



Should I meditate in the morning or night?

Teddington, Richmond, Twickenham and Kingston are all vibrant areas with great shopping restaurants and services. Many families choose to move to these areas because of great schools, rail access and proximity to the Royal Parks of Richmond and Bushy. However how many of us take the time to find a quiet space to be mindful or stop and pause for thought?. Many of us are aware of the concept of mindfulness and meditation but putting it into practice in every day life. As a Private GP serving the patients of Teddington, Richmond, Twickenham and Kingston, I see many families who are rushing from one school pick up to the next, and are caught in the rat race balancing professional and home life and often feeling like they are failing in both.

Meditation and mindfulness can be a really useful practice and actually does not require much time - lets look at how you can put meditation and mindfulness into your daily routine

What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the practice of cultivating awareness and being present in this moment. The great thing about mindfulness is that you can do it anytime, anywhere - whether it be whilst waiting for a bus or walking to work! One of my favourite mindful practices is eating mindfully. We spend so much time rushing around and on our phones that we don't take the time to taste and enjoy our food. Try this simple mindfulness practice next time you eat something

Mindful eating exercise - choose a snack that you love, whether it be an apple or banana (try to avoid chocolate as this may distract from achieving full focus) sit in a

quiet place and let yourself relax. When ready start by looking at the food, noticing the colours and how it looks. Next take a few deep breaths in and out, focusing on the smell of the food. Now gently pick up the food and hold it in your hands, feeling the texture and weight of it. Take a small bite and chew slowly, paying attention to how the food tastes - is it sweet, sour, salty? Focus on the flavour of each bite and how it feels in your mouth.

You should start to feel more relaxed after this exercise, so if you have time to practice again then do! If not just take a moment to bring awareness into your next activity - for example when you get onto the bus or tube try to be present and focus on your surroundings rather than thinking about what you have to do when you get to your destination.

What is meditation?

Meditation is the practice of training your mind to focus on something, be it your breath or a mantra (repeating words). Meditation generally refers to a longer period of time spent focusing and practicing mindfulness than short bursts throughout the day. If you are just starting out I would recommend doing shorter meditations but more frequently rather than having one long session.

There are many different types of meditation, so I would recommend trying a few to see what works best for you. A great way to start is by using an app such as Headspace or Calm which have guided meditations and also offer trial periods so you can try before you buy.

How can I fit mindfulness and meditation into my daily routine?

Many people choose to meditate in the morning, as it can set the tone for the day. You may find that if you meditate at night, you will be more relaxed and able to fall asleep easier. The best time to meditate is what works for you. You can even practice mindfulness whilst working out or on your commute, it's just a matter of choosing the right moment and sticking with it!

So whether you have 20 minutes a day or 20 seconds - I hope that this post has inspired you to try meditation and put some more mindfulness into your daily routine. Top 3 spots to meditate in Richmond, Teddington and Kingston

1: Bushy Park Woodland Gardens

Just amble through and find a bench near the water, stop and listen, you will be amazed at the sounds around you. Then head for a green tea at the [Pheasantry Cafe](#)

2: Tow path Kingston Bridge

Wander over Kingston Bridge and amble down the towpath and just pause and watch the river flow past, constantly shifting. If you can get there early the mist will drift past and you will feel the energy of the water.

3: Richmond Park

Park up or better cycle to [Pembroke Lodge](#). Cross the road and head down to the lake in the middle of the park. Wander kicking through the leaves in the woodland areas and stop and feel the strength of a tree, look up towards its upper branches and listen to the movement of the leaves. Find a quiet spot and pause. You could be in a forest anywhere and you will truly forget you live in London.

If you are feeling anxious or stressed and would like to see a Private GP and you live in Teddington, Richmond, Twickenham or Kingston then please do get in touch with our friendly reception team who will be happy to make an appointment for you. Our membership offers access to our amazing wellness team [Nicky Dye](#) and Nutritional Therapist [Christine Bailey](#). Nicky runs our [Yoga, Mindfulness and Breathing services](#). Strala Yoga combines the movement and healing wisdom of yoga, tai chi and qigong, and is infused with the principles of Chinese and Japanese Medicine. Nicky is passionate about supporting people back to optimal health & wellness. Trained in the Yoga Medicine approach, she uses a Chinese Medicine evaluation to build a big picture of each client, in order to create a highly personalised yoga treatment plan. Modalities include different styles of yoga, breath work, acupressure, myofascial

release, massage, meditation and visualisation. Beginners are welcome, and flexibility is not required! Particular areas of interest for Nicky include sleep, women's health and fertility, as well as mental health for adults and teens.

[Book your appointment today](#)

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