

# MINDFULNESS MEDITATION TIPS

## 1. ENERGY LEVEL FOR MEDITATION

Practice meditation when you have lots of energy. Concentration requires an alert mind; if you are tired, meditation will be a struggle. If you are a “morning” person, meditate in the a.m. If you are an “evening” person, try it then.

## 2. MEDITATIVE PLACE

Try to find a peaceful place in your home to meditate. Whether it is a corner of a room, or a whole room, decorate it with colors and accents that reflect sacredness for you. If you create an altar, place items upon it that reflect your spirituality and symbolize the presence of God.

## 3. MEDITATIVE POSTURE

Sitting is the ideal pose for meditation because energy travels better throughout a straight spine. You can sit on a cushion and lean against a wall, or sit in a chair. Place your legs and hands in comfortable positions. Comfort is more important than struggling with acquired postures. Ideally, hands are placed palms up in lap or on knees to signify receptivity.

## 4. TIME LIMITS ON MEDITATION

If you are able to begin your practice by sitting for 20 minutes, two times a day, terrific! If this is difficult, however, try sitting for 5 minutes, one or two times daily, or less, when first starting out. It is more important to train your mind and body in the beginning to sit daily, than it is to make it an endurance test. If you start small and practice daily, your meditation time will gradually expand on its own.

## 5. CONCENTRATION TECHNIQUE

It is helpful to focus your gaze, eyes closed, at the bridge of your nose. This will take practice in order for it to feel comfortable. Placing tip of tongue on roof of mouth, behind front teeth, also encourages a sense of being centered.

## 6. MEDITATION BREATHING

Begin meditation with a breathing exercise such as Meditation or Rhythm Breathing. Empty

lungs, breathe in to a count of 8, hold to a count of 4, out to a count of 8, and hold lungs empty to a count of 4. (You may make your own counts, however, the held breaths should equal half of the respiratory breaths.) Practice this exercise until you feel your mind begin to settle.

## 7. DEALING WITH INTRUSIVE BODY SIGNALS, THOUGHTS, & EMOTIONS

The purpose of meditation techniques are to give our minds a little action to watch while our brains move into an alpha state. We do not, and cannot blank the mind. When we sit with our meditation technique, our consciousness will constantly be invaded by thoughts, emotions, and bodily discomforts. Our job is not to resist these interferences; resistance gives them energy. Place your errant thoughts and feelings on your mental view screen and imagine them as clouds floating away from you. Scratch the itch or readjust your body if it calls to you. Then, return to wherever you left off in your meditation technique.

## 8. MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

Fine tune your hearing; become aware of any sounds outside the room and identify them. Listen for the sounds inside the room. Allow sounds to be a part of your meditation. Become aware of your body and its position. This awareness checklist will aid in your not being distracted by what is going on around you. Then, bring your attention inward and watch the movement of your chest as it expands and contracts to the rhythm of your breath. Later, move your attention to the bridge of the nose (where your nose joins your forehead) and imagine that you can watch your breath move in and out your nose. You may want to add a word or short phrase to repeat with your exhalations. Think of this word as a prayer. It is always nice to end with some deep breaths and expressions of gratitude—no matter what you experienced. Remember that we do not “make” the meditative state happen. It is a gift from God and is given after we have spent a considerable amount of time in meditative practice.

