

# meditation

Meditation is about staying in this moment, savoring this moment, living this moment of your life. Why? Because generally, 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- breathing naturally 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 your 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 your meditation 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. Your job is to gently watch your mind, become the observer of what is going on in your head. When your thoughts go away from this moment, take note of what the mind wander to... then call it back.

What I mean is don't dive into the thinking pit 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." The observer is like a news reporter, noting what is going on but not getting emotionally involved. As you become familiar with your brain's "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 can 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, that is perfectly normal.** This happens in everyone's experience. With practice, the mind may wander less frantically and less often. In time, you may notice a bit of space before a thought pops into your mind. The space is the goal in meditation. It's our light at the end of the tunnel. When the space between thoughts arrives- you will sense 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.

When this free floating moment arrives, that's total success. In time, that space between thoughts 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.**



**Spend more time in your happy place!**

### **How often and how long to meditate?**

Start with five minutes or one minute? Whatever you think you can stick with. Add time when ready. Do it when you can. If you never practice, then pick a time, morning or evening, to try. Try it while seated. Try it while hiking or running. Try it while stuck in traffic... just keeping your self present in whatever situation. Stay present and breathe while doing the dishes, walking the dog, pulling weeds. We are learning to savor the moments our our lives.

### **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 someone 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 amazing ideas 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.

Some people find journaling after meditation is helpful- recording how it went or writing down insights. Follow your intuition on this... follow your intuition on the whole process.

**Thanks for joining me for meditation.** For more help with meditation, come back to group or check out my website at **SuniMoon.net** Look for the **Resources page**. There's lots of info on meditation and other wellness tools there.

### **More resources? Visit SuniMoon.net**

Suni Moon

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