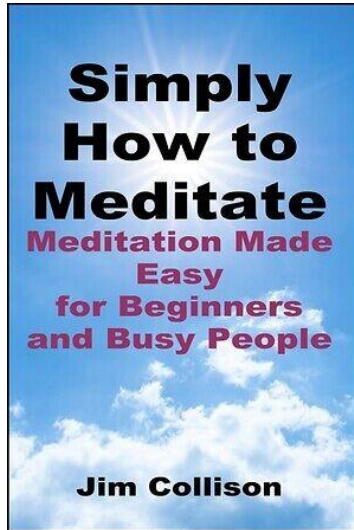


**Guide to Teaching
Living Moments
Meditation:
Companion to the Book**



**For Meditation Instructors,
Wellness Coaches,
Teachers, and Parents**

Jim Collison

iWeave Books

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Also by Jim Collison

Simply How to Meditate: Meditation Made Easy for Beginners and Busy People

Skill-Building in Advanced Reading

Mental Power in Reading

NO-How Coaching: Strategies for Winning in Sports and Business from the
Coach Who Says "NO!"

Your Safety Program Made Easy

The Complete Employee Handbook Made Easy

The Complete Suggestion Program Made Easy

Hidden Riches: Discover Hidden Wealth from Your Employees' Ideas

Part I

First Things, First

Prepare Yourself Before You Teach and Guide

You won't be teaching or instructing the learner so much as **guiding** the learner.

Your role is more that of guiding the learner, as the learner teaches herself or himself and experiences the meditation practices.

*Read **Simply How to Meditate***

You'll want to read my book *Simply How to Meditate* before you prepare yourself to teach and guide learners in the LivingMoments meditation techniques for beginners and busy people.

You'll definitely want to do each of the meditation practices and experience creating and writing out your own personal, affirmation mantras.

The practices in the book begin with the very simple practice of thinking of just one thing, a favorite food. The next practice is simply breathing. The third practice is a few repetitions of three words: Relax, calm, peace. In Chapter 6 the learner is asked to create their own affirmation mantras. And the question of how a learner's religion might fit into the affirmation mantras is introduced. As the learner progresses through the chapters and practices the opportunities increase for composing more creative mantras.

The last meditation practice in the book – Questioning Meditation – is possibly the most challenging. It introduces silence. It requires some discipline. Think of it as a transition practice. The learner isn't doing much repetition of a mantra. Instead, the learner is quietly waiting without repetitious mental activity.

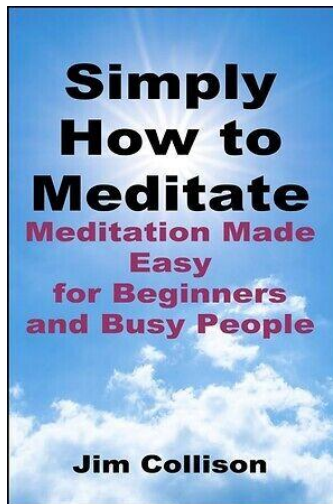
So, after doing this Questioning Meditation practice, the learner may wish to transition on in meditation to more advanced kinds of meditation, such as Mindfulness, transcendental meditation, or contemplative prayer. See Afterword #4 in the book for other kinds of meditation.

The book is written for students and adults with 6th to 9th grade or higher reading ability levels. It's written at this middle school reading

level so that both children and adults can benefit from experiencing the practices in the book.

After reading the book and doing the practices yourself, you'll want to prepare to teach and guide learners by studying the following information. This gives you more information about LivingMoments meditation and other topics that will come up as you encourage a learner to experience the practice of LivingMoments meditation.

Purchase the book *Simply How to Meditate*



Purchase the book *Simply How to Meditate: Meditation Made Easy for Beginners and Busy People*, by Jim Collison, from these websites:

www.SimplyHowToMeditate.com

www.Amazon.com

On Amazon, search for “Simply How to Meditate by Jim Collison.”



Meditation: What is it?

The word *meditate* means to muse about something, to ponder on a subject, to think about any topic.

The common understanding for centuries was the word and activity of *meditation* meant thinking about, contemplating, and focusing the mind on god, and on religious and spiritual topics, especially prayer. Starting in the late 20th century in the United States and Europe the word *Mindfulness* was used for a Buddhist type of meditation. By the early 21st century, the word mindfulness started being used as a synonym for meditation. Though Mindfulness meditation is marketed as and taught as a non-religious form of meditation, it originated as a Buddhist meditation technique.

In my book, *Simply How to Meditate*, meditation is religious, non-religious, or both, depending on the intentions and practices of the individual meditator. The meditator learns to focus their mind in practice meditations in ways that fit their personal preferences.

Health-boosting Benefits of Meditating

Just about any type of meditation can produce health-boosting benefits for meditators who develop the habit of doing two simple things while meditating. The two essential elements of meditation that result in health benefits are (1) focus the mind in the present moment, and (2) while focusing the mind, breathe slowly and deeply.

The first essential research to confirm that meditation results in health benefits was done in the late 1960s by Dr. Herbert Benson and associates at Harvard University Medical School.

In the early 1970s the Hindu-yoga form of meditation, Transcendental Meditation (TM), was getting widely publicized. Maharishi Mahesh

Yogi established the Maharishi International University in Fairfield, Iowa. Dr. Benson and associated researchers studied if TM alone could result in health benefits. The research confirmed that TM can elicit what they termed “the Relaxation Response,” resulting in health benefits. In 1975, Dr. Benson’s book, *The Relaxation Response*, publicized the scientific testing of TM and the positive impact of TM on health.

Most important, Dr. Benson concluded that just about any kind of meditation and activity involving relaxed, mental focusing will result in health benefits.

In the Foreword to the year 2000 edition of *The Relaxation Response*, Dr. Benson wrote “When the mind is focused, whether through meditation or other repetitive mental activities, the body responds with a dramatic decrease in heart rate, breathing rate, blood pressure (if elevated to begin with) and metabolic rate...”

In the years following publication of *The Relaxation Response*, continuing research has shown many positive health benefits of meditation. For a detailed summary of these benefits, see Chapter 2 (Yes, the Benefits) in my book *Simply How to Meditate*.

LivingMoments Meditation: What is It?

LivingMoments is the name I’ve given the type of meditation I’ve developed during my 80-plus years of meditating. The major influences on my meditation are detailed in Afterword #3 in my book *Simply How to Meditate*.

Here’s a quick summary:

- The use of positive affirmations as mantras during meditation. I stress to the learner throughout *Simply How to Meditate* the importance of creating your own positive affirmations for mantras. Psychologist Catherine Moore, in the article “Positive Daily Affirmations: Is There Science Behind It?” lists several benefits of daily affirmations, including: a) self-affirmations decrease health-deteriorating stress, and b) self-affirmation has been linked positively to academic achievement, (Read her full article at positivepsychology.com/daily-affirmations.)
- Guided meditations shrunk down from two or three minutes in length to 20- to 30-second positive affirmations and used as mantras during meditation.
- Slow, deep diaphragmic breathing during meditation.

-- The HeartMath Freeze-Frame technique. This is a technique of keeping your mind focused on seeing and feeling a person, place, or event that triggers positive, open-heart emotions.

-- And finally, baking cookies. What? Yes, baking cookies. Based on my more than 80 years of baking I can testify that cookie baking recipes are pretty simple. And so, I use cookie baking as a metaphor to emphasize that LivingMoments (and many other health-boosting meditation techniques) are no more complicated or difficult to learn than cookie baking.

Mindfulness Meditation: What is It?

The word “mindfulness” in meditation for many centuries was associated with Buddhist meditation. Then in the late 20th century the word was introduced in association with a mostly secular form of meditation in the United States and Europe. After more than 45 years of use, people often use the word as a synonym for meditation generally. For purposes of the instruction in this Guide, the word Mindfulness is capitalized when referring to the secular version of meditation that focuses on a Buddhist-type of meditation without obvious Buddhist religious content.

The two persons most associated with launching and marketing Mindfulness in the U.S. and Europe are Thich Nhat Hanh and Jon Kabat-Zinn. Hahn was a Vietnamese Buddhist monk who brought Buddhist mindfulness meditation to the United States and Europe in the 1960s. Kabat-Zinn, creator of the Stress Reduction Clinic and the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, launched Mindfulness meditation in the 1980s and 1990s.

The central feature of this form of mindfulness is observing – paying attention to -- body sensations, one’s thoughts, surroundings, actions *without judgment*. The objective is to separate yourself from what’s going on with you and around you *in the moment*. This kind of non-thinking mental state, in Buddhist meditation, is intended over a long period of time to bring the meditator into a state of transcendence. That is, into a state detached from the body and into a beyond-body, beyond-this-world state of nirvana. This Buddhist, religious connection of Mindfulness is intentionally obscured in Mindfulness meditation marketing and Mindfulness instruction.

Here's Kabat-Zinn’s definition of Mindfulness: “Mindfulness is awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally.”

Brief History of Meditation

From earliest times of recorded history, about 5,000 or 6,000 years ago, meditation was religious and spiritual.

This religious, spiritual practice dominated until the late 20th century, when Jon Kabat-Zinn introduced mindfulness meditation into the United States and the western world as a Buddhist form of meditation, but free of references to the Buddha and free of explicit Buddhist terminology. Kabat-Zinn is creator of the Stress Reduction Clinic and the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

Mindfulness seems to be an attempt to popularize a secular form of Buddhist mindfulness meditation as a non-religious meditation practice.

The preparation for Kabat-Zinn's launching a secular kind of mindfulness in the United States and the western world began in the late 1950s and 1960s when Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, an Indian yoga guru, developed and began popularizing Transcendental Meditation, also known as TM. His fame and the popularity of TM was boosted in the late 1960s when the Beatles endorsed TM. In 1973-74, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi founded the Maharishi International University in Fairfield, Iowa, where students and faculty practice the TM technique.

About this time, Dr. Herbert Benson chose to study whether or not practicing the Transcendental Meditation (TM) technique resulted in health benefits.

What I find interesting, though, is that Kabat-Zinn and others in the last half of the 20th century weren't the historical pioneers for secular meditation.

The pioneer of non-religious, secular meditation may have been the Apostle Paul who, in the early 60s of the first century CE, encouraged his readers to focus their minds on an assortment of positive thoughts. There is no mention of a strictly religious belief in Paul's 34 words. Following is the non-religious, secular text Paul wrote in Philippians 4:8 in the New Testament:

“Whatever is **true**, whatever is **honorable**, whatever is **just**, whatever is **pure**, whatever is **lovely**, whatever is **commendable**, if there is any **excellence**, if there is anything **worthy of praise**, think on these things.”

Comparing Meditation Techniques

How does LivingMoments meditation compare to Mindfulness meditation?

-- **Mindfulness meditation** is a Buddhist-based form of meditation with the ultimate goal of detaching the self from the body and environment and reaching a mystic, transcendental state. As marketed in the United States and Europe, though, Mindfulness meditation is presented as a non-religious version of Buddhist meditation. This secular version of mindfulness meditation has become widely popular in the United States and Europe in the last 30 years. Yet few people seem to be aware that it emerged from Buddhism, particularly Zen Buddhism.

The distinguishing feature of the secular Mindfulness technique is to focus the mind by observing the body, observing the environment, observing your actions, and observing your breathing *without judgment*. An example is mindful dishwashing. In mindful dishwashing you hand wash your dishes slowly. You focus your mind on the dishwashing process (the nature of the soap, the feel and quality of the water, even the feel and nature of the dish) *without judgment*.

So, mindfulness training introduces the beginning learner to what, frankly, are detachment practices in which the learner observes (is mindful of) their bodily parts, their breaths, their distracting thoughts...without making any judgments. The mindfulness learner deeply observes, without judging, what is happening within them and what they are doing during the period of meditation.

-- **LivingMoments meditation** is a positive affirmation meditation technique. For the first thousands of years of meditation, until the emergence of Mindfulness meditation in the 1980s and 1990s, meditation was a religious-focused practice. LivingMoments meditation is similar, emphasizing affirmative mantras **that can be religious or secular**, as the meditator chooses. The ultimate goal in mindfulness meditation is achieving a transcendental, enlightened state. In contrast, the primary goal of a LivingMoments meditation habit is immediate and **practical**, it's to experience relaxation, calmness, and peace to achieve health-boosting benefits.

Summary of the contrasts:

Mindfulness meditation (and also TM and other forms of meditation originating in India and China) are the trigonometry and calculus levels of meditation (using math studies as a metaphor). Mindfulness starts a person at the observe without judging level of meditation, which for many beginners and busy people is boring and frustrating. Mindfulness meditation, with roots in Buddhism, has the ultimate goal

of moving the learner into a spiritual, transcendental separation from bodily pain, discomfort, and distractions.

LivingMoments meditation, I believe, is more helpful for beginners and busy people to learn meditation habits because LivingMoments starts the learner at the basic math level (again, using math studies as a metaphor). LivingMoments is a *meaningful* experience (in contrast to a *mindful* experience). LivingMoments meditation's primary purpose for a beginner is improving personal health and lessening the impact of stress on one's body and mind by experiencing physical relaxation, emotional calmness, and overall peace. Thus, LivingMoments practices in the book *Simply How to Meditate* start a learner meditating at a practical level, at a level immediately helpful to the learner.

Examples of practical LivingMoments meditation:

* LivingMoments meditation is about a basketball player repeating a positive *athletic* affirmation mantra to succeed on the basketball court.

* LivingMoments meditation is about an exhausted mother relaxing in mid-afternoon, thinking positive thoughts and expressing positive affirmations while calmly knitting.

* LivingMoments meditation is about a kid in school or college doing what the Apostle Paul told the Philippians to do: "Think on these things." Think on what things? "Whatever is **true**, whatever is **honorable**, whatever is **pure**, whatever is **lovely**, whatever is **commendable**, if there is any **excellence**, if there is anything **worthy of praise...**"

* In several practice meditations in *Simply How to Meditate* the learner will be doing exactly what the Apostle Paul urged the Philippians to do. Three such practice meditations in the book are: The "Good Health & Healing" meditation, the "Extend Love to Others" meditation, and the "Express Gratitude" meditation.

***Simply How to Meditate* Teaches LivingMoments**

Why does the book *Simply How to Meditate* teach beginners and busy people LivingMoments techniques rather than Mindfulness techniques?

In LivingMoments meditation the learner mostly focuses the mind on self-composed, positive affirmation mantras and on positive memories of relaxing, calming, and peaceful moments. In LivingMoments meditation the learner **chooses** the thoughts to focus on and repeat. In Mindfulness meditation, the learner mostly **observes** thoughts, body

sensations, breathing, surroundings, activities as they come and go through the mind.

So, in *Simply How to Meditate* practices the learner is actively involved in choosing the content of the mantra thoughts and seeking to experience the feelings and relaxing responses resulting from the repetitions of the thoughts. This approach to learning to meditate, I believe, is more interesting to the beginner and to the busy person. It's more interesting, that is, than the Mindfulness technique of observing without judgment. Thus, I believe, the learner is more likely to stick to practicing this type of meditation until meditation becomes a habit.

What's Unique about *Simply How to Meditate*?

The book *Simply How to Meditate* is unique, compared to other how-to-meditate instruction books, in these seven ways.

1. This book is the first how-to-meditate book that includes guidance for persons with *aphantasia*, the inability to see images in the mind. These individuals have no "mind's eye." It's estimated 1- to 3% of the population has no "mind's eye," which can make some kinds of meditation, such as guided meditation, frustrating for them. In the book's Afterword #1 and Afterword #2 the learner is shown two alternate ways to use images in meditation. Learn more about aphantasia at www.aphantasia.com.
2. The book, also, is unique for a how-to-meditate book because it is visually interesting. It's illustrated with 24 color photos of persons in normal, real-life activity. This is in contrast to other published illustrations of people meditating, which show people sitting in lotus positions, making meditation appear off-putting and boring to beginners and busy people.
3. Also, *Simply How to Meditate* is unique because, through 16 practice activities, the learner is encouraged to create their own, personal affirmative mantras to repeat in the meditations. This contrasts with other kinds of meditation instruction that have learners use "canned" repetitions, focus on observing their mental activity, body, or environment without judgment (such as doing a "body scan"), or gazing on a candle flame.
4. The I Live meditation practice in the book is unique for a how-to-meditate book. This practice encourages the learner to compose their own personal affirmations to repeat often in

meditation and remind themselves that their life is important and has value. The book by Victor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*, was a major influence on me to create my own I Live affirmation mantra. My I Live affirmation mantra is in the book as an example for the learner to create their own, personal I Live mantra. The positive impact of Frankl's book on me and millions of other readers in the past 76 years is why I encourage learners to compose their own I Live affirmations.

5. Another meditation practice in the book, My Core Belief, is unique for a how-to-meditate book. I believe it's important for success in our lives for all of us, from students to people my age, to identify core beliefs we have that help us conquer challenges and reach goals. *Simply How to Meditate* includes several examples of My Core Belief mantras to encourage the learner to compose their own.
6. Also, the Be Kind to Myself meditation practice in the book is unique for a how-to-meditate book. You may find other how-to-meditation books encouraging "Self-Love" meditation. As I considered recommending self-love meditation, I kept asking myself, "Just what is the greatest form of self-love?" The answer I got was, "It seems every type of thing I can do to love myself is really just being kind to myself." So, using "Be Kind to Myself" as the term for this meditation is prompting the learner to answer the questions "What can I do to be kind to myself?" and "What do I need that will be good for me?"
7. A fourth unique meditation in the book is in Chapter 17, Meditate for Answers. This meditation encourages the learner to quietly relax in silence, and ask practical questions, even serious questions. Then wait for answers to come to their minds. From whom or what do the answers come? As I explain in Chapter 17, the answers come from the Who or the Whatever the learner believes "whispers a sudden thought or message to you when you least expect it."

ADHD and Meditation

Children and adults diagnosed with Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) benefit from meditation.

To understand why meditation is helpful for children and adults with ADHD, consider the behaviors that result in a diagnosis of ADHD.

Start with the word *hyperactive*. Add *lacking in the ability to focus attention* (that's attention-deficit). Just about any age-appropriate meditation gives the ADHD child or adult opportunity to slow down their activity. To pause. To listen for silence. To focus thoughts. Basic to helping ADHD children and adults are activities for them that encourage them to develop relaxing and calming habits. By participating in meditation practice, the ADHD child and adult gradually learns habits like slow breathing, focusing the mind for longer periods, and relaxing and being calm during repetition of mantras and affirmations.

One important benefit of teaching LivingMoments meditation to children is this form of instruction encourages the child to create their own affirmation mantras. This is a creative activity associated with their meditation that can be enjoyable for them and encourage them to stick with the practicing.

How the Book Helps Students and Young Readers

The book is written at a 6th to 9th grade reading level. The steps in some practice instructions may limit the LivingMoments meditation practices to those age 10 or older.

What is most important to keep in mind when coaching and teaching young children meditation is this: Meditation is simple. The spread of Mindfulness meditation – and it's five to 13 steps for learning how to do it – has caused many people to believe meditation is complicated and difficult. The exact opposite is true if the purpose of meditating is to achieve the health-boosting benefits.

Consider one of the very earliest descriptions of how to meditate (quoted above), the Apostle Paul's 31 words in the New Testament (Philippians 4:8). The practice Paul recommends is a very easy way to introduce meditation to young children. A little bit at a time. A child age 9 or 10 can easily "think about" things in their life that are "lovely," "commendable," "excellent," and "worthy of praise." In fact, the Be Kind to Myself meditation in *Simply How to Meditate* is an easy way to introduce children to repetition of "self-worth" mantras such as "I am proud of what I do when I (do such-and-such in school)."

"But, I Don't Have Time."

How might you respond when a learner tells you "I don't have time to meditate?"

Explore with the learner what is keeping her or him from carving out time to meditate in their awake hours? What ways can you find two to five minutes here, two to five minutes there, to total 10 to 20 or more minutes a day for meditation?

Help the learner answer that question by having the learner patiently spend time making a complete list of their specific activities in a typical day, along with an estimate of the time in minutes they spend on each activity. Next, help the learner make judgments about how less time could be spent on some activities and how some activities could be cut out completely.

Some examples of time use: In 2019 the average adult in the United States spent 38 minutes a day on Facebook. In 2022 the average TikTok user spent 95 minutes a day on TikTok. Those age 16- to 24-years old spent a median of 3 hours a day on social media. Internet users spent an average of 2-hours, 22-minutes a day on social networking. More examples of time use: Americans spend around 5.4 hours a day using phones. Millennials spend 48 minutes texting per day.

As you help the learner make judgments about their time use, encourage the learner to find ways to reduce their use of social media, Facebook, smartphones, and TV.

As you assist beginners to find minutes in a day to meditate, you might suggest they begin by finding time in their day to carve out two minutes here, two minutes there, to total 10 minutes a day. One simple example is to pause for about two minutes at the start of a day when the learner is dressing to just stop, remain silent, and repeat a short affirmation mantra four to 10 times while breathing slowly.

Also, while coaching the learner about finding time for meditating, tie this in with the Be Kind to Myself meditation. Suggest to the learner that two of the kindest gifts they can give themselves are (1) silence, and (2) free time. Explain how a person can give themselves *silence* to meditate, and *time* to meditate.

Taming the Monkey Mind

Soon in the learner's meditation experience, the learner's monkey mind barges into the learner's thoughts. (See p. 19 in *Simply How to Meditate*.) The learner's subconscious mind becomes the Monkey Mind and takes over the learner's thoughts.

This is a significant experience where Mindfulness meditation and LivingMoments meditation differ.

The Mindfulness approach is to “pay attention, without judgment.” The Mindfulness approach is to tolerate the Monkey Mind chatter, observe it, know it, listen to it. One description of the Mindfulness approach (from the EOC Institute website) is: “How & Why Mindfulness Meditation Tames The Anxious Monkeys. Practicing mindful meditation teaches you to pay attention to your chattering monkeys, to **know** them, to **listen** to them, to **understand** them.”

The LivingMoments approach is different, it’s not so serious about Monkey Mind behavior. Basically, the LivingMoments approach is to tolerate the Monkey Mind bouncing around for a while, if you wish. It’s normal. Don’t get angry. Don’t waste time observing them “to understand them.” Instead, as I write in the book, “When you realize this chattering is distracting you, pull your thoughts back to your mantra. You might even smile about it, shrug your shoulders, and re-focus on your mantra.”

Assure the learner that monkey-mind interference in meditation is normal. Encourage the learner to make peace with the monkey mind, and not be afraid to push the monkey mind aside and re-focus the mind on the desired and meaningful meditation objects, thoughts, and positive mantras.

Helpful Resources

The most important books to help you understand how the LivingMoments approach to meditation can lead to important health-boosting benefits are Dr. Herbert Benson’s three books:

- *The Relaxation Response*
- *Beyond the Relaxation Response: How to Harness the Healing Power of Your Personal Beliefs*
- *Timeless Healing: The Power and Biology of Belief*

To better understand the importance and role of positive affirmations as mantras to repeat in meditation, see the article “Positive Daily Affirmations: Is There Science Behind It?” by Catherine Moore, Psychologist, at positivepsychology.com.

To better understand the role of breathing for better health, and the importance of slow, deep breathing, read this book:

- *Breath: The New Science of a Lost Art* by James Nestor.

Part II

Guiding the Learner



Lesson 1

Meditation. What is it?

1. Prepare the learner to know and understand the meaning of the words “meditate” and “meditation.”

You might first ask the learner, “What do you think it means for you to *meditate*?” You might follow this with the question “What are one or two ways you’ve already *meditated* about something?” Explore with the learner two, three, or four words they may already know that mean the same as or similar to *meditate* and *meditation*. Such as *think about*, *ponder*, *cogitate*, *contemplate*.

Next, explain to the learner “in your *meditation* practices you’ll be **focusing your mind on a single word, a phrase, several phrases or sentences, a thought or thoughts, or simply on silence.**”

Then, explore with the learner something they may already be doing that involves **focusing their mind.**

Here’s an example: Give the learner a needle and some thread. Have the learner thread the needle. Ask the learner to tell you what they are doing with their eyes, fingers, thoughts as they try – and hopefully succeed – threading a needle. You can explain, “Threading a needle is an example of focusing your mind on a single thing – the tiny hole in the needle – and focusing your mind on the single act of putting the thread tip into the hole.”

Breathing Slowly. How and Why

2. Prepare the learner to know and understand the action of breathing slowly and deeply.

Have the learner view the illustration from the book, *Simply How to Meditate*, on page 9, showing diaphragmic, belly breathing.

Explain – and demonstrate – the difference between shallow breathing when you are frightened and running away, and diaphragmic breathing when you are resting and relaxing as you start to take a nap. Ask the learner to demonstrate the difference between these two kinds of breathing. When you are frightened and running away your breaths are short and shallow. When you are resting and relaxing, it is healthier and more natural for your breaths to be slower and to draw more air deeper into your lungs.

3. Begin with Chapter 1 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 1-2.

Have the learner do the Favorite Food activity. This will take just a few minutes. Then briefly discuss with the learner their reactions to this simple practice.

Lesson 2

Benefits of Meditation

1. Go to Chapter 2 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 3-6.

2. Begin with The Benefits topic.

The learner might say, “So what’s the big deal about doing this?” After all, most people take a pass on meditating and basically dismiss it as “What’s the big deal, and besides I don’t have time to meditate.”

Right now, then, is a good time to explain what the big deal is about meditating for beginners and busy people. This will be a basic science lesson, and it’s important for the learner to learn and to celebrate the positive, health-boosting benefits of meditation.

Since meditating began centuries ago as a spiritual practice, people devoted to some forms of meditation may object to focusing on the health-boosting benefits of meditation. Keep in mind, though, the purpose of the *Simply How to Meditate* book is to encourage beginners and busy people to discover ways to meditate that do not bore them and turn them off. The learner begins to develop habits of meditation by using the practices in *Simply How to Meditate*, and then may choose

to move on and advance to other forms of meditation that may stress spiritual growth and spiritual achievements.

3. Talk to the learner about the *elixir of life* (see p. 4 in *Simply How to Meditate*). You might have the learner do a bit of research on the phrase “elixir of life” by doing a google, bing, or duckduckgo web search. You might want to tell the learner one example from your own experience of how deep, slow breathing can improve a person’s life, such as doing slow, deep breathing to reduce pain in the body.

At this point, review with the learner the information and illustration about slow, deep breathing on pp. 8-9 in *Simply How to Meditate*. Have the learner lie down on his or her back, on a floor, a mat, or other flat surface, and practice belly breathing as shown in the illustration. Have them pay particular attention to how their belly rises and falls as they breathe in and breathe out.

You might suggest to the learner to try using slow, deep breathing when they are experiencing any muscular pain, or when they suddenly hurt a finger, elbow, knee, or even a bump on the head. Suggest that when this kind of pain happens, they pause for a few moments and take several (perhaps up to 20) slow in-and-out breaths. And be aware of the lessening of the pain. Tell the learner that doing slow, deep breathing may also help them experience a lessening of any chronic pain they are dealing with.

Explain to the learner how belly (diaphragmic) breathing opens up the lungs more and this brings more oxygen into their lungs compared to faster, shallow breathing. Belly breathing means the learner gains more oxygen with less physical effort. Belly breathing helps the learner relax and calms the learner.

4. Explain to the learner the role of belly breathing in strengthening their vagal tone (see pp. 4-5 in *Simply How to Meditate*). At this point, it may be helpful to discuss examples of actual “fight or flight” reactions the person has had...and have them compare these moments to actual “resting and relaxing” moments they have had. Explain to the learner that belly breathing is a way we bring ourselves into the resting and relaxing state and improve the quality of our vagal tone.

5. Talk with the learner, also, about how meditation practices like LivingMoments meditation are ways the person can escape from the noisy, busy and demanding world we spend so much of our 21st century time in. These kinds of meditation practices focus us on escaping into a world of many moments over many minutes in which we experience a lessening of noise, even some silence, and relaxation, calm, and peacefulness.

Lesson 3

The Recipe for Meditation

1. Go to Chapter 3 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 7-10.
2. You can quickly note the basic three ingredients of LivingMoments meditation. You'll want to explain that at this point the learner will focus on the breath and breathing ingredient.
3. Since you've already introduced the learner to belly breathing and the illustration of belly breathing, move directly to Meditation #1 – Breathe Slowly.
4. Have the learner do Meditation #1 – Breathe Slowly.

Lesson 4

Focus Your Thoughts

1. Go to Chapter 4 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 11-13.
2. Have the learner do Meditation #2 – Focus Your Thoughts.
3. Talk with the learner about ways to count and keep track of repetitions of words and mantras they think and express during meditation time. You might suggest that one benefit of using meditation beads is that using your fingers while tracking repetitions may assist the learner in focusing the mind during meditation.

Lesson 5



Picture Your Thoughts

1. Go to Chapter 5 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 15-19.
2. This is when you raise an important question with your learner. Simply ask this question: “When you read the words ‘picture your thoughts’ and when I say to you ‘Picture your thoughts,’ are you actually able to see a picture in your mind?” You are attempting to verify that the learner has the ability to see images in their mind. You are confirming if the learner has a mind’s eye. Or not.

If the learner does not have the ability to see images in their mind it is likely they have no mind's eye. Fortunately, the no-mind's-eye condition, named *aphantasia*, is rare. It's estimated that only 1-to-3 out of 100 people have the no-mind's-eye condition. Learn more about aphantasia at www.aphantasia.com.

If the learner has no mind's eye (has no ability to see pictures in their thoughts) have the learner read the *Afterword #1* and *Afterword #2* on pp. 85-89 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*.

Talk with the learner about ways they might be able to recall and bring into the present moment memories they have of times when they were especially relaxed, calm, and feeling in peace.

For example, often the purpose of recalling past memories and picturing them into the present moment in meditation is not to actually see the remembered image. The purpose is to recall the *feelings* of relaxation, calm, and peace that were experienced in the past and to reexperience those feelings in the present moment. The learner with no mind's eye, then, can recall and focus on the physical and emotional *feelings* that are relaxing, calming, and peace-giving.

This conversation will help you lead the learner into *Meditation #3*.

3. Most learners will have a mind's eye and you'll be able to initiate this lesson by going right into *Meditation #3 -- Create Pictures in Your Mind*, on pp. 16-19.

4. Spend some time helping the learner select their own three *Moments-in-Time* as explained under the heading "Before Starting" on pp. 17-18.

5. After the learner has completed the meditation practice on pp. 18-19, talk to the learner briefly about the monkey-mind distractions during meditation, noted on p. 19. Assure the learner everyone's monkey-mind becomes a challenge in meditation. And let them know they'll learn a meditation practice in Chapter 13 that helps them take charge of their own thoughts when the monkey-mind needs pacifying.

Lesson 6

Create Your Own Mantras

1. Go to Chapter 6 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 21-28.

2. Begin by confirming to the learner these three things:

-- What a mantra is. The purpose of the mantra is to aid the learner's mind in focusing in the present moment.

-- The learner's mantras can be religious, spiritual, non-religious. The choice is the learner's.

-- The words, phrases and messages in the learner's mantras are **positive**.

3. This is the point in the LivingMoments training that you encourage the learner to create their own affirmation mantras. It's in Chapter 6 that the book has blank pages the learner uses to write out their own affirmation mantras. Reinforce the message that the learner can use example affirmation mantras in the book, but often encourage the learner to create their own affirmation mantras.

4. Then have the learner do the meditation practice on p. 28.

Lesson 7

Athletic Meditation

1. Go to Chapter 7 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 29-32.

2. Ask the learner if she or he has an interest in sports and athletics. Learn if they have a favorite sport they want to or do participate in.

Decide with the learner if he or she wants to use meditation as one way to improve their sport skills and athletic participation. If they do, have them do Meditation #4-B on pp. 29-32.

Lesson 8

Add details to your pictures

1. Go to Chapter 8 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 33-38.

2. Have the learner create at least one Moment-in-Time mantra.

At this point the length of the learner's mantra may become a bit longer. So, on p. 35 the learner is shown how they can easily overcome the fear of being memory-challenged.

3. Then have the learner do the meditation practice on p. 38.

Lesson 9

More Moments-in-Time

1. Go to Chapter 9 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 39-41.

2. Encourage the learner to create more Moments-in-Time. This is going to be more challenging, of course, for many learners. (**Note:** For young children and some high school students, creating three longer

mantras may be especially challenging and off-putting. If so, simply have the learner create only one or two mantras, and shorter mantras.)

The learner may ask, “Why? What’s the point of more and longer mantras?”

Explain that the advantage of creating and having a number of different longer mantras is these will help the learner add variety to their meditations. Having more variety to repeat and hold in mind during meditation time lessens the potential for boredom that causes people to give up on developing a habit of meditation.

3. Then have the learner do the meditation practice on p. 41.

Lesson 10

I Live

1. Go to Chapter 10 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 43-45.

2. The previous More Moments-in-Time practice prepared the learner for doing this important I Live meditation.

The book “Man’s Search for Meaning” by Viktor Frankl is an important book for everyone to read, including the high school age and adult learner. This is a 1946 book in which Frankl uses his experiences and observations as a prisoner in Nazi concentration camps in World War II to make the case that everyone needs to have a purpose in life.

Simply for the mental and emotional good health of the learner, this meditation practice may be the most important meditation practice in *Simply How to Meditate*.

If the learner finds it challenging to deal with the need to create their own I Live mantra, you might talk with the learner about the challenges Helen Keller had in her life. Yet, despite her complete and total blindness she lived a full and accomplished life. Then share with the learner this quotation from Helen Keller: “Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.” Suggest the learner ponder how to take Helen Keller’s idea and use it to prompt a daring thought of their own. You might even suggest an example like this: “Life is a daring adventure. I live to live it.”

Note: If the learner is dealing with serious emotional or mental challenges, it is best to proceed with this meditation practice only with guidance from the learner’s counselor or mental health professional.

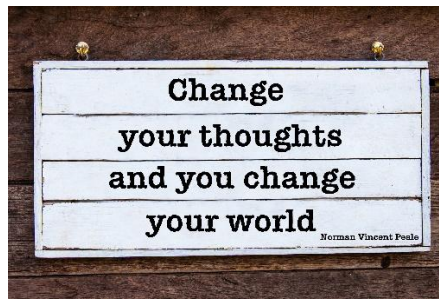
3. Then have the learner do the meditation practice on p. 45.

Lesson 11

For Good Health and Healing

1. Go to Chapter 11 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 47-50.
2. Review with the learner the ways meditation is good for a person's health.
3. Encourage the learner to compose their own personal Good Health and Healing mantras, on p. 49.
4. Have the learner do the meditation practice on p. 50.

Lesson 12



Core Belief Meditation

1. Go to Chapter 12 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 51-55.
2. Review with the learner the Amanda Gorman core belief mantra (p. 51) and my core belief mantra (p. 52).
3. Spend some time with the learner, assisting her or him in discovering and expressing their own core belief.
4. Encourage the learner to create their own core belief mantra, on p. 53.
5. Have the learner then practice meditating with their core belief mantra.
6. Then, if you have not already done so, talk with the learner about the role of listening to music while meditating.

Lesson 13

Monkey-Mind Pacifier

1. Go to Chapter 13 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 57-59.
2. Talk with the learner about the monkey mind and Monkey-Mind Pacifier. This is such an important meditation to learn and use, especially for beginners. The learner's Monkey-Mind is an un-focused

mind. Its thoughts bounce around from idea, to idea, to idea. Interference from a person's aggressive monkey mind is one reason people who begin the practice of meditation become dismayed and quit the practice. It's very important to assure the learner that nearly everyone gets interrupted by their monkey mind, and that it is normal.

Also tell the learner that taking charge of and controlling their monkey mind is possible. Assure the learner he or she probably will never totally tame their monkey mind, but with practice they will learn to meditate with the rascal.

3. Have the learner compose their own Monkey Mind Pacifier mantra and then practice it in meditation.

Lesson 14

Extend Love to Others

- 1.** Go to Chapter 14 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 61-63.
- 2.** Tell the learner some of the benefits of extending thoughts of love and loving kindness to others in meditation. You might say to the learner, "The best way to find out if extending thoughts of love to others benefits you is to try this meditation for several days or weeks. During that time you'll discover if you are experiencing benefits or not."
- 3.** Have the learner compose their own Love Mantras and then practice this meditation.

Lesson 15

Be Kind to Myself

- 1.** See Chapter 15 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 65-68.
- 2.** Discuss with the learner the importance of building themselves up, because the world around them often is beating them down. Or at least it seems that way to them.
- 3.** Take some time with the learner to go through the list of examples of positive Be-Kind-to-Myself mantras on the lower half of p. 66. Ask the learner to tell you which of these mantras he or she is most comfortable with.
- 4.** Have the learner compose their own Be-Kind-to-Myself mantras and then practice this meditation.

Lesson 16

Express Gratitude

1. Go to Chapter 16 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 69-74.
2. Take some time with the learner to go through the list of examples of Gratefulness mantras on the top half of p. 70. Ask the learner to talk with you about which of these mantras she or he can relate to.
3. Help the learner go through the list of questions on the lower half of p. 70 and talk about these and similar things she or he is grateful for.
4. Have the learner compose their own Gratitude mantras and then practice this meditation.
5. After the learner has practiced the Gratitude meditation, go over the “Introduce some variety” section on pp. 73-74 with the learner.

Lesson 17

Meditate for Answers

1. See Chapter 17 in the book *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 75-79.
2. Explain to the learner that this Questioning meditation practice is quite different from the previous practices. Something like this: “In this meditation you’ll focus mostly on being silent. You’ll also focus on being patient. When you are in Questioning meditation, asking for answers to your questions, you will focus on relaxing while waiting in silence.”

Explain, also, something like this: “This Meditate for Answers practice is different from LivingMoments meditation that you’ve been doing in previous practices. Most of your time in Questioning meditation you will remain silent while breathing slowly and deeply.”

3. Guide the learner through the Questioning meditation steps in *Simply How to Meditate*, pp. 76-77.
4. As you guide the learner through the Questioning meditation steps, the learner probably will want to explore with you these two questions: Who am I asking? And, how many answers will I get? When these questions come up, discuss with the learner the explanations on pp. 78 and 79 in *Simply How to Meditate*.



About the Author

Take a look at author Jim Collison's 72-year career...and how he developed into a diligent and tenacious researcher and writer, and how he developed into a meditation coach.

Starting in 1950 at age 17, he was a part-time, small-town newspaper reporter. At age 20 he was sports editor. Jump to year 2022 and his newest book -- *Simply How to Meditate: Meditation Made Easy for Beginners and Busy People* – is published.

What makes Jim an expert at researching, writing and communicating on topics he writes about?

He's a dogged researcher. For example? Back in 1963, as staff writer for the Mason City (IA) Globe-Gazette newspaper, he dug into the mystery of the "Mason City" name. His feature article revealed Mason City, Iowa, is the only city in the world named in honor of the Masonic Order. Then Jim wanted to know the answer to "Why?" He kept the file open, and 58 years later his follow-up article, "Why a MASON City?" was published in the Grand Lodge of Scotland 2021 Yearbook.

In 1968, Jim started a business to teach advanced reading to students and teachers in the upper Midwest. He wrote and published *Skill-Building in Advanced Reading* and *Mental Power in Reading* and pursued this career through 1977.

In 1978, with several other business executives, Jim started an association for employers. He was president of the association, Employers of America, for 30 years. He also headed the association's workers compensation insurance company. During that time, he doggedly researched the subject of employee handbook policies. Then he wrote and published *The Complete Employee Handbook Made Easy* that went through three editions and was successfully marketed throughout the United States. This manual was 300-plus pages and sold for \$269...and generated the income and profits to support eleven employees for eight years.

Jim also started digging into a subject of even greater interest to him: Profit-making generation from employee suggestion programs. His

persistence and pursuit of generation of cost-savings and new profits from employees' ideas resulted in Jim's writing *The Complete Employee Suggestion Program Made Easy*, followed by *Hidden Riches: How You Can Discover Hidden Wealth From Employees' Ideas*.

In 1982, Jim prepared and taught his Start on Success in Your Own Business course at the local community college, a 10-session class for women wanting to start their own businesses. This course was developed and taught with funding from the U.S. Department of Labor for the purpose of encouraging women in North Iowa to achieve independence and opportunities in the world of business.

His expertise in employee management and his interest in business and football sports at St. John's University (MN) drove him, in year 2000, to research and write the book *NO-How Coaching: Strategies for Winning in Sports and Business from the Coach Who Says 'NO!'* (Published by Capital Books in 2001.)

When in all this determined researching, writing, and business success did meditation come into Jim's life?

Actually, very early.

Jim started meditating when he was about 10 years old. He was reciting the rosary as a Catholic child of two parents who were deeply dedicated to the rosary. (Yes, properly recited, praying the rosary is a recognized form of meditation.) Over the next 25 years, Jim's spiritual development advanced, he left the rosary behind, and in his early 30s he dug into Buddhism and philosophical Taoism. In the early 1970s he discovered the Unity School of Christianity (Unity Village, MO) and Unity publications. He discovered Unity's approach to guided meditation and the use of positive affirmations.

Jim also became a lay minister, mostly speaking in United Church of Christ (UCC) churches, during 42 years.

During all these years his growth and experience in meditating matured and broadened.

In 2018, Jim decided he would create some exercise worksheets to instruct beginners to easily teach themselves how to meditate. The worksheets idea slowly morphed into a how-to book idea, which by early 2022 joined the meditation world. The book is *Simply How to Meditate*.

Jim Collison is a graduate of St. John's University (Collegeville, MN).

Jim taught on both the high school and college levels and served as an educational consultant. He designed an educational program called ALERT (Adult Literacy and Employment Reading Training) and wrote and conducted such workshops as: Start on Success in Your Own

Business, Power Over Fear, How to Take Advantage of Crisis and Change, and How to Help, Energize and Lead People.

He was a founding member of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Committee in Waterloo, Iowa. He served as a member of the advisory council for the Center for Industrial Research and Service, associated with Iowa State University.

Jim lives, and thrives, in Mason City, Iowa.

Contact Jim Collison at www.SimpleHowToMeditate.com