

## **Mindfulness Apps**

### **Free Apps for iOS and Android**

#### **The Insight Timer**

You can see everyone else in the world that is meditating with you (or at least where they are in the world), and you can customize the bell sounds, and choose from hundreds of guided meditations by leading meditation teachers.

#### **Aura**

This one must have been made with mothers in mind, because all of the meditations are just three minutes long! This is a great app if you are just beginning your practice.

#### **WhiteNoise**

As its name suggests, this app uses white noise to mask distracting sounds during meditation and to promote relaxation. You can also use WhiteNoise to help with sleep. It comes with 40 pre-recorded white noise sounds, such as falling rain, a bubbling brook, or ocean waves. You can loop these samples, or even mix them together to create your own soothing sounds. What's more, you can record and loop your own favorite sounds. No guided meditations here.

#### **Breathe2Relax**

Breathe2Relax by National Center for Telehealth and Technology helps you relax and relieve stress through exercises such as diaphragmatic breathing, also known as "belly breathing." It is completely free. Breathe2Relax is a portable stress management tool. Breathing exercises have been documented to decrease the body's 'fight or flight' (stress) response, and help with mood stabilization, anger control, and anxiety management.

#### **What's Up?**

Now that's a question to ask yourself when feeling anxious! Having a quick self check-in can do wonders for finding perspective with your thoughts and feelings. This app has loads of features to help you do just that. When you feel negative thoughts taking over, use the app's methods to help you overcome them. The app also has grounding techniques to help you re-center.

### **Mindshift**

Mindshift is an app designed to help people cope with anxiety. Rather than trying to avoid anxiety, you can make an important shift and face it. Mindshift will help you learn how to relax, develop more helpful ways of thinking, and identify active steps that will help you take charge of your anxiety.

### **Relax with Andrew Johnson Lite**

Relax with Andrew Johnson Lite teaches relaxation techniques, which have helped with ME, pain control, insomnia, posttraumatic stress disorder and many other symptoms. It provides a great guided meditation session for relaxation, helpful with anxiety and stress as well as a sleep aid.

### **Free Apps iOS**

#### **SimpleMind+**

This isn't a meditation app, either, but it's useful if you find a "brain dump" useful to clear your mind for meditation. SimpleMind+ is a free mind mapping tool that helps you clear your head of clutter. *An Android alternative, which is also free, is SharpMindMap.*

#### **Anxiety Free**

One strategy some people with anxiety swear by is self-hypnosis. A practitioner of clinic-based hypnotherapy, Donald Mackinnon developed these guided recordings. How it works: You listen to an audio recording in a quiet and safe environment and learn the technique. The recordings are more than just relaxing. They contain subliminal signals to speak to your subconscious.

#### **Free Relaxing Nature Sounds and SPA Music**

Tuning out of your anxiety may mean tuning in to something else. With 25 nature sounds, this app is sure to have something to soothe an anxious mind. If you want something even more personal, the app contains a soundboard with 35 sounds for you to mix and create your own experience. Listen to the app before bedtime, just to slow down, or even as an alarm.

### **Self-Help for Anxiety Management**

This app provides self-help techniques to help manage overall anxiety. Track anxiety levels, triggers, and build a personal tool kit in the app. It also provides interactive guidance for practicing self-help and a closed social community to engage with others. If you're looking for holistic snapshot of your anxiety and how to cope with it, this may be the app for you.

### **Sattva**

Sattva is all about inspiring you to meditate every single day. The app carries a host of unique features. Along with the standard components of pre-loaded guided meditations and chants, timers, and mood trackers, users can also check their heart rate and receive "trophies" for taking on new challenges. The app also does a great job of explaining why and how meditation can be an important and necessary component to improving your life. New features let you integrate with the iPhone's built-in Health app.

### **Free Apps Android**

#### **Nature Sounds Relax Sleep**

Sometimes you just need a time-out when your stress becomes overwhelming. This app uses the calm sounds of nature to soothe you back into a calm, relaxed state. Sounds include thunder, ocean sounds, birds, rain, or waterfalls. You can set the timer to have a quick 10-minute break, or even set the sounds as an alarm to help ease into your day.

#### **The Worry Box**

Put your worries away in a box! While that statement seems too good to be true, this app's idea is to help you deal with and manage your worries. You keep a personal diary in the app where you input your worries. The Worry Box then helps you decide if the worry is unimportant, important, controllable, or uncontrollable. Depending on the worry, the app will give you techniques to help manage it, like next steps or coping statements to tell yourself.

#### **Stop Panic and Anxiety Self-Help**

This app is for users who've experienced panic attacks due to a panic disorder. In addition to keeping a personal diary, the app comes with three sets of audio: panic assistance, emotional training, and relaxation. The panic

assistance audio is meant to coach users through a panic attack, while the emotional training audio trains users to access a calm state. The relaxation audio helps users reduce stress and relax the body.

**Free sessions with either In-app purchases or subscriptions**

**iOS and Android Apps**

**Omvana**

Omvana offers a wider range of guided and music-only options like an iTunes of meditations. It claims to have “the largest library” of guided meditations and self-hypnosis tracks online. While some tracks are available at no cost, most tracks cost a few dollars each. It’s worth noting the self-hypnosis tracks, which claim to help you lose weight, find love, or acquire wealth, are not based on neuroscience and are of dubious value.

**Headspace**

Like Meditation for Fidgety Skeptics, Headspace teaches less spiritual, more science-based meditation techniques, beginning with a free introductory course. You purchase a subscription to gain access to additional courses, as well as guided meditations. Headspace includes mood tracking features as well, and you can download guided meditations for offline use. A Headspace subscription is \$12.99 per month, or \$94.99 for a year. A lifetime membership costs \$399.99.

**Calm**

Calm combines rich features and a large library of guided meditations with a simple, clean interface. Guided meditations range in length from 3 to 25 minutes, so you can always find a meditation to fit your schedule. Like other subscription-based apps, Calm provides a basic course in meditation for free, with more advanced meditations requiring a subscription starting at \$9.99 per month. \$12.99/mo or \$60 per year

**iOS Apps**

**Meditation for Fidgety Skeptics by Hea Happier**

Here’s training for meditation skeptics by meditation advocate Dan Harris. This app’s content is firmly based in neuroscience and omits the spiritual components present in many other apps. The free seven-lesson course teaches basics of

meditation, with access to more advanced meditations and courses for a subscription of \$9.99 per month, or \$79.99 for a year. Unfortunately, Meditation for Fidgety Skeptics is not yet available for Android.

### **Stop, Breathe & Think**

Stop, Breathe & Think combines a library of guided meditations with the mood tracking features of apps such as My Mood Tracker (13). It even “curates” suggested meditations based on your mood. With its goal-oriented tracking focus, it is something like a meditation Fitbit. You can purchase additional guided meditations, or receive full access to their library with a subscription of \$4.99 per month or \$41.99 for a year.

### **iOS and Android Apps that cost**

#### **buddhify**

First of all, despite the name this app has no apparent relation to Buddhist meditation. Its 11 hours of guided meditations are customized for activities such as walking in the city, taking a break at work, waiting around, and going to sleep. These situation-based meditations help to make buddhify compatible with busy, urban lifestyles. There are also meditations that aim to reduce anxiety and take your mind off pain. For a single, relatively low payment, buddhify offers many of the features of much costlier meditation apps. Some users do have minor quibbles with this app, such as the fact it 300+ MB of storage and can't be transferred to an SD card on Android devices. Some user reviews also mention the meditation guide speaks faster than they prefer.

#### **Simply Being**

Simply Being is a solid, affordable app that features voice-guided meditations as well as relaxing nature sounds. Unlike some of the pricier meditation apps, there isn't much choice in meditation themes or voices. But the app's relative simplicity could be a virtue: More elaborate apps can be overwhelming and even distracting.

#### **Acupressure: Heal Yourself**

Acupressure is a massage technique that uses fingers to press pressure points on the body to ease body tension. Don't worry, no needles involved here! This app teaches users how to perform self-acupressure with over 90 point combinations to help relieve anxiety, pain, and other common conditions.

The instructions use illustrations to show exactly where to find a pressure point and how to massage it.

### **Relax and Rest Meditations**

We could all use a little R&R, especially if you feel overwhelmed by anxiety. This app has you covered. With three guided meditations either 5, 13, or 24-minutes long, you can find time for that quick break and get re-centered.

### **The Mindfulness App**

The Mindfulness app provides timed meditations from three to 30 minutes long. It also has customized reminders to keep you mindful throughout the day. You can get a premium subscription for \$9.99 for one month or \$59.99 for the year with one month's free trial included. Premium subscribers will gain access to more than 200 guided meditations on topics like calmness, focus and relationships. The app can be downloaded on an iPhone, iPad and Android.

### **OMG! I Can Meditate**

Meditations on the OMG! I Can Meditate app is broken down by interest and life event. For example, there is a special series of meditations specific for people undergoing treatment for chemotherapy. Another series focuses on weight loss. Sign up for the year for \$7.42 per month. The app works on the iPad, iPhone and Android.

### **iOS Apps that cost**

#### **Equanimity**

This app could be your favorite if you're an established meditator looking for a timer you can customize. No guided meditations, no music or nature sounds. Equanimity allows you to set unobtrusive gongs, bells, or chimes to signal the end of your session. The elegant timer shows you how much time is left in your meditation without distracting you. Also included are a meditation journal and a way to log meditations so you can track and monitor your practice. *A comparable option for Android is Bodhi Timer.*

### **Meditation Timer Pro**

Meditation Timer Pro is meditation in the most classic sense. No bells and whistles here, just solid exercises designed to let you get the most out of your practice. Users can use the default options available or create their own specialized package. This includes customized start and stop chimes and background noise. Users can also program the app to log their meditation automatically to better keep track of their progress.

### **Inscape**

As one of New York's premier meditation studios, Inscape knows a thing or two about mindfulness. The Inscape app lets you experience everything the studio has to offer no matter where you live. It allows you to select from a number of different guided meditation exercises, set meditation timers, and even keep a practice journal. The app also offers an amazing selection of sound meditations. Inscape offers monthly subscriptions starting at \$8. There's a 14-day trial available to new members, so you'll have a little time to try out the app before committing.

### **Timeless | Meditation**

Timeless offers a simple, minimalist user interface. The app allows you to select meditation duration from 8 to 32 minutes. Courses, guided meditations, and personal data are available on the bottom menu. The Timeless app makes it easy to set goals and track your progress. Timeless offers basic guided meditations and some free courses, but you will have to subscribe to unlock the more advanced guides. The free content within the app is excellent, and should be enough to help you decide if this is the meditation app for you. If you choose to build your meditation practice with Timeless, monthly subscriptions start at \$9. If you're an Apple Watch owner, then you'll be happy to know Timeless is compatible with Apple Watch.

### ***US Department of Veterans Affairs, Smartphone Apps***

#### **The Mindfulness Coach App**

The Mindfulness Coach App provides you with tools and guided exercises to help you practice mindfulness, which means paying purposeful attention to the present moment without passing judgment on it or your feelings. Mindfulness Coach can be used alone, but is not intended as a substitute for therapy.

### **The Virtual Hope Box (VHB)**

The Virtual Hope Box (VHB) contains simple tools to help patients with coping, relaxation, distraction, and positive thinking. Patients and providers can work together to personalize the VHB content on the patient's own smartphone according to the patient's specific needs.

### **Tactical Breather App**

Tactical Breather App can be used to gain control over physiological and psychological responses to stress. Through repetitive practice and training, anyone can learn to gain control of your heart rate, emotions, concentration, and other physiological and psychological responses to your body during stressful situations.

## ***Mindfulness Apps for Kids***

### **iOS and Android**

#### **Breathe, Think, Do with Sesame**

In this app, kids help the monster calm down and solve problems! They practice breathing, and then help the monster think about different solutions and try them out.

#### **Smiling Mind**

Mindfulness for kids, with an Australian accent. It's awesome (And it also has meditations and programs for grownups).

### **iOS**

#### **Stop, Breathe, and Think Kids**

In this kids version of the popular app for teens, kids check in with how they are feeling, and then the app recommends a mission for them to go on to help them with their particular emotion(s).

## ***Mindfulness Apps for Teens***

### **iOS and Android**



### **Stop Breathe and Think**

Tell the app how you're feeling and it will recommend specific guided meditations based on your mood and your needs. The app opens by asking users what five emotions they have been feeling today, which in and of itself is a great tool for emotional awareness for teens.

### **Calm**

This is a favorite among the teens. It offers short practices, with soothing music and nature scenes to go along with them. There is also a "bedtime stories" feature to help you fall asleep. (This app is great for adults, too).