

Chapter 2 Part 2

1.1 Chapter 2 Meditation

1.2 What is meditation

Now that you know how to fit self-care into your daily routine, we would like to introduce you to the next skill.

Meditation refers to a broad variety of practices (much like the term *sports*) . these include techniques designed to promote relaxation, build internal energy and develop compassion, love, patience, generosity and forgiveness. Meditation aims to enable us to enjoy a sense of well-being while engaging in any life activity.

1.3 Benefits of meditation

Why meditation?

- Research shows that meditation increases psychological well-being, mental health, and physical health in many carers.
- A study found a **51.2% reduction in carers' depression** and **49.4% reduction in carers' anxiety** - for carers who practiced yoga and meditation.
- Practicing meditation / mindfulness will also help you with a number of skills introduced in the following lessons, for example observing people with dementia and recognizing their needs.

Meditation may not be suitable for everyone, but if you heard about meditation or someone recommended it why not give it a go?

1.4 How meditation can help

Meditation can help you as a carer. It can teach you ways of observing the needs of people with dementia and to communicate better with them.

- Centering yourself is an important part of meditation: In order to do this, you need to focus on your breathing and expel as much anger and frustration as possible
- This release of your own emotions is crucial to be able to listen to another person with empathy
- By releasing this anger you open yourself up to the feelings of the person with dementia in your care with whom you are trying to communicate

After you click on the next button, try a short meditation exercise with us. Just make sure you are sitting in a comfortable position before you start.

1.5 How to practice meditation

How to practice meditation:

- Allow for at least 10 minutes of uninterrupted time
- Find a quiet and peaceful place (house/park/sea side)
- Light some candles and play calm and relaxing music
- Prepare a cushion or mat to sit in a comfortable position
- Follow these steps
 - 1 Sit down on the mat or cushion.**
 - 1 Let your hands rest one in the other on your lap, palms facing upwards, or place your hands palm up on your knees with your thumb touching your second finger.** Again, don't worry too much about your position, just be comfortable and relaxed.

- 2 Focus on a spot about 2 inches below your waist and devote all of your attention to your breathing.** Stop all inner dialogue.


- 3 Close your eyes and start to count your breaths.** Count on each breath in...Breath one, breath two, breath three... Try to breathe deeply and slowly. Inhale deeply through your nose, filling your body with air. Exhale through your mouth. Relax your face and jaw. Relax your hands. When you get to ten, start again at one. If you miss ten and find yourself at 12 or 13, don't worry; just go back to one. With each breath out, feel your tension going out as well.

- 4 When thoughts come into your mind, try not to follow them.** Just identify them and let them go. The same with sounds and sensations. "I just thought about my husband" "I should spend more time with him" "I am hungry". If you simply identify thoughts and distractions and don't follow them or focus on them, they will begin to just pass by you.

- 5 For a beginner, try to meditate for just a few minutes -- 10 minutes or so is a good start.** You may wish to set a quiet alarm or have soft music start at the end of your meditation period. After you meditate, begin to move slowly. Open your eyes, let your hands fall to your sides, stretch your toes, feet and legs.

Look at our list of resources on the main page for more information on meditation,

1.6 For more information



You are in Chapter 2 of Coping Skills for Families and Carers. You have finished Skill 2 in Chapter 2: Looking after yourself.

You can now go to Chapter 3: introduction

for more information, go to [Dementia Elevator](#)