

# The Benefits of Meditation for Moms & How to Start—Even If You Think You Don't Have Time

By Sugey Palomares

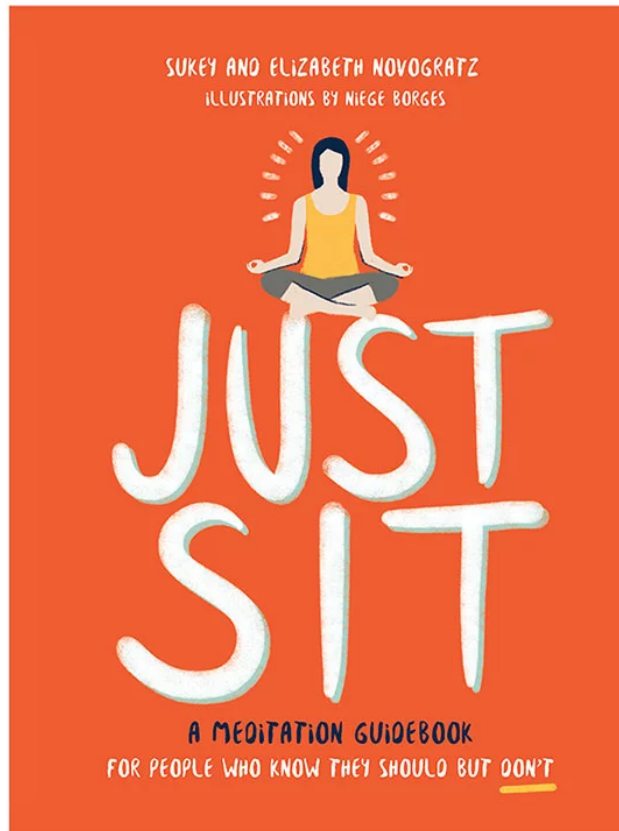


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All moms want to feel the peace—we really do, but when it comes to making time for meditation, often times it doesn't get checked off of the to-do list. I'm guilty of it too. Meditating is a way of life. It requires time, energy, and mindfulness. The truth is, sometimes I have it in me and sometimes I rather eat a box of chocolate while "slothing" it on the couch.

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Sukey and Elizabeth Novogratz, co-authors of *Just Sit*, understand the struggle. Their new meditation book is designed for people who know they should meditate, but don't. Some of the health benefits to meditation include improved

sleep, less wrinkles, better sex (yes), and lower blood pressure, just to name a few, so making the time sure seems worth it.

**Also see:** How to Have Happier Dreams and Get a Good Night's Sleep

“There’s not a soul on the planet who couldn’t benefit from meditation. It’s probably the best gift you can give yourself, you just won’t know until you experience it,” they write. In honor of National Meditation Month, we asked Sukey and Elizabeth to share more of their wisdom and best tips to start meditating.

## **What are some common misconceptions of meditation?**

There are a lot of misconceptions about what meditation is and what it does. Many people come to it with unrealistic expectations and ideas. To start, meditation isn’t a way to stop your thoughts or empty your mind. Meditation is a way to slow down and observe your mind, not kill it. Another is absolute stillness. Absolute anything doesn’t really help and, although stillness is wonderful at times, there are many meditations that you can do while in motion.

## **What are some health benefits of meditation?**

Meditation gives us numerous physical and emotional health benefits: it aids the immune system, reduces heart attacks and strokes, improves circulation, and lessens stress – which is the culprit for almost all disease. Emotionally, meditation decreases depression and anxiety, builds compassion, and adds a sense calm to the chaos that so many of us live. Many doctors recommend a daily meditation practice for both physical and emotional health as well as longevity.

## **How long should you be meditating in order to start feeling the emotional and physical health benefits?**

For a lot of people, 8 weeks seems to be a golden number, because it's enough time to get going and feel some results. Although, most people feel better after the first session.

## **When you're a busy mom on-the-go it could be difficult to find time and space to meditate. What are some recommendations?**

Finding time to meditate when you're a mom on-the-go is a bit difficult, but it isn't impossible. No matter how busy you might be, there's always a spot of time where you can sneak it in: on a lunch break, after putting the kids to bed, or before everyone wakes up. All you need is just a few minutes.

## **How can you transform your commute into a meditation session?**

If you take public transportation, don a pair of sunglasses and a set of headphones and 'just sit' and meditate. If you drive to the office, go a little earlier than normal and minutes earlier and "sit" in the car when you arrive to the office.

## **What are some meditation techniques for beginners? How should you get started?**

We recommend keeping it simple. Close your eyes and focus on your breath. Watch the inhale and the exhale and each time that your mind starts to wander, come back to the breath. Set your phone alarm for a few minutes and go from there.

## **How can meditation make you a better parent?**

Meditation truly makes us nicer: it grows our compassion muscle, teaches us to respond before reacting (most of the time), and helps us to accept and

understand ourselves in bigger, better ways; therefore accept and understand everyone else bigger and better too. Trust us, the kids will love it if you start a meditation practice.

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