



MEME AND MEANING

8 TIPS TO PROGRESS IN MEDITATION WHEN YOU FEEL STUCK

I find that when someone starts meditating, or when they begin to take it seriously again after some time away, there can be a “honeymoon” phase in which their sessions are very attentive and calm. The benefits of the practice are apparent in this case. However, such results in every sit are not to be expected, and there will be times where your mind at its most distressing moments. If you begin to feel as though you are moving off track or stagnating with your practice, some general guidelines can help you course correct and set you up for further progress. Below are some tips and questions to nudge you in the right direction: inward.

1. Read a Meditation Manual or Other Related Book Before Your Sit

- a. Though it can be rewarding to try many different approaches and meditative paths, ultimately, it's usually best to settle upon one, and stick to it.
- b. Addresses most, if not all, questions you have related to your sit at whatever stage you are at.
- c. Gives you a sense of where you've been, where you currently are, and where you will be going next in your meditative career.
- d. Meditation manual recommendation: *The Mind Illuminated*

2. Affirm Your Motivation, Goals, and Intention Before Your Sit, and During if Necessary

- a. Why are you choosing to meditate?
- b. What are your long-term goals with meditation?
- c. What are your goals with the session you are about to sit?

3. Set Aside Your Rigid Expectations

- a. The only “bad” meditation is the one you don’t do.
- b. Do your best not to compare yourself to others. Doing so is nothing short of toxic to both your morale and progress. Instead, focus on how you can improve today based on your most recent sits.
- c. If you don’t get what you want or think you need from this session, can you accept that and continue along the path regardless with a higher dedication?

4. Settle into Your Posture

- a. Before your sit, assure that you are in a comfortable position. Any will suffice, as long as you choose one where you aren’t prone to fall asleep.
- b. When you first start your meditation, it can be helpful to take a few deep breaths and assure that your shoulders and other common areas of tension are relaxed.

5. Cultivate Contentment

- a. Before your meditation, invoke feelings of curiosity, gratitude, and opportunity in relation to your practice and broader life.
- b. Overtime, your mind will associate these subtle positive feelings with the practice itself, and you will drastically increase your chances of making meditation a lifelong habit.

6. Keep A Meditation Journal

- a. Keep track of your answers to these questions in a written or digital journal; both before and after your sit.
- b. Also write down how your meditation went, what the quality of your focus was like, what was most distracting, and how you can improve for the next day.

7. Ease Your Transition Out

- a. Don't rush right after the bell or timer goes off.
- b. Afterward for the next few minutes, try to bring the same attentive mindfulness to the movements you make and things you do. Get curious about your experience.

8. Join a local Sit

- a. A group meet-up where you sit and discuss meditation is invaluable.
- b. First hand you will get to see other people's struggles and successes with meditation and you, in turn, will be wiser and more grounded because of it.