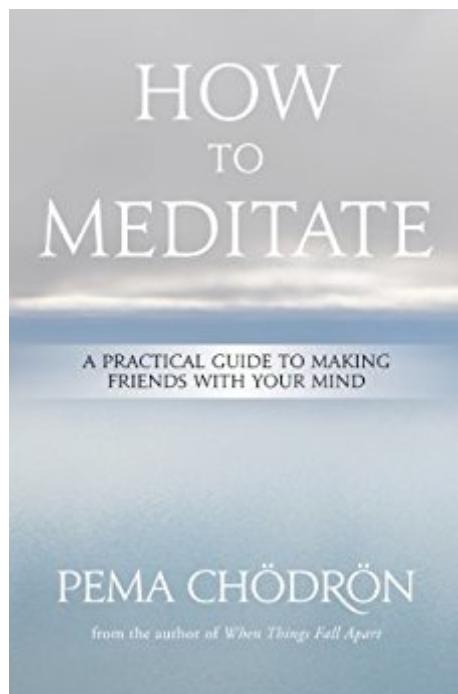


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Meditation: How To Meditate: A Practical Guide To Making Friends With Your Mind



Synopsis

How to Meditate Has Been Named One of Library Journal's Best Books of 2013Pema Chodron is treasured around the world for her unique ability to transmit teachings and practices that bring peace, understanding, and compassion into our lives. With How to Meditate, the American-born Tibetan nun presents her first book exploring in depth what she considers the essentials for a lifelong practice. When we look for a meditation teacher, we want someone who has an intimate knowledge of the path. That's why so many have turned to Pema Chodron, whose gentle yet straightforward guidance has been a lifesaver for both first-time and experienced meditators. With How to Meditate, the American-born Tibetan Buddhist nun presents her first book that explores in-depth what she considers the essentials for an evolving practice that helps you live in a wholehearted way. More and more people are beginning to recognize a profound inner longing for authenticity, connection, compassion, and aliveness. Meditation, Pema explains, gives us a golden key to address this yearning. This comprehensive guide shows readers how to honestly meet and openly relate with the mind to embrace the fullness of our experience as we discover: The basics of meditation, from getting settled and the six points of posture to working with your breath and cultivating an attitude of unconditional friendliness. The Seven Delights—how moments of difficulty can become doorways to awakening and love. Shamatha (or calm abiding), the art of stabilizing the mind to remain present with whatever arises. Thoughts and emotions as "sheer delight"—instead of obstacles—in meditation. Here is an indispensable book from the meditation teacher who remains a first choice for students the world over.

Part One: The Technique of Meditation

1. Preparing for Practice and Making the Commitment
2. Stabilizing the Mind
3. The Six Points of Posture
4. Breath: The Practice of Letting Go
5. Attitude: Keep Coming Back
6. Unconditional Friendliness
7. You Are Your Own Meditation Instructor

Part Two: Working With Thoughts

8. The Monkey Mind
9. The Three Levels of Discursive Thought
10. Thoughts as the Object of Meditation
11. Regard All Dharmas as Dreams

Part Three: Working With Emotions

12. Becoming Intimate with Our Emotions
13. The Space within the Emotion
14. Emotions as the Object of Meditation
15. Getting Our Hands Dirty
16. Hold the Experience
17. Breaking with the Emotion
18. Drop the Story and Find the Feeling

Part Four: Working with Sense Perception

19. The Sense Perceptions
20. The Interconnection of All Perceptions

Part Five: Opening Your Heart to Include Everything

21. Giving Up the Struggle
22. The Seven Delights
23. The Bearable Lightness of Being
24. Beliefs
25. Relaxing with Groundlessness
26. Create a Circle of Practitioners
27. Cultivate a Sense of Wonder
28. The Way of the Bodhisattva

Excerpt

The mind is very wild. The human experience is full of unpredictability and paradox, joys and sorrows, successes and failures. We can't escape any of these experiences in the vast terrain of our

existence. It is part of what makes life grandâ "and it is also why our minds take us on such a crazy ride. If we can train ourselves through meditation to be more open and more accepting toward the wild arc of our experience, if we can lean into the difficulties of life and ride of our minds, we can become more settled and relaxed amid whatever life brings us. There are numerous ways to work with the mind. One of the most effective ways is through the tool of sitting meditation. Sitting meditation opens us to each and every moment of our life. Each moment is totally unique and unknown. Our mental world is seemingly predictable and graspable. We believe that thinking through all the events and to-dos of our life will provide us with ground and security. But itâ ™s all a fantasy, and this very moment, free of conceptual overlay, is completely unique. It is absolutely unknown. Weâ ™ve never experienced this very moment before, and the next moment will not be the same as the one we are in now. Meditation teaches us how to relate to life directly, so that we can truly experience the present moment, free from conceptual overlay.

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Customer Reviews

Pema Chodron is a master at presenting teachings in a simple and accessible way, so that anyone can read her books and connect with them. The only potential downside is that it's possible to be

deceived by the simplicity and overlook the depth of wisdom actually offered. In the case of this book on meditation, it begins with very basic, easy to follow instructions on getting started with a meditation practice focused on the breath. If you are looking for a straightforward little book to help you begin meditating, this is a great one (and Pema offers many meditation CDs that you can use for guidance as well.) As this book progresses though, it offers many more meditation approaches, and insights that will be useful even to those who have meditated for a long time. Sections 2, 3 and 4 are devoted to 'Working with Thoughts', 'Working with Emotions', and 'Working with Sense Perceptions', and in each she invites us to actually use these as 'objects of meditation' - to invite them into our meditation and work with them as the foundation for our practice, rather than judging them as 'bad' and trying to push them out. This 'friendliness' as she puts it, really changes everything, and offers us the potential for deep understanding and healing. She offers many personal stories, and anecdotes from students, to support how powerful this can be. In the final section of the book, 'Opening Your Heart to Include Everything', Pema connects meditation to the awakening or enlightenment process. This is perhaps the most 'Buddhist' section in the book, although really I feel anyone of any faith interested in spiritual meditation will find much value here (as with most of Pema's books, this one is not targeted to those who define themselves as 'Buddhist').

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