

How to use meditation for deep inner work

Enjoy instant epiphanies and immediate
peace

By Suzanne Heyn



The classic idea of meditation is that it's breath work. It's considered to be a tool to calm the mind, release anxiety and increase mindfulness, which is essentially how much you're actually paying attention to life.

And meditation is these things, but it's so much more. Meditation is a tool to connect with your deepest self. To heal your heart and discover who you are. To learn to love who you are.

Sometimes, meditation can become an escape, a way of tuning out instead of tuning in. If you find yourself falling asleep, or even using meditation purposefully to fall asleep — not before sleep, but to actually end your session sleeping — this is usually because of some inner fear or resistance, something you're avoiding. A desire to ignore the things lurking beneath the surface.

If this is true for you, or if you feel this at any step along your path, the first step would be to pay attention to and honor your fear or resistance or whatever block you're feeling. Honor the block. Create space for it to exist.

What does it feel like? It's okay to feel fear or resistance. Everything you feel is okay and contains information about what's happening in the deeper levels of your psyche.

This is very much about approaching your inner world with compassion and curiosity instead of judgment and resistance. It's natural to feel afraid or wonder if you're doing it right, but keep showing up! This is the most natural process in the world and soon you'll be a pro.

This is a process of tuning in, not tuning out, and this process of tuning in is at the core what meditation is. Meditation practice is a process of becoming intimately aware of every sensation within you. It's a process of releasing resistance to any internal pain, discomfort or fear you're experiencing and developing compassion and curiosity instead.

Meditating to feel and heal your emotions

The specific way I teach meditation is through the Feeling Awareness Meditation. It's a process of connecting to your inner heart space and becoming intensely aware of your emotions.

As you breathe in the emotions, which are energy in motion, from your heart center,

you're merging your awareness with that energy and literally dissolving it with your awareness, which is essentially non-judgmental attention. This is the process of feeling and healing your emotions.

Don't worry so much about labeling the emotions or even investigating them at this point. It's just about becoming comfortable with the process of feeling and learning not to react to it right away. It's about giving your emotions, which are information from your true self, and your true self space to exist without fear.

You can use the audio included with this PDF guide to learn this technique, the Feeling Awareness Meditation. I recommend practicing this technique, alone or with the audio, every day.

If you feel nothing at first, or just numbness, sit with that. Allow that to exist without worrying what's wrong with you, why you're so slow to heal, why the pain keeps coming, etc., and eventually you'll feel things at a deeper level. If you do enter into a space of self-judgment, break that at any time with compassion and love for this being, you, who is feeling pain. Understanding that whatever you feel is okay.

It's important here to have the intention to sit with yourself and honor whatever arises. This isn't a process of getting rid of specific emotions, which is really just the desire to get rid of parts of yourself. This is a process of sitting with your feelings with the understanding that they contain powerful, soul messages.

By showing up here like this every day, you will learn to love who you are. Love that's unconditional and not based on whether you're happy or not. You will connect to the deepest part of yourself and learn about your true needs and desires, what you like and don't like, and how you've changed, how your personality has evolved, in hopes of receiving love.

When you love who you are, you don't need that external validation from the world. This frees you to show up in life in a more authentic, empowered way because you're not worried about losing the love of those outside of you.

As you continue showing up every day, creating space in your day to be your true self and prioritizing yourself, this will change how you show up in the rest of your life. You will reclaim those parts of yourself you deemed unworthy to express in the world. You will heal.

Emotions are your truth, but not THE truth

I want to emphasize that emotions are true in the moment, but not necessarily objectively true. The nature of life and being human is that everything is perception. Everything is perception. I can't say that enough.

So while emotions are the soul's response to how the ego is interacting in the world, this too is based on perception.

If you feel, in a moment, trapped, this is based on the ego's perception of feeling trapped in a moment or life circumstance. If you should change your perception and realize that you're more free than you originally thought, then the feeling of being trapped transforms into a feeling of freedom.

When you feel the feelings of being trapped, or whatever it is you feel, you're healing the emotion along with the related life experience, the experiences that created this way of seeing the world and interacting with the world. Feeling and healing the emotion is the same as feeling and healing the situation related to that emotion, regardless of whether it was yesterday or when you were 5 years old.

This is about noticing when you're feeling pain and instead of judging yourself for feeling the pain, drop in with compassion and presence, which brings healing.

If you feel pain regarding a part of your personality or life, this pain reflects a need for love and acceptance. Even if you desire to create change, the first step is always acceptance.

For example, if you feel trapped, you can hate yourself for feeling trapped and hate your life for the way you feel like it's making you feel trapped. Or you can accept that you feel trapped, lean in and recognize that it's a call for love.

Go into that feeling with a sense of compassion and love and curiosity, and investigate that feeling so you can heal and expand your perception so you no longer feel trapped. Even if you desire to create change, the first step is always acceptance.

No matter what situation is causing pain, love will heal you and allow you to expand beyond this constriction. To love yourself regardless of what happened to you, or even what you've done. To find the love in painful situations. And to love the neuroses that developed in you as a result from living through painful situations.

Love is presence, and that's why feeling your emotions from a place of non-judgmental presence, without opinion for what the emotion means, will heal you.

And even if you do have opinions about what the emotion means, the negative self-talk that arises, try to have compassion for the negative self-talk that's arising because you're just causing yourself pain. And the way out of pain is acceptance, compassion, curiosity and love.

Viewed in this way, you can see how all pain, emotional or physical, is a call for love. Once you shift your perception and accept who you are and understand that you are perfect exactly as you are, then you can find that peace of unconditional self-love and radical self-acceptance.

Showing up in this way is an ongoing process. That's why it's best to meditate with this technique daily.

You could start at the thought level and try to change your thoughts, which is what most people do. But unless you heal the underlying emotional wound by feeling, which is the root of the thought, the thoughts will keep coming back and you'll be at eternal war with yourself, always hiding how you feel inside.

For deep peace, which for most modern people is about being who you truly are, accept all of yourself. View your emotions and thoughts and personality quirks and all pain, whether a painful emotion or an unkind thought, as a call for love. A call for you to understand yourself at a deeper level.

So while we need to honor our emotions as true, it's important to remember that they're based on our perception of any given situation. And our perceptions are based on our own internal wounds that influence how we see the world and ourselves. As you feel the feeling, you heal the underlying wound, which heals your perception.

How to use meditation for deep inner work, instantaneous insights and immediate peace so you can create a wildly authentic life.

Step 1:

Tune into your heart with the accompanying guided meditation. This guided meditation will teach you how to use your awareness to connect with the emotional

energy inside your heart and soul. You're simply placing your awareness on your heart center and noticing how it feels.

You may feel an identifiable emotion, but many times, I just feel powerful energy. Sometimes it's peace and empty, but many times, it's like semi-swirling cloud of energy. Almost a fog or a mist. Maybe dense or heavy or light. Maybe stagnant and deep or maybe moving and chaotic. It can feel scary, but that's okay. You get used to it.

Emptiness signals some kind of block, something within you that you don't want to face. If you feel empty, just sit with the emptiness.

Peace feels joyful, light and buoyant. It can feel happy and electric, in a very connected, non-manic kind of way.

A lot of times when you first sit, there will be extra layers of thought energy or unconscious stuff to burn through. It will feel a bit confusing and detached, disconnected.

This is kind of like turbulence, if an airplane is flying through the sky and it goes through shaky air. That's kind of what thoughts are. It's just stuff you have to go through on your way to clear skies. That's basically all our thoughts and emotions are, but emotions are a deeper level than the thought energy.

If you can just keep flying through the thoughts, sitting with them in a non-judgmental way, then eventually you will get to the emotional layer, which is a deeper layer, and as you sit with that layer, then you're more able to sink even deeper into the energetic body and your experience. Your true self. This is at the deepest level, connecting to your true self.

Continue sitting and using your awareness to essentially dig a pathway to the center of your heart. Not in a forceful way, but in a purposeful, patient way rooted in the knowing that this just extra stuff that will burn away.

Trust that if you continue to sit and show up, even over the course of several days or weeks, eventually your mind will quiet enough to allow your attention to fall all the way down to the center of you. It's not about forcing your mind to quiet, but being more patient and persistent than your thoughts.

Your mind will quiet. The less attention you pay to your thoughts, the faster they will simmer down and create space for you to feel.

Have patience! If you don't have patience, keep going because you'll develop patience through the process. This is sacred work and deserves your attention, repetition and your committed effort.

Step 2:

Now that you've connected to your heart, it's time to enter into a conversation with your emotions to learn more about yourself! I'll describe how I use this method, and then provide a more general step-by-step explanation so you can see the example plus additional context.

So right now, I just announced that I'm going to be releasing this guide on social media. I sit with my heart and name one word that feels true. Scared.

Why do I feel scared?

I feel like people will hate me for shining.

Okay, so that was like a wow massive insight for me and immediately I feel a shift because of course people won't hate me for shining. When I shine it helps others feel safe to do the same.

You could follow up that question with more questions:

Why do I feel like it's not safe for me to shine?

Then, tune into how you feel and name one words that feels true.

Perhaps a situation will come to mind, something that happened when you were younger that instilled in you that it's not safe to shine. Or maybe you'll just feel vague anxiety, unease, sadness, anger, whatever. Just keep digging in. Tune into how you feel, and name one word that feels true.

Follow the thing. Keep asking why. You can write this down in a journal or you might simply just talk out loud to yourself. Both have merits and can lead to different discoveries.

The key is that as you tune into your heart and ask yourself questions related to how you feel, those questions will bring up more feelings. As you feel the feelings and keep asking, "why," you'll learn new information and keep going deeper and deeper.

It's ultimately a process of entering into a conversation with your true self. Again, getting out of judgment and into compassion and curiosity. You cannot be

simultaneously curious and judgmental, so any time you're feeling judgmental, just shift into curiosity and that will help you come to love.

Know that the inquiry has merit, and the simple act of sitting with the feelings that arise also has merit. Both bring healing. In fact, after you have a discovery, it might elicit more emotions. The way to process and heal the emotions is simply to sit with them. If at any time, you don't have answers, that's okay. Just sit with your feelings and have patience. Keep showing up and trust that the answers will come.

Another example:

Earlier, I sat with the push and pull between desire and resistance. Here is a description of how I used the process and how you can, too.

Step 1: Name one word that feels true. For me, it was resistance.

Step 2: Ask, *How does that feel?* It felt heavy. Like a burden.

Step 3: Ask another question. Because I was contemplating the difference between resistance and desire, I asked myself, *How does desire feel?* It felt deeper, like a true knowing. More eternal.

I went ahead here and investigated these two polarities that I was sitting with. It was a push and pull, so I asked, how does one feel and how does the other feel? But you could first, before you move on, investigate the first thing more.

In this case, I could have asked why resistance feels like a burden. Or if I feel like I am a burden? Use your intuition to guide the inquiry. Keep asking questions.

Eventually, I moved to journal about this and fleshed out ideas about how desires come from the soul but resistance is more of an ego-based fear, fearing that my desires won't come true. The journaling was free-flowing, writing whatever came up. Not editing or censoring, just releasing.

This resistance has a purpose because it can lead to frustration, which leads to action, and this forward-motion will help us find acceptance for the present moment. But again frustration, you can resist it or wallow in it or ask yourself, "How can I use that frustration to move forward?"

So you're always leaning in and showing up with compassion and curiosity and taking

for granted that you're worthy and loved so you don't have to waste your time judging yourself.

So essentially you can use this method of meditative inquiry and journaling to do inner work about situations that are bothering you and also to flesh out your personal life philosophies.

Keep in mind that things will change. But momentary truths are often all we have. Just keep showing up, honoring your experiences and moving beyond duality that says only one thing can be true when in reality, everything is true. If something is true for you right now, that's your truth. That should be taken seriously.

Important things to know...

You cannot ask a wrong question. And actually this is a great chance for you to practice using your intuition in an area without high stakes, but just using your intuition to come up with a new question.

Try to have a curious attitude and just keep asking questions, sitting with those questions, seeing how it feels, and evolving from there. You are exploring your soul!

If you're new to this work, or have forgotten how to trust yourself, it will feel a little bit like wandering lost in the woods. But please feel empowered in your own knowing. You cannot do this wrong as long as you show up.

After the self-inquiry, I just fleshed out my thoughts in writing, just writing unedited from the heart. If you're not sure where to start writing, just write one word that feels true, just like during the self-inquiry you said one word that felt true.

And this is a good tool for anytime you feel lost or confused or stuck. What is one thing that is true? Figure that out and go from there.

Then write another word. And another. Soon you'll be writing paragraphs and eventually you will come to a truth. A realization. A shift. And then your task becomes to shift something in your life. Put it into action! What can you do today to make a real change in your life?

Often though, simply shifting inside will create external shifts. As you shift within, you'll change how you show up in the world. Naturally. It's a slow process, but have

patience! You'll see changes immediately, but big shifts take time and that's okay.

This journey is like unwinding a knot. You just have to find a loose string and keep working the knot until it comes undone. Do this over and over and over again, for the rest of your life. There is always more to discover and deeper to grow.

Why this works:

This technique is really simple, but also really profound. Because a lot of times we expect ourselves to have complete answers and full knowing about the things that hurt us or why we feel certain ways.

But when you're exploring new territory or feel stuck, in your heart or in life, it can feel amazingly spacious to just ask yourself, "What is one thing that feels true?"

Sometimes when I'm stuck in life, I ask, "What is one thing I know to be true?" And that helps me go into new directions. It releases the pressure and sense of anxiety that comes from feeling like we need to have it all figured out.

So in review:

* **Trust your emotions.** They are true and valid of your perspective at any moment in time. And even if your perspective could shift to help you feel more peace, empowerment and joy, working with your feelings as you feel them will help you identify the inner wounds that are keeping you in that perspective.

It's not like you're a bad person and that's why you're feeling pain. It's that you need more love. And you'll get to where you want to go through love and acceptance, not through resistance. It's only when you resist your feelings and wish you didn't feel a certain way that you get stuck and lost for answers. And that's also when you start searching for answers outside of yourself. So truly just honor your experience.

* **Don't be afraid to dive in.** Start with one word that feels true and go from there. There is nothing within you that could ever possibly make you unlovable. Your job is to find those dark places, those painful places and love them because they are you and you are love.

* **Keep up the practice.** This takes time. Learning how to do self-inquiry is really just about changing the questions you're asking yourself. Instead of asking useless

questions like “what’s wrong with me?” ask good, soulful, illuminating questions that will probe the inner recesses of your heart and soul and lead to real discoveries that will help you make important shifts and create lasting change.

* **Step-by-step.** Your life can change in any instant, but many times change is slower and that’s okay. Whatever is okay. And even though change can happen in an instant, wanting it to when it's not just blocks you from the transformation that you seek. So take every moment for what it is and find the love.

Journaling questions:

What came up for you while reading this?

What are you resisting?

Where in life are you selling yourself short?

In what ways are you avoiding action, hoping someone or something will come save you?

Why don't you want your desires to come true? Sometimes we sabotage ourselves even though we think we want something.

What is the story you're telling yourself around your desires, about maybe why they can't come true?

How safe do you feel in expressing your needs?

What areas of your life are out of alignment?

I hope this served you!