



Mindfulness Meditation: What It Actually Does (and Doesn't) Work

17.3%

of U.S. adults now practice mindfulness meditation — more than double the 2002 rate of 7.5%, the most-used complementary health approach in the country.

Source: NIH NCCIH, 2022 National Health Interview Survey

~8%

of practitioners report a temporary negative experience, such as increased anxiety — a rate similar to talk therapy.

Source: research reviews cited in script

What Mindfulness Actually Is

Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention to the present moment, on purpose, without judging it. Meditation is the formal exercise — usually a set amount of time, often focused on the breath or body — that trains that skill.

It isn't relaxation, hypnosis, or "thinking about nothing." Thoughts are expected to arise; the practice is noticing them and returning attention, without judgment, again and again — closer to a rep at the gym than a trip to the spa.

Among adults who practice mindfulness meditation, most say they do it to relax and reduce stress — not for any spiritual or lifestyle reason. If you've tried an app for three days and quit, or written this off as new-age fluff, this is for you.

Myths vs. Facts

MYTH	FACT
"You're supposed to clear your mind of all thoughts."	Thoughts showing up is normal and expected; noticing them and gently returning focus is the whole exercise, not a sign of failure.
"It only counts if you meditate 30–60 minutes a day."	Consistency matters more than duration — a focused 5–10 minutes daily is a legitimate, evidence-backed starting point.
"Meditation is always calming and completely harmless."	Roughly 8% of practitioners report a negative experience, similar to rates in talk therapy — a reason to learn from a qualified source, not avoid it.
"It can replace therapy or medication."	Use it alongside conventional care, not instead of it — loop in a provider on major treatment decisions.

How to Start: same time each day, 5 minutes, attention on the breath. When the mind wanders — and it will — notice that and return, without self-criticism. That cycle of wandering and returning is the practice working, not the practice failing.

Treatment Options If You're Unable to Meditate and Focus Your Attention

Having a qEEG can be super beneficial to identify if there are brainwave dysregulation that are preventing you from relaxing. If so, seek Neurofeedback to rebalance and train your brain to self-regulate and thereby allowing you to Meditate and Focus.