



Kerry McClure, BS, RYT, NC, BCHN  
Website: [www.kerrymcclure.com](http://www.kerrymcclure.com)

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## Practical Mindfulness Meditation, and Office Yoga Tips and Techniques

### What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is being fully present in the moment. A sense of awareness, nowness, presence...

1. Paying attention to the sensations of the breath
2. Paying attention to the physicality of your body
3. Observing the thoughts in your mind non-judgmentally

### Benefits May Include:

Feeling more focused, more effective, happier, less stress, change the way you think about life.

### Walking Meditation

Enjoy the benefits of walking – health and endurance

Enjoy the benefits of meditation – awareness and mindfulness

In walking meditation the act of walking is your focus

### Mindfulness Meditation #1 - One-Minute of Mindfulness

- Check your watch and note the time
- For the next 60-seconds your task is to focus all your attention on your breath
- Leave your eyes open and breathe normally
- Catch your mind from wandering off and return your attention to your breath whenever it does so
- Keep in mind that this is not a contest or a personal challenge
  - You can't fail at this exercise, you can only experience it

### Mindfulness Meditation #2 – Conscious Observation

- Choose an object that you have lying around
- Hold it in your hands and allow your attention to be fully absorbed by the object
- Observe it
- Don't assess it or think about it, or study it intellectually
- Observe it for what it is
- You'll feel a sense of heightened "nowness"
- Conscious observation is a form of meditation that is subtle but powerful

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## Office Yoga

Yoga offers many benefits, from reduced stress to improved strength and flexibility. Here are a few stress relieving poses you can do at your desk to help you feel your best at work. Each pose takes less than two minutes and can undo tension in your neck, shoulders, low back, hips, hands, and wrists.

Note: Before you begin any new physical activity consult with your doctor. Be mindful of restrictive clothing and the type of shoes you are wearing when practicing these poses in your office. If you're not sure how to do any of these postures, please seek the advice and support from a qualified professional. Choose the poses that best suit your current needs and ability.

### Neck and Shoulder Release

If you've been slouching at your desk, this pose can help soften neck tension and gently open the shoulders. Sit on a chair with the spine long and both feet flat on the floor. Exhale and release your right ear towards your right shoulder. Take 3-5 breaths here. Inhale head back to center. Repeat on the other side.

### Chair Cat-Cow Stretch

Sit on a chair with the spine long and both feet flat on the floor. Rest your palms on the top of your thighs. Inhale, gently arch your back and drop your shoulders. This is cow position. Exhale, round your spine, letting the shoulders and head come forward. This is cat position. Continue moving between cow on the inhalations and cat on the exhalations for 5 breaths.

### Dynamic Arm Raises (can be done seated or standing)

Coordinate your movements with your breath, improving circulation in your upper body – refreshing your body and mind. Inhale, raise your arms toward the ceiling. Allow your shoulder blades to slide down your back as you reach upwards with your fingertips. Exhale, return your arms to your side. Repeat 3-5 times.

### Eagle Arms (can be done seated or standing)

Improves your upper back posture and relieves tension at the base of your neck and shoulders. Cross your left arm over the right at the elbow. Bend the elbows and bring your palms to touch. Gently lift the elbows while dropping the shoulders away from the ears. Hold 3-5 breaths. Repeat on the other side.

### Seated Chair Twist

Wring out tension in the deep muscles of the spine. Sit sideways on the chair, facing left. Exhale and twist your torso toward the left, holding onto the back of the chair. Lengthen your spine on each inhale and twist on each exhale for 3-5 breaths. Move your legs around to the right side of the chair and repeat the twist to the right side.

### Happy Hips Pose

When you're seated for long periods, the outer hip and buttocks can tighten. This stretch releases the hip rotators. From a seated position, bring your right ankle to rest on your left thigh, keeping the knee in line with your ankle as much as possible. Hold 3-5 breaths. Repeat on the other side. You may forward bend to intensify the stretch if desired.

### Seated Forward Bend

This gentle inversion stretches the long muscles of the spine and refreshes the nervous system by encouraging blood flow to the head, neck and shoulders. Exhale, come into a forward bend over the legs. Let the hands rest on the floor if they reach it. Let the head hang heavy. Inhale, engage your abdominal muscles, slowly uncurl the spine back to upright position. Repeat this sequence several times moving with the breath.

### Finger Roll and Forearm Stretch

Typing for hours (and years!) can create tension in the forearms, wrists, and fingers. This is a simple, stress-relieving pose. Place your hands palms up forearms parallel to the floor. Starting with your pinky finger, roll your fingers in towards your palm and back out. Repeat several times. Then, hold your arm straight out with fingers flexed downward. Stretch your forearm by gently pulling your fingers back. Then, squeeze and stretch each finger back. Repeat on the other side. Rest palms on your lap when done.

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