

The Secrets to Leading a Calm and Peaceful Life



INTRODUCTION

Have you ever told someone - or yourself - to just “calm down”?

According to psychologists, that phrase NEVER actually makes anyone feel calmer.

But we live in a fast-paced, stressful world, and everyone wants to know how to truly feel more at peace.

It might take more effort than just commanding yourself to be calm, but keep reading for the science-backed secrets to a peaceful life.

1. Focus On Mindfulness

You might have heard that mindfulness evokes calm, but have no idea how to practice it.

Luckily, there are a few concrete ways you can try to cultivate this increased sense of awareness:

- **Try Meditation**

You don't need to be a Buddhist monk straight off the bat. In fact, data shows that a mere 5 minutes of meditation a day can produce noticeable changes in things like mood and sleep. If you don't know where to start, there are several apps that will teach you

the basics and lead you in guided practice: try Calm or Headspace. And if you can't meditate? Just breathe. A few deep breaths will increase the supply of oxygen to your brain and immediately promote a feeling of overall calm.

- **Be Present**

Our thoughts love to distract us, but you'll feel best when you focus on the here and now. If you feel your mind wandering from your current state, try grounding yourself by honing in on your five senses.

- **Worry Less**

Anxiety of all kinds is a huge burden, and a definite obstacle to a peaceful existence. Focusing on the present and not agonizing about the future is key to experiencing inner peace.

2. Change Your Mindset

Your perspective has a massive impact on how you feel overall. Try making these mental shifts for a calmer existence:

- **Practice Gratitude**

Studies show that experiencing gratitude produces feelings of peace. Focusing on your appreciation for what you have, instead of dwelling on what you don't, acts as a positive disruption to the negative chemicals in your brain. Try to take a few minutes each day and jot down three things you're grateful for.

- **Be Tolerant**

Judgment and intolerance of others is associated with a negative outlook. A lot of our negative views are rooted in things we don't understand; so start by trying to open your mind and develop a sense of curiosity about other people. You can then work on extending compassion and empathy towards them, which is proven to yield more positive emotions.

- **Find Forgiveness**

Holding onto a grudge is not only a less-than-peaceful mental experience - clinical studies actually show it's bad for your health. Forgiveness can decrease blood pressure, increase sleep, and reduce pain. Spend some time reflecting and trying to let go, and your nervous system is bound to reap the benefits.

3. Strive For Balance

It's impossible to feel calm when you have too much on your plate and no time to unwind! Try to consider the following in order to make more space in your life:

- **Do Less**

Most of us are navigating jam-packed schedules, which we know is anything but calm. Evaluate your commitments, decide what's most important to you, and say no to everything else. It's also important to reduce the number of tasks you have per day, to leave time for breaks in between, to quit multitasking, and to pencil in some down time. And don't forget to limit your technology usage - too much screen time is likely overstimulating your brain.

- **Don't Procrastinate**

Research shows that procrastination increases anxiety levels and negatively impacts your physical health. Putting off important things may be tempting, but you're only eliciting more negative stress. Face the things you need to do head-on, and you'll enjoy an immense feeling of relief.

- **Experience Joy**

Part of pursuing balance is making certain it isn't all work and no play - be sure to make plenty of time for doing the things that make you feel good. Being in nature, engaging in an artistic activity, and surrounding yourself with people you enjoy are all associated with increased happiness and inner calm.

Being calm in a chaotic world may seem daunting, but by employing these proven strategies you'll be well on your way to a much more peaceful life!