solace and enrichment through meditation. Whether it's for stress reduction, improved sleep, or personal growth, meditation can enhance various aspects of our lives, allowing us to find deeper fulfilment and happiness in our daily experiences.

*Stay
Fearless*

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Myth #7: I'm supposed to have transcendent experiences in meditation.

Truth: While some meditators may have profound experiences during their practice, such as feelings of bliss or oneness, these are not the primary goals of meditation. The true benefits of meditation extend beyond these moments and manifest in our daily lives. Meditation cultivates a state of inner stillness and silence that stays with us long after our practice sessions end. This newfound clarity and presence allow us to navigate life with greater creativity, compassion, and centeredness, enhancing our relationships and overall well-being.

Perfectly
imperfect

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We appreciate your invaluable time and dedication on this journey. Your commitment to hard work always yields rewarding results.

We're here to assist you if you encounter any discomfort or obstacles.

Most importantly, remember to enjoy yourself and have fun!

For any concerns or questions, please feel free to reach out via WhatsApp at +27824588151 or email at shery@sheryclein.com.

Blessings Stay Healthy & Safe

