

GAINING GROUNDING WITH MEDITATION

[MODULE 2]

“The mind is everything. What you think you become.”

-Buddha

MEDITATION AND SELF-DOUBT



Meditation was the first thing on Farheen’s list. It helped her eliminate her self-doubts, calm her mind, and give her a clear prospect of things in front of her.

With time, the practice of meditation has become quite popular. Whether it is getting a night of good sleep, stopping anxious emotions, or even reducing mental and physical pain, meditation always comes to the rescue.

Meditation **boosts your self-confidence, silences your doubts**, and keeps you happy.

THE STORY OF BUDDHA

Have you heard the story of the early life of Gautama Buddha? This story is almost 2600 years old.

He was the **founder of Buddhism, a philanthropist, a meditator, and a spiritual teacher** from Ancient India. But how he became a meditator is interesting.



Buddha belonged to the Royalty and was the Prince of a city known as Kapilavastu.

He had an affluent lifestyle, all the luxury, and comfort one could think of. His father loved him dearly and kept him away from all the pain and illness that are known, even from the knowledge of old age.

He was married to a beautiful lady and had a son with her. He was all set to become a great king of the Shakya clan.

But one chariot ride to the forest suddenly made him encounter an old man, a crippled man, and a corpse. Till that moment, Buddha was oblivious of the existence of pain or misery.

Buddha started having major self-doubts and was filled with negativity. He saw that a life of luxury could not prevent illness or old age. He started questioning the meaning of life, the purpose of his existence.

After this incident, **the 29-year old man met the eyes of a meditator and saw the peace that vibrated from him.** As he was trying to grab any essence of positivity he found, he left the palace to be an ascetic. His father offered him anything he wanted so that Buddha stayed, but outward appearances never delighted him. So he left.

Ascetics believed in self-denial and harmed themselves to free their soul from pain and suffering. Buddha mastered these practices but it did not solve any of his doubts. His questions remained unanswered.

He remembered sitting under the tree as a boy and feeling peaceful. So that is what he did next. He continuously **meditated under a tree and eventually found his answers.** After that, he became a noble teacher and the founder of Buddhism.

If Buddha found the answers to life's questions through meditation, why can't you!

SELF-DOUBT AND MEDITATION

Our minds are like empty boxes waiting to be filled. The **innate nature of the mind is to fill the boxes with peace and calmness.**

If they are filled with good memories, happiness, and positivity, our mind is calm and peaceful. We can process our thoughts with clarity and use the wisdom we have gained through our personal experiences.

But there are times those boxes are filled with negativity, self-doubts, and bad experiences. We replay the bad memories and get full of negative thoughts. It lowers our confidence and self-esteem and our mind gets clouded with doubtful thoughts.



Like **how everyone faces ups and downs in life, everyone experiences self-doubts.** But **sometimes self-doubts can portray a gruesome look of self-worth.** That is exactly when you need to make a note.

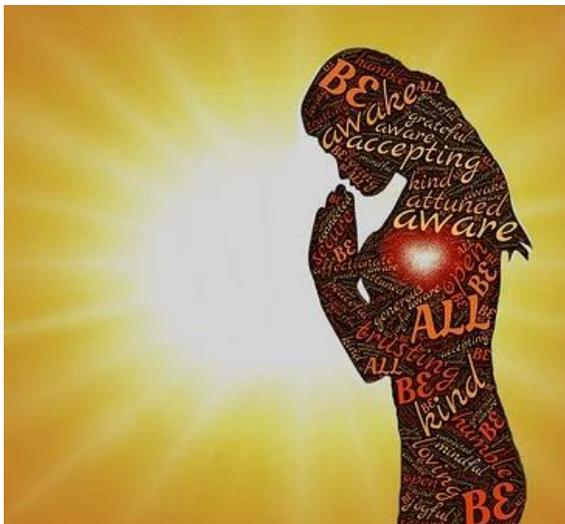
This is where meditation plays a good part. It helps you process your bad memories and get your positive spirits back on track.

Meditation is a practice that helps you **gain awareness and calm your spirit.** It helps you attain a better focus and clarity to understand and process thoughts and emotions positively. It is an individual process that you can do by yourself or can practice with a group.

It is **not limited by anything and can be learned and practiced by anyone.**

HOW DOES MEDITATION HELP?

Remember the negative voice we talked about before?



It gets triggered whenever you feel anxious or whenever you are overwhelmed by self-doubts. That voice puts an ocean of destructive thoughts in your head about how everything you do will become wrong.

Meditation helps you fight it and it stops the negative debates you have with your mind.

Stopping negative self-talk is the first step for developing confidence.

Practicing meditation ensures that even during your lows, there are always a few boxes filled with positivity, self-esteem, and peace. It always keeps those boxes safe and does not let the negative vibes affect them. It helps restore the natural essence of the mind and lets the bad experiences and thoughts fly far away from the mind.

Meditation is a powerful way that can **build high self-esteem**. It will help regain control of your mind and thoughts. The negativity will not let you determine yourself because you will have a still mind that lets you process the negativity and extinguish it.

REPLACING SELF-DOUBTS WITH COMPASSION

Let me relate to you my example here.

I always used to have these limiting thoughts, “you cannot be a writer”, “you can never find love ever again”, “you will never influence people positively or teach them”, “you are a below-average human”.

I let these thoughts define me sometimes that yes they are true. But through this meditation, I gained control over my self-doubts and it helped me gain groundedness and clarity. It helped me analyze my weaknesses but did not let them define me.



Apart from all these, I started loving myself and learned to put my needs first sometimes too. I

realized **I could not be in everyone’s good books, I just needed to be honest to myself always.** I stopped judging myself harshly, especially during my weaknesses. These new affirmations brought a good change in my life.

Self-love and self-compassion meditation is a powerful practice for combating self-doubts and low self-esteem. It highlights sentiments of kindness and compassion to yourself. You can start with positive affirmations like, **“I am loved, I am happy, I feel at ease and peace, My heart is filled with love and compassion.”**

The language of mediation is **NOT** important, you can practice in any language you feel most comfortable.

THE 3 EASY STEPS TO START GAINING CONFIDENCE

STEP 1: LEARN TO MEDITATE



To be honest, **there is no right or wrong way to meditate.** You don't have to necessarily be seated to meditate. You can be either standing, seated, or lying down. **Your position should be comfortable** so that you are not distracted.

Find a location or setting that you feel comfortable with so that you are not disturbed. If you like or if it is possible, you can put on some nice music or light up incense sticks and candles. Music preferably should be calming or natural tones, not jazz or pop because you are trying to put your mind at peace.

You can **set a timer on your phone or a stopwatch for a minimum of 5 minutes** and the maximum depends on you. Then just take a position and start inhaling cool air and exhaling warm air. **Concentrate on your breathing and let go of the self-doubts and negativity with each exhalation.** That's it! It is as

simple as that, no rocket science.

If you find yourself getting distracted, simply draw your thoughts back to the breathing process. You can use special audio that is easily available on youtube or any applications to have a better meditation session. I will include a few sources later in this module itself.

STEP 2: PUT IT IN YOUR SCHEDULE

Meditation isn't something that you do once and you get all the benefits. You need to constantly feed your soul in the same way you feed your body.

Make it a point to put meditation in your weekly schedule, anytime you are comfortable with it, whether it is in the evening, early morning, or before sleeping. **Meditating daily will bring out the best results** within 2 weeks but at least make sure that you **meditate thrice a week.**



In the beginning, it can seem tough to sit and concentrate but you will get hold of it in no time. You can focus on several other things if you cannot focus on your breathing daily, like positive imagery, or visualizing a place that makes you most peaceful. But **you need to constantly practice** it to reap the benefits.

STEP 3: PRACTICE BREATHING EXERCISES WHEN ANXIOUS

Let's take examples first.



You have an interview in a few minutes and you start feeling anxious. Or, you have a speech to deliver but you start experiencing stage-fright. Or, you are going to approach a person you like but you get goosebumps and are on the verge to succumb to negativity.

These are a few situations where your thoughts and emotions can cloud your judgments and overpower you. You can feel like a loser with the negative whirlpool of

thoughts paralyzing you. This is where mindful breathing comes at your aid.

You need to **first catch yourself amidst these thoughts and take a deep breath first.** Then, **concentrate on your breathing** and change the focus of your mind towards it. **Relax your body** and feel the peace that now surrounds you inside out and **go with the action.**

A MINDFUL EXERCISE TO PRACTICE

Always start meditation with positive affirmations, like the ones I cited above. It can be any set of positive thoughts you like in any language you're comfortable with. The outcome is more important than the process, so **you can completely personalize your meditation sessions**.

You can also get a written exercise from this [link](#).

BE A PART OF A LARGER GROUP



The Art of Living

Art of Living is one of the largest volunteer-based non-profit organizations in the world. Founded by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, this organization was solely established to serve society by bringing peace to every individual.

Their motto is to achieve world peace by making every individual free from stressful and violent thoughts. This community has centers operational in 156 countries and they offer a range of offline and online meditation courses, some free and some paid.

This organization has united several people irrespective of their nationality, caste, gender, or

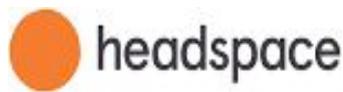


religion. They aim at creating a single, united spiritual nation across the world.

To know more and be a part of their foundation, [visit](#).

Headspace

With the ultimate mission to teach meditation and improve the health and happiness of the world, they provide online guided meditations, articles, animations, and videos. They have their application that can be accessed on the phone with free and paid services.



Headspace has gained immense popularity and has millions of users in more than 190 countries.

They have meditation exercises for everyone, from mini-meditations to fit your busy schedules to mediation sessions to help your insomnia.

[Click here](#) to get the Headspace app. For more information, visit the [site](#).

Other Well-known Sources

Apart from the popular ones I mentioned above, there are several other ways to get started with meditation. I have listed youtube video links, mobile applications, or links where you can get audio clips.

1. [Mindful.org](#):

Here you will find written processes for various types of meditations along with free audio clips. They have meditation courses that you go through if you like. Also, they give out monthly magazines that have amazing content that you can subscribe to.

2. **Mindworks:**

This is an organization that has different meditation courses based on your needs and liking. They also have their [app](#) that you can use.

3. **Youtube video links:**

I am attaching 2 links. One is a [15-minute](#) relaxing session if you want to meditate for a short time and the other is a [2-hour](#) long session if you wish to put yourself at total ease.

4. **Calm**

This is a popular application that you can easily install on your mobile and use. They have free and paid sessions. [Click here](#) to get the app.

References

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- <https://mindworks.org/blog/discovering-genuine-confidence-meditation/>

- https://www.huffpost.com/entry/meditation-self-esteem_b_1803862
- <https://awaremeditationapp.com/7-steps-cure-self-doubt-insecurity/>
- <https://yogainternational.com/article/view/guided-meditation-for-self-love>