THE GOAL OF MEDITATION IS **not** TO CLEAR YOUR MIND. It is to connect your mind & body, resulting in more peace, balance, focus and clarity (to attain the highest level of consciousness possible).

Benefits of Meditation:

- lower blood pressure
- improved blood circulation
- lower heart rate
- less perspiration
- slower respiratory rate
- less anxiety
- lower blood cortisol levels
- more feelings of well-being
- less stress
- deeper relaxation
- improved sleep patterns
- improved data retention and focus

**How to start:**

- Start small (2-3 minutes, or 10-20 breaths)
- Be comfortable
- Focus on your breath
- Idea: 100 breaths meditation (count your breaths 100 times)
- Idea: Timer meditation (set your timer so your mind doesn't constantly wonder how much time is left)
- Idea: use YouTube guided meditations

**Simple types of meditation styles:**

**Standing Meditation:** Standing instead of sitting to meditate can relieve lower back pain and promote a greater sense of internal stability. Stand in a comfortable, straight posture with the feet pointing straight forward, about shoulder width apart. After settling into the position, do a quick full-body “scan,” releasing tension and bringing awareness to every part of the body.

**Walking Meditation:** In walking meditation, called kinhin in the Zen tradition, practitioners move slowly and continuously while staying aware of the body and mind. For this form of meditation, use good posture (just like seated meditation), take deep breaths, and experience the motions of the body. The walking movement should be continuous, so pick a safe place with space to roam around, like a large park or field.
Dance Meditation: Get ready to boogie—meditation just got a soundtrack! Most people, at one time or another, have put on some tunes and cut the rug to chill out after a tough day. Dance or kundalini meditation takes that release one step farther by asking participants to let go of the ego and surrender to the rhythms and ecstasies of movement. Some classes encourage yelling, jumping, and even hooting like an owl! Dance meditation may not be for the faint of heart—or arm or leg—but it can be a great way to release tension and get in touch with our instincts.

Daily Life Practice Meditation: Does high-energy dance sound a bit too wacky? Bring meditation back to a more reasonable pace with daily life practice meditation, which is also called Samu work meditation in the Buddhist Zen tradition. In this style of meditation, practitioners slow down daily activities to half-speed and use the extra time to be mindful and focus on thoughts. There’s no need to sign up for a class when it’s possible to meditate while washing dishes, taking a shower, walking down the subway steps...

Breathing Meditation: This technique takes those pre-yoga class "Oms" to the next level. Also called yogic breathing or Pranayama, this meditation style is all about controlling the inhales and exhales. Dr. Jeffrey Rubin explains, "Longer exhales tend to be calming, while longer inhales are energizing. For meditative purposes either the ratio of exhale to inhale is even or the exhale is longer than the inhale for a calming effect." This type of meditation can be done anywhere, anytime (except underwater... for obvious reasons).

Other types (there are MANY more; find what works for you):
Concentration meditation: A concentrative meditation technique involves focusing on a single point. This could entail watching the breath, repeating a single word or mantra, staring at a candle flame, listening to a repetitive gong or counting beads on a rosary.

Mindfulness meditation: Mindfulness meditation technique encourages the practitioner to observe wandering thoughts as they drift through the mind. The intention is not to get involved with the thoughts or to judge them, but simply to be aware of each mental note as it arises.

Other forms:
- Listening to music
- Painting, drawing; art
- Yoga, Tai Chi
- Talk a walk or go on a run
- Journal
- Breath

Whatever you decide that works for you; start small, be forgiving of yourself and release any expectations. Just. Be.