



Wellbeing Insight

Can Meditation Alter the Rate of Brain Ageing?

It's a provocative question, isn't it?

Can sitting quietly – eyes closed, breath steady, mind wandering and returning – actually influence the age of our brain? Surprisingly, the science suggests it might.

In a 2016 peer-reviewed [study](#) published in *Frontiers in Psychology*, neuroscientist Eileen Luders and colleagues compared long-term meditators with non-meditators across adulthood. They found that while brain volume naturally declines with age in everyone, the decline was significantly less pronounced in those who had a regular meditation practice. In simple terms, the brains of meditators appeared to age more slowly.

Other studies – including [work](#) led by Sara Lazar at Harvard – have shown increased cortical thickness in regions associated with attention and emotional regulation among mindfulness practitioners. Whilst no single study should be over-interpreted, taken together they offer a hopeful invitation: how we train our attention may influence how we age.

Of course, meditation is not a magic pill. It is a practice. And like all practices, it meets each of us differently. Some arrive at meditation through faith traditions, some through sport psychology, some through therapy, and some through sheer exhaustion. Others carry resistance – perhaps shaped by past experiences or misconceptions. All of that is welcome.

At *My Manifesto*, we often return to one of our Inspiration Cards: “Peace. It does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble or hard work. It means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart.”

Meditation, in its many forms, is simply one way of practising that calm. It is rehearsal for returning to centre. And here is where your personal manifesto quietly enters the frame. When your words are clear – when you have named who you wish to be and how you intend to live – something settles. Another of our cards reminds us: “The clarity of my words provides me with a deep sense of inner peace.”

Imagine a manifesto line such as: *I cultivate calm presence in the midst of complexity. Or I return to stillness so I can respond with wisdom.* Those are not abstract ideals. They can become daily practices.

If you feel curious – or ready to re-introduce yourself to stillness – here are five gentle invitations:

- Three conscious breaths – before opening your laptop or answering a message.
- A five-minute body scan – noticing sensations without trying to change them.



- A mindful walk – one street, no phone, noticing colour, light, sound.
- Loving-kindness phrases – silently offering: May I be calm. May others be safe.
- A manifesto pause – re-reading one line of your manifesto each evening and sitting quietly with it for two minutes.

None require incense, cushions, or perfection. Only willingness.

We know from our own work that clarity leads to calm, and calm supports wise action. If meditation can even slightly support the vitality of our brain as we age – and slightly deepen our inner peace along the way – then perhaps it is worth the experiment.

Not to chase happiness.

Not to eliminate difficulty.

But to practise being the person you have chosen to be.

Go well.