



6 WHY MEDITATION IS A MUST

Prince Harry is said to meditate every day, and according to Nahid de Belgeonne, founder of Good Vibes yoga, 20 to 30 minutes is all it takes to boost your brain, strengthen your heart and improve the condition of your skin.

‘Practising meditation over time shrinks the amygdala, which is the brain’s fear or flight response centre. As the amygdala shrinks, the prefrontal cortex of the brain becomes thicker, meaning you’re better able to concentrate and make decisions,’ she says. Meditation also lowers blood pressure and increases the variation in between heartbeats (HRV), which shows you are more resilient in stressful situations. Regular sessions have even been found to improve acne, eczema and psoriasis, according to a study in the *British Journal Of Dermatology*. ‘This is because meditation helps you to manage stressors that produce hormones like adrenaline and cortisol, which wreak havoc on skin.’

Try sitting and focusing on your breathing for five minutes a day for a week, and then build it up a week at a time. Or, download the Stop, Breathe & Think app for free (optional subscription £9.99 per month; £54.99 per year), which encourages you to pick an adjective that describes how you’re feeling to guide you to the right mindset.

7 PLACATE PANIC

To avoid or stop a panic attack in its tracks, try the three-step SOS technique devised by Dr William Van Gordon, a psychologist at the University of Derby and a former Buddhist monk.

1 Stop: ‘As soon as you feel the mind begin to panic and run away with itself, pause for a moment to recognise that this process is actually happening.’

2 Observe the breath: ‘Focusing on the in- and out-breaths anchors the mind in the present moment and slows down ruminative thinking.’

3 Step back and watch your mind: ‘This creates distance between you, the observer, and your thoughts and feelings, so that you are better able to see them as passing events, which, in turn, reduces the amount of control they have over you.’



8 CALLING ALL ADRENALINE JUNKIES
‘You can’t work out without adrenaline – it pushes your body to do those extra reps,’ says Dalton Wong of TwentyTwo Training. ‘But if you excessively work out, you could suffer from adrenal fatigue.’ This reduces your thyroid function, leading to brain fog, decreased immunity and even insomnia. ‘The recovery phase after exercise is key to avoid abusing your adrenaline so that you save it for improving your gym performance. After every eight high-intensity workouts, follow up with a soft-tissue massage.’ ►