



KATIE BRINDLE

Meditation Guide

A short introduction



What is Meditation?

Meditation is a fundamental in Chinese medicine. When we meditate, we can increase Qi flow and clear energy blockages in the body. Most of us are aware that meditation is powerfully good for us. Meditation helps you be more present, calmer and lowers your heart rate. It has been shown in numerous studies to relieve anxiety and depression, preserve brain function, support immunity and improve concentration and overall psychological wellbeing.

So, if it's so great, why aren't we doing it? Because the reality is that it is too difficult for our 'always on brains' to relax to that extent. The number of patients I've witnessed in clinic guiltily mentioning that they've downloaded head space or other apps and haven't really got much further than that, only confirms my belief that what is stopping us is the fact we find it really hard to know where to start.

This is where Chinese medicine comes in! The masters knew this too and so they devised a really simple entry point for us novices to actually get to grips with meditation.

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Practice the Inner Smile

Meditation encourages the mind and body to work together. The emphasis on bringing awareness to the lower body is hugely grounding. This mind/body approach is increasingly accepted in Western science. The relatively new scientific field of Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI) studies the connection between our brains and our nervous, immune and endocrine systems. PNI is proving in Western terms what the Chinese have believed for thousands of years, namely that mind and body should be treated as a whole. Essentially, this is about engaging the power of the mind to heal the body.

There are two brains. The upper brain and the belly brain. We need to practice taking our attention down from the upper brain to the belly brain. How? It's actually really simple, and beautifully summed up by a famous Chinese proverb 'Where intention goes, Qi flows'. So simply hold your hands over the belly and focus your attention there.

Now we need to keep the intention down there, focussing on something to keep it there. And the most beneficial thing to focus on at that moment in time is a smile. Why? This sends positivity to the whole area. Imagining a smile tricks our constantly chattering 'monkey mind' into focusing positively into our centre, one breath at a time.

And now, the final ingredient, breath, or more specifically a relaxed long breath. This breath calms you, instantly moving awareness and energy out of the head and deeply into the energetic centre of the body. It can be as short as one inhalation or extended into an effective "Yang" meditation.

When you first start, your attention inevitably wanders, conjuring up a shopping list or mentally replying to an email. Don't worry, this is why it's called meditation practice! Practice makes perfect. By repeating this every day, slowly but surely it does get easier.

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Practicing Quiet

If even the Inner Smile feels like too much, the first thing to practice is simply being quiet and thinking about your breath for a little while. Lie still, and breath in through the nose for four and out through the nose for four. If you can do that, try in for 5 and out for 5. I can now count in for about 30 now. The Daoist masters take it to 1 minute in and one minute out! Just practice. And once you've got the hang of that feeling, then go back and try the Inner Smile.

Sound therapy is another really easy way to get the body to relax and to calm the mind without trying to empty it. Crystal singing bowls, such as the ones that Jasmine Hemsley plays so beautifully in her Instagram soundscapes, have been used for thousands of years for their meditative effects.

This is just the beginning of your meditation journey. Employ these simplest of techniques to just get over the initial little hurdles, those perceived barriers to meditation. And meditation is much easier when you have someone helping you – so let me help you, let Jasmine help you, by joining our free meditation sessions on Instagram.

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You can also find more information in my Qigong Guide below.

[View the Qigong Guide](#)

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Want to know more?

We will be delighted to support you as you continue along your Yang Sheng journey. The following will get you started:

'Yang Sheng: The Art of Chinese Self-Healing' available on Amazon, Waterstone and www.hayoumethod.com

Buy Yang Sheng Book

Live Qigong Healing classes (3 x each week) for a more in-depth and healing practice – full details on www.hayoufit.com

Free Masterclass "[Master Your Health](#)" – understand the 3- step plan for preventative health. Find more Qigong Masterclasses [here](#).

Free self-care weekly content [@katiebrindle](#) on Instagram, Facebook and YouTube.

Free regular gua sha demonstrations on [@thehayoumethod](#) Instagram. Purchase the accompanying tools from www.hayoumethod.com

DISCLAIMER:

Please note that any of these Yang Sheng techniques are designed to support your overall self-care and wellbeing and should not be used as a substitute for any Western medical advice or treatment that you may be receiving. You should not use the information in this Guide or on our website for diagnosing or treating a health problem or disease and must always consult your doctor if you have any health concerns. Additionally, please note that there are a few contraindications to Yang Sheng techniques, so please visit www.hayoumethod.com to view our comprehensive FAQs.

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