

Exploring Meditation and Mindful Living



“When something is bothering you – a person is bugging you, a situation is irritating you, or physical pain is troubling you – you must work with your mind, and that is done thru meditation. Working with our minds is the means through which we’ll actually begin to feel happy and contented with the world that we live in.”

- Pema Chodron

“Anything and everything can become our teacher of the moment, reminding us of the possibility of being fully present: the gentle caress of air on our skin, the play of light, the look on someone’s face, a passing contraction of the body, a fleeting thought in the mind.

Anything. Everything. If it is met with awareness. “

- Jon Kabat-Zinn

How to begin a home practice

- Choose a quiet place in your home or garden
- Add a comfortable chair... meditation cushion is optional and not needed
- A timer with a gentle chime is useful
- A shawl or blanket for warmth
- A willingness to be gentle with what emerges
- After your meditation
- A journal can be useful... as can a cup of tea.

Meditation is a state of be-ing that can be practiced anywhere.

A Simple Meditation...

Try a short meditation to help you relax your body and mind.

Gently close your eyes and focus your awareness on your breath as it flows in and out of your body. Notice how your back is moving with your breath, along with your chest and belly, and allow your whole body to be soothed and massaged.

Your mind may eventually become calm – or it may not. Your mind may become filled again with feelings or thoughts. If this happens, be kind to yourself and gently return your attention back to your breath again and again.

After a few minutes, or longer if you prefer, open your eyes and gently bring your awareness back to your surroundings. See if you can take breath awareness with you as you reengage with the activities of your day.

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Bubble Meditation

Sit comfortably and simply notice what arises in your mind.

Wrap each word or image in a translucent bubble, like a soap bubble that you made as a child.

Observe again as each bubble drifts up and out of your field of awareness.

As a new thought arises, choose again to wrap that in a bubble and observe it disappear.

Practice observing without judgment or agenda. Be gentle with yourself and with what arises.

Meditation is a state of being that can be practiced anywhere.

Pause Practice or “Three Conscious Breaths” by Pema Chodron

Pause practice—taking three conscious breaths at any moment when we notice that we are stuck—is a simple but powerful practice that each of us can do at any given moment. Pause practice can transform each day of your life. It creates an open doorway to the sacredness of the place in which you find yourself.

When you are waking up in the morning and you aren’t even out of bed yet, even if you are running late... take three conscious breaths. Just be where you are! When you are washing up, or making your coffee or tea, or brushing your teeth, just create a gap in your discursive mind. Take three conscious breaths. Just pause. Let it be a contrast to being all caught up. Let it be like popping a bubble. Let it be just a moment in time, and then go on.

Maybe you are on your way to whatever you need to do for the day. You are in your car, or on the bus, or standing in line. But you can still create that gap by taking three conscious breaths and being right there with the immediacy of your experience, right there with whatever you are seeing, with whatever you are doing, with whatever you are feeling.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- “Mindfulness for Beginners” by Jon Kabat-Zinn
- “How to Meditate” by Pema Chodron
- “The Power of Pause, Becoming More by Doing Less” by Terry Hershey
- “Mindfulness in Action” by Chogyam Trungpa