



# **A Beginner's Guide to Meditation: Practical Advice and Inspiration from Contemporary Buddhist Teachers**

*Rod Meade Sperry (Editor) , Shambhala Sun (Editor) , Pema Chödrön (Contributor) , Thich Nhat Hanh (Contributor) , Norman Fischer (Contributor)*

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**A practical, accessible guide to the fundamentals of Buddhist meditation, with pointers from some of today's most respected Buddhist teachers, including Pema Chödrön, Thich Nhat Hanh, Cyndi Lee, and Sharon Salzberg.**

As countless meditators have learned firsthand, meditation practice can positively transform the way we see and experience our lives. This authoritative guide to Buddhist meditation will introduce readers to the practice, explain how it is approached in the main schools of Buddhism, and offer advice and inspiration from Buddhism's most renowned and effective meditation teachers, including Pema Chödrön, Thich Nhat Hanh, and Matthieu Ricard.

Topics include how to build excitement and energy to start a meditation routine and keep it going, setting up a meditation space, working with and through boredom, what to look for when seeking others to meditate with, how to know when it's time to try doing a formal meditation retreat, how to bring the practice "off the cushion" with walking meditation and other practices, and much more.

## A Beginner's Guide to Meditation: Practical Advice and Inspiration from Contemporary Buddhist Teachers Details

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## **From Reader Review A Beginner's Guide to Meditation: Practical Advice and Inspiration from Contemporary Buddhist Teachers for online ebook**

### **Peggy says**

Only took me five years but I did it. A few of the selections are very dry/dense. But maybe in 5 yrs those will make sense to me.

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### **Mihai S says**

Pretty hard to follow in places.

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### **Ken says**

If you're a relaxed, meditative sort, maybe you can read this book cover to cover chronologically. Not me. I found it worked much better to treat it like a resource by using the Table of Contents to good effect. Otherwise, the overlapping begins to create a drag of sorts.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying this collection of essays by topnotch minds in the field is too repetitive. There's plenty of divergence to please those searching for ways to meditate. I'm just saying there are unavoidable similarities because, well, it's the same basic music: Variations on a Theme of Meditation. But still, variety is to be had. For instance, some will tell you the optimal time for meditation is an hour, others 30 minutes, still others 10. It's like the professors you had in college -- you're bound to like some of their messages and deliveries better than others. So the beginner can look for the right fit even though the topic revolves like a wheel.

Using the Table of Contents as your compass, you'll find subsections on getting started (basic advice), cultivating calm and insight (the whole point), the lowdown on zazen (Zen, anyone?), Indo-Tibetan variations (getting to the roots), and, sensibly enough, how to keep the ball rolling once you begin. Within these sections are essays on walking meditation, meditating alone vs. with a community, yoga, the surroundings you choose to meditate in at home, how to relax, how to avoid boredom, and how to incorporate koans (oh boy... now THERE'S something to meditate over). And that's just a start.

All in all, a great resource for your shelf. Reach for it as needed or when you need to start, change, or keep your meditation alive and meaningful. And relax. You are not obliged to plow through this like a novel....

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### **Jennifer says**

Whether one is new to meditation or has been practicing for quite some time, A Beginner's Guide to Meditation: Practical Advice and Inspiration from Contemporary Buddhist Teachers by Rod Meade Sperry,

makes for an excellent resource guide to Buddhist meditation. The book can either be read literally cover-to-cover or, as was my preference, to use the index and read the section I found spoke to me on a particular day. I would not hesitate to recommend A Beginner's Guide to Meditation to anyone.

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### **Nicholas Why says**

A collection of practical advice from Buddhist teachers to inspire u to meditate. I didn't even know there was a thing called meditative walking. Even if u dun meditate, take this advice: Don't leave your strength in the gym.

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### **Ana Gutierrez says**

I found this book both informative and perplexing. It is a compilation of multiple meditation experts writing small articles on different aspects or focuses for starting and maintaining a meditation practice. Some of them made sense and some of them felt like mental acrobatics were needed to understand it.

At the very least I know have a list of authors to look up and work from.

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### **Lindsey Höhn says**

I skimmed through this book. Lots of great insight!

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### **Steven says**

This book was a bit of both for me. While I really loved some of the articles on meditation and the different ways to look at it, some articles I just skipped because they were going away from the topic. However, I did find some great introductions to new authors for me to discover in full book form.

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### **Alain Burrese says**

“A Beginner's Guide To Meditation: Practical Advice and Inspiration from Contemporary Buddhist Teachers” edited by Rod Meade Sperry and the Editors of the Shambhala Sun is a good collection of essays on meditation and Buddhism. It is not quite what I expected from a book titled “A Beginner's Guide To Meditation” but a book I enjoyed and learned from nonetheless.

The book contains nearly forty different essays of different lengths. They range from two pages long to ten to fifteen pages for some of the longer ones. These were written by a wide range of experts, some such as Thich Nhat Hanh, Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, Jack Kornfield, and the Fourteenth Dalai Lama being more recognizable than others. I found all of the essays interesting, but some more than others. The writing style varied as well, with some essays more “beginner” level than others.

For the person looking for a beginner's "how to" meditate book, this collection of essays wouldn't fit the bill. While some of the selections offer some tips and suggestions on meditation practice, it's not a simple beginners "how to" book. This is more of a supplemental text of essays to support a meditation practice.

When you look at it as such, a support to your meditation practice, it is a very good book. Very good that is if you have or want a Buddhist perspective to your meditation. Obviously, meditation can be done by non-Buddhists, and if you fall in this category, you might not want a book focusing on Buddhist concepts and philosophies.

As someone who does study Buddhist and Taoist philosophies with my martial art, meditation, and Asian studies and practice, I really enjoyed many of the essays. Some more than others, but I gained something from each and every one of them. I liked the variety of topics and voices, and while some were heavy on philosophy, there were many practical tips to incorporate into your meditation practice, and also a healthy dose of motivation to either get you started on your meditation path, or to continue if you have already started. While this wouldn't be the first book I'd recommend to someone wanting to learn meditation, it is a good book to include with your studies and it definitely contained information to help me with mine.

If you are wondering what Buddhist meditation is all about, this is a good book to give an overview of various concepts, philosophies and practices. If you are already meditating and want a supplemental text to enhance your education and practice, this is a great addition to your meditation resources. If you fall into one of these camps, I'd recommend you read this guide to meditation.

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