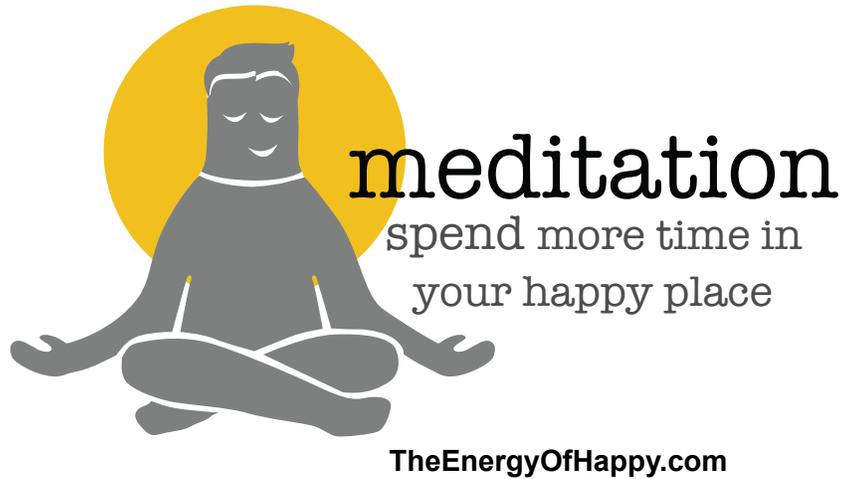


Meditation is about staying in this moment, savoring this moment, living this moment of your life. **Why?** Because most the time, you are okay in this moment AND now is the only time you can take action. We tend to replay the past or forecast the future but we can't change either. **Live in this moment to savor and make the most of life!**



How to stay in the moment?

Pay attention to your breath. Breathe fully at your own pace. When you realize your mind is wandering from this moment, note what it's thinking about then call it back to the breath. Repeat in your mind "In" as you inhale and "out" as you exhale if that helps. We use breath as base camp; a familiar, comfortable place to be. If the breath isn't comforting, relaxing, stabilizing to you, then choose your own base camp. Try noticing the firm support of chair or pillow or the warmth of your fingertips touching, something comforting and relaxing.

Staying in this moment is the beginning of meditation or maybe it's the beginning of your practice. At first, staying in the moment feels a bit like herding cats or three year olds. Every moment your mind is wandering off, sometimes it's running at full speed and your job is to gently and with humor reel it back in. Come back to base camp, the breath or whatever you use.

Take note of what the mind was babbling on about but don't indulge it. What I mean is don't sit down and have a conversation with your mind. Don't chastise it for thinking. You just want to note- "Ah, I was worrying again." "I'm imagining the worst." "I'm making a list again." "I'm criticizing myself for my lack of amazing talent for meditation." As you become familiar with your brains "go to" escape routes, eventually you can note these behaviors with a bit of humor, "Oh, there it goes again, fantasizing." Be kind and gentle with yourself. You're learning something new that's really going to help you. Meditation will become one of your favorite tools to have a saner, healthier, more fun life. Have fun with it.

If you feel like you spend most of your time just reeling your mind back to this moment and your base camp, that is perfectly normal. We're just beginning. It's fine. It's what I expect. Accept that it's what you should expect now at this phase of your practice. As you practice, in time the mind will wander less frantically. With a bit more time, it will wander less often. At some point, you may notice **space**, a bit of space before a thought sneaks up and taps you on the shoulder. **The space is the goal in meditation.** It's our light at the end of the tunnel. When the space arrives, you will find that you're not thinking, you're just floating in the moment. Floating, falling, flying then poof, the space is gone and the thought is back. **That's all normal. It's fine.**

At some point you'll get this space, this free floating moment just a nanosecond or two at a time. That's total success. But I assure you that with practice, that space will grow. It takes time... depending on your consistency with practice, the time you practice and how crazy your head can be. But the space will grow. It won't grow every time you sit. For me, some days I feel like I'm falling off a cliff, just free falling into nothingness and other days, it's back to herding cats. That's okay. Any time you spend in the present moment, relaxing, focusing on the breath, and observing your mind is meditation and it's excellent. How long to meditate? Start with five minutes or one minute? Whatever you think you can stick with. Add time when ready. **So meditation is simple. You sit, you breathe, you relax, you stay in the moment.**

There are basically 3 kinds of meditation.

Mindfulness means you are paying attention to this moment. You call you mind back to this moment, by reminding it to pay attention to your breath, or whatever your base camp is. At first, you get to savor this moment for whatever is going on. Eventually, you find a bit of space and stillness. Ahh... the happy place.

There is mantra meditation. You may have chosen to use a mantra of sorts to calm the mind, like "in" and "out." Other ideas for mantras could be "peace" and "love," one word on the inhale and one on the exhale, "I" and "Am" is used in some traditions. Try a nice traditional "Om" on the exhale.... or whatever might help you focus and rest in your practice. With mantras, eventually you will find that you aren't repeating the mantra anymore AND your mind isn't wandering. Ahh... the happy place.

The third type is guided meditation, where you sit and I or an app or a recording leads you in a calming practice, perhaps a visualization. And if you're lucky, you'll find as the guide babbles on that your mind has drifted into stillness. Ah... the happy place.

Ultimately, the stillness, the peace, the happy place is a place where we can listen to our higher self.

This is a place where sometimes I get ideas that are amazing for art or answers to questions. They just come out of nowhere... or they appear after I've concluded meditation. This listening, these answers, this direction from our higher selves is the real mojo in meditation. It can come in bits and pieces in the beginning. With practice, this golden, light filled time comes more regularly. And it's... it's ... I don't know.

What's the best thing you can think of? It's like that only better.



Thanks for joining me for meditation. For more help with meditation, come back to group or check out my website at **TheEnergyOfHappy.com** There's lots of info on meditation and other wellness practices in my blog and in time, you'll find guided meditations and online classes. That is, if I doesn't spend too much time floating in my happy place.

Suni Moon

The Energy of Happy.com

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