

Preparing for Meditation

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Even if you are on the right track, you will get run over if you just sit there. - Unknown



Introduction

The meditation exercises (click on the links to the left) are intended to help keep your meditation practice new and fresh. It is usual to find that sometimes your daily meditations aren't as rewarding as perhaps previously, nevertheless, it is crucial to keep practicing, at least 5 minutes a day. Most people find that after some time, the benefits of meditation are revealed in their life, even before they fully understand what meditation is. This is normal. Remember that meditation is an experience of the heart and not of the mind, for us to learn how to meditate, we need to trust the messages of our heart.

It is best to create a permanent meditation place. Your meditation place may be anything from a quiet room in the house, a table or a corner of your study desk, to even the shade of your favourite tree in the backyard. It doesn't matter where it is, just as long as you are able to find peace of mind there and access it regularly. On a little table, place a cloth and other inspirational objects - such as a leaf from an amazing forest, a beautiful crystal, a crucifix or other sacred object, or a picture of a spiritual figure. If you cannot have a permanent meditation place, it is just as effective to create this space anew with every meditation. Just have the components (e.g. cloth, inspirational object, candle, incense) in a bundle, ready to go. **Put simply, this place is an entrance to your heart - think of it as a shrine to your soul. Whatever inspires you spiritually is perfect.**



Preparing for your meditation

Proper preparation for your meditation is extremely important. Mentally, you are unloading your mind of all extraneous thoughts and beginning to focus more on your spirituality.

Physically, you can express this by taking a shower (to "wash away your troubles"), brushing your teeth, and generally "purifying" yourself. If this is impossible, try at least to wash your hands and face.

Ideally, you already have a permanent meditation place, in which case you might like to make sure it is clean, and if possible, light a candle and some incense, place some fresh flowers on the table. It is helpful to use this time to begin to focus on your spirituality. Prepare the meditation place with reverence - pay attention to your movements and feel the grace that comes with the joy of spirituality. Light the candle and incense, place the flowers, with no other thought but the now. If your meditation space is temporary then as you are setting it up the same applies.

You might like to take 5-15minutes to read some spiritual writings, reflecting on and absorbing their meanings, perhaps taking notes in a special diary reserved only for spiritual reflection. Then - this is very important - **sit with straight back, relaxed but extremely alert and take at least seven, deep, slow breaths.** With each inward breath you are opening yourself to the true, peaceful and loving nature of the universe. Your outward breath releases the frustrations and tensions you unconsciously hold on to. Let them go. Now begin your chosen meditation exercise (you will find a meditation exercise at the end of each class - links are on the left). During all the exercises your focus should be from your heart.



Afterwards

After your meditation, you might like to sit quietly for a while longer, to gather the feelings from this session, to bring your experiences in to the "real world" and not just forget about them. You may wish to write some notes or a poem in your diary, compose a song, paint a picture... Be conscious of the revelations or intuitions that you may be feeling - it is crucial that you listen to your "inner voice" so that your real self can begin to guide your journey.

A piece of fruit, placed on the table and consumed with reverence afterward, makes a tasty ending to a meditation!