



For families at home: Tips and inspiration on how to hold a

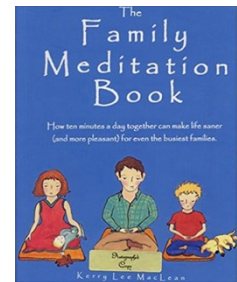
Family Meditation



Benefits of family meditation

"In our blended family of seven, we found that regular meditation sessions began to work wonders. Not only did each individual family member slow down and cheer up, but the entire family dynamic began to change in ways we had never expected. New channels of communication opened up that we didn't even realize were missing. After a while we found ourselves on a whole new ground, a much more open, loving supportive and enriching one than we stood on before."

- Kerry Lee MacLean, The Family Meditation Book



How to create an inspiring environment for family meditation

Perhaps you already have an inspiring shrine space to share with your children. Here some suggestions on how to create a supportive environment for family meditation and how children can feel included:

- a meditation cushion for everyone to sit on
- some shrine items chosen by your children
- a bell or a gong to ring at the beginning and end of the session
- a candle that a child can light and/or incense/ a flower

Rigpé Yeshé

How long to meditate for and what methods to use?

Children can start sitting for a minute or two, and gradually over time can add another minute when they are ready. Children usually love to ring the gong at the beginning and end of the meditation, or you can use egg timers, or meditation apps such as [insight timer](#) to time the meditation. It can be fun to explore different methods of meditation together, such as watching the breath, listening to sound, or using movement as meditation, or taste, or meditating outside in nature.

Love it?

Here are some additional things you can do during the family meditation session:



You could use the [Mind in the Jar](#) experiment

Watch a video on meditation together, such as one from [“Headspace”](#)

-Headspace : [Meditation Underlying calm](#)

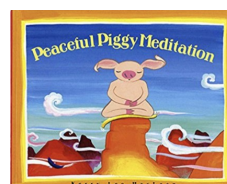
-Headspace : [Blue Sky animation](#)

-Headspace : [Meditation Tips – Understanding Dark Thoughts](#)



Watch a **video teaching** together, for example: Mingyur Rinpoche's [teaching on taming our wild Monkey Mind](#)

Or read a **story** with your children which explains meditation (find a book list below)



What about younger children?

Young children really benefit from being in the atmosphere of your practice, they love the rituals, such as lighting candles and opening the shrine. Often, they like to mimic their parents and can meditate quite naturally for a few moments beside you - if so, be spacious, and keep it simple, light and fun. You can also provide some books in the room or a special toy or colouring book for them to remain and play quietly in the environment of your practice.

Ricpa Yashz

Here is some advice for parents of younger children: from Phakchok Rinpoche, who has two younger children. Phakchok Rinpoche is the grandson of Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche and the eldest brother of Khyentse Yangsi Rinpoche Here is some advice for parents of younger children: from Phakchok Rinpoche, who has two younger children. Phakchok Rinpoche is the grandson of Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche and the eldest brother of Khyentse Yangsi Rinpoche

Teaching : [How to balance family life and meditation practice](#)

Books on Meditation

For children under 5

- Just Me and My Mind, *Kerry Lee MacLean*
- Zen tails series, *Peter Whitfield*
a number of good books on different Buddhist topics

For children aged 5-10

- Mindful Monkey, Happy Panda, *Kerry Lee MacLean and Alderfer*
- Moody Cow Meditates, *Kerry Lee MacLean*
- Peaceful Piggy Meditation, *Kerry Lee MacLean*
- The Hermit and the Well, *Thich Nhat Hanh*
- Ziji the Puppy who learned to Meditate, *Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche and Torey Hayden*

For teenagers, aged 11+

- Buddha in your backpack, *Franz Metcalf*
- Finding peace in a frantic world, *Mark Williams*
- Joy of Living, *Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche*
- The Mindful Teen, *Dr. Dzung Vo*
- Wide Awake, *Diana Winston*

