

EXPLORING MEDITATION COURSE WEEK ONE

EXPLORING MEDITATION COURSE WEEK I
(GUIDED IMAGERY)

CLASS FORMAT:

6 WEEKS

EACH WEEK EXPLORE & EXPERIENCE A DIFFERENT FORM OF MEDITATION.

PLENTY OF TIME TO EXPERIENCE MEDITATION.

LEARN MORE ABOUT MEDITATION IN GENERAL

SUGGESTIONS TO HELP IT BE EASIER

BUILT IN EACH WEEK WILL BE A SHORT PERIOD OF SILENT MEDITATION.

I AM INVITING YOU TO DO AT LEAST 5 MINUTES OF MEDITATION A DAY.

SUGGEST WRITE A FEW SENTENCES OF YOUR EXPERIENCE EACH TIME IN A JOURNAL OR NOTEBOOK: YOUR MEDITATION EXPERIENCE WILL BE DIFFERENT FROM ONE DAY TO THE NEXT. AND TO SEE HOW THINGS HAVE SHIFTED IN THE SIX WEEKS.

FEEL FREE TO EMAIL ME WITH QUESTIONS OR SHARING AS IT COMES UP. chozkaya@aol.com

WHAT IS MEDITATION?

MEDITATION IS NOT WHAT YOU THINK!

MEDITATION – THE ART OF PEACE AND BALANCE

MEDITATION IS ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE AND IMPORTANT THINGS YOU CAN DO FOR YOURSELF.

MEDITATION IS BRINGING OUR CONSCIOUS AWARENESS TO WHAT IS.

IDEALLY....

IN A STATE OF MEDITATION, WE OBSERVE THE MIND, WHAT WE ARE THINKING OR FEELING, WITHOUT MENTAL OR EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT.

WE ARE SIMPLY A WITNESS TO WHAT IS IN THE MOMENT.

IT IS BEING IN THE PRESENT MOMENT, NOT IN THE PAST AND NOT IN THE FUTURE.

YOU ARE NOT TRYING TO TURN OFF YOUR THOUGHTS OR EMOTIONS BUT YOU ARE LEARNING TO OBSERVE THEM WITH OUT REACTION OR JUDGMENT, OR NAMING ANYTHING RIGHT OR WRONG, GOOD OR BAD.

AND YOU ARE DISCOVERING WHO YOU ARE IN THE PROCESS.

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A PERFECT MEDITATION. SOMETIMES YOUR FOCUS OR MIND WILL BE DISTRACTED. REMEMBER WE ARE NOT JUDGING, JUST BRING YOURSELF BACK TO THE TECHNIQUE YOU ARE USING, BACK TO CENTER.

ANDY PUDDICOMBE, HEADSPACE CO-FOUNDER, A MEDITATION APP:

“THERE IS NO GOOD OR BAD MEDITATION – THERE IS SIMPLY AWARENESS OR NON-AWARENESS. TO BEGIN WITH, WE GET DISTRACTED A LOT.

OVER TIME, WE GET DISTRACTED LESS. BE GENTLE WITH YOUR APPROACH, BE PATIENT WITH THE MIND, AND BE KIND TO YOURSELF ALONG THE WAY.”

SOMETIMES MEDITATORS GET VERY SERIOUS. I SUGGEST PLAYING WITH THESE TECHNIQUES. YOU WANT TO ENJOY THE JOURNEY.

TRUE MEDITATION IS NOT SOMETHING THAT WE DO. TRUE MEDITATION IS SOMETHING THAT HAPPENS SPONTANEOUSLY WHEN YOU ARE NOT DOING ANYTHING, WHEN YOU ARE IN A STATE OF NON-DOING.

ALL OF THE TECHNIQUES THAT WE LEARN AND PRACTICE ARE TO BRING US TO THAT STATE OF NON-DOING WHERE TRUE MEDITATION CAN HAPPEN.

OUR MONKEY MINDS ARE THINKING ALL THE TIME.

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THE DIFFERENT MEDITATION TECHNIQUES, BREATHING, CHANTING, VISUALIZATION, ETC. ARE TO HELP US FOCUS ON ONE THING.

AND TO BRING OUR CONSCIOUS AWARENESS TO THAT ONE THING. WHEN THAT ONE THING THEN DROPS, WE ARE IN A STATE OF TRUE MEDITATION, A STATE OF NO MIND. NOT EASY!

THAT BEING SAID, WE NEED TO START SOMEWHERE. WE WILL LEARN DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES TO HELP US TO NARROW OUR FOCUS TO ONE THING. AS YOU PRACTICE IT GETS EASIER.

BENEFITS OF MEDITATION

WHEN YOU MEDITATE WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR BODY?

STRESS STIMULATES THE SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM CAUSING A SURGE OF STRESS HORMONES.

THAT CAN LEAD TO INCREASED BLOOD PRESSURE, HEART RATE, CHOLESTEROL LEVELS AND INFLAMMATION.

IT CAN LEAD TO DISRUPTED IMMUNITY, ENERGY LEVELS & SLEEP.

WHEN THE BODY AND MIND ARE RELAXED, WHICH CAN HAPPEN THROUGH MEDITATION PRACTICE, THE PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM IS STIMULATED, CAUSING THE BODY TO STOP PRODUCING STRESS HORMONES.

IT CAN LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE AND HEART RATE AND DIMINISH THE PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS OF MANY HEALTH CONDITIONS, REDUCE INFLAMMATION AND EVEN AFFECT OUR DNA.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR MIND & EMOTIONS?

MEDITATION HAS BEEN SHOWN TO REWIRE THE BRAIN AND ACTUALLY SHRINK THE AMYGDALA, THE PART OF THE BRAIN THAT REGULATES HOW WE FEEL STRESS, FEAR & ANXIETY.

RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT MEDITATION CAN DECREASE AGGRESSION AND IRRITABILITY AND INCREASE POSITIVE EMOTIONS AND COMPASSION.

WHEN WE BRING OUR CONSCIOUS AWARENESS TO THE PRESENT MOMENT, WE ARE BETTER ABLE TO HANDLE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS AND FEEL BETTER.

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT HAPPENS AROUND US, IT MATTERS IF WE REACT OR DO NOT REACT TO THE SITUATION. MEDITATION HELPS US BE LESS REACTIVE.

AND BEYOND THAT YOU MAY FIND YOU HAVE A STRONGER FEELING OF CONNECTION TO YOUR HIGHER SELF AND TO ALL THAT IS.

THIS WEEK: GUIDED IMAGERY

YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH GUIDED VISUALIZATION. GUIDED IMAGERY IS A BIT DIFFERENT.

A GUIDED IMAGERY IS A MENTAL IMAGE THAT IS GUIDED THROUGH CALMING OR HELPFUL THOUGHT PROCESSES.

IT CAN BE USED IN SEVERAL DIFFERENT WAYS:

IT CAN BE USED FOR DEEP RELAXATION BY INTENTIONALLY VISUALIZING A PLEASANT IMAGERY OF A PEACEFUL PLACE.

IT CAN BE USED FOR HEALING IN THE BODY BY VISUALIZING IN DETAIL THE HEALING YOU WANT TO HAPPEN.

GUIDED IMAGERY HAS BEEN USED IN MAJOR HOSPITALS AND EVEN THE VETERANS HOSPITAL. IT HAS SHOWN TO HELP CANCER PATIENTS BY REDUCING SIDE EFFECTS OF TREATMENT, INCREASED SELF ESTEEM AND SENSE OF CONTROL AND INCREASED CALM.

IT DIRECTS THE IMAGINATION TO HELP INFLUENCE THE BODY'S HEALING.

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IT HAS BEEN USED FOR MANY DIFFERENT HEALING SITUATIONS.

IT CAN BE USED AS A MENTAL REHEARSAL OF SOMETHING YOU WILL DO, SUCH AS PUBLIC SPEAKING.

IT USES ALL OF YOUR SENSES: VISION, SOUND, TOUCH, SMELL & TASTE.

IF YOU WANT TO IMAGINE A BEACH IN HAWAII:

YOU CAN IMAGINE THE WARM WATER LAPPING AT YOUR FEET, THE GENTLE BREEZE ON YOUR SKIN, THE SCENT OF FLOWERS, THE DEEP COLORS OF THE OCEAN AND EVEN THE TASTE OF COCONUT ON YOUR TONGUE. THIS HELPS YOU FEEL AS IF YOU ARE TRULY THERE.

START TO THINK ABOUT HOW YOU WILL DEVELOP YOUR MEDITATION PRACTICE.

WHERE WILL YOU DO IT?

WHEN EACH DAY WILL YOU MAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF AND MEDITATION? HOW LONG?

GIVE YOURSELF THE GIFT OF TIME TO GO INWARD. NO MATTER HOW BUSY YOU ARE, IT WILL GIVE YOU A GOOD FOUNDATION TO MOVE THROUGH YOUR DAY.

DURING THE WEEK TRY FOR AT LEAST 5 MINUTES A DAY.

CONSISTENCY IS VERY HELPFUL. IT IS BETTER TO DO 5 MINUTES EACH DAY, RATHER THAN AN HOUR ON THE WEEKEND.

EVEN 5 MINUTES WILL HELP YOU SHIFT YOUR ENERGY, EMOTIONS AND THOUGHTS.

IT WILL LEAD YOU INTO A STATE OF PEACE AND BALANCE.

KEEP NOTES OR A JOURNAL.

A GOOD BASIS FOR SILENT MEDITATION IS TO SIT COMFORTABLY, USING GENTLE BREATHS, START TO MOVE INWARD AND FEEL YOURSELF SINKING DOWN. AS MUCH AS YOU CAN IN THIS MOMENT, BE IN A STATE OF CONSCIOUS AWARENESS, WITNESSING, NOTICING. WHEN THOUGHTS COME, LET THEM FLOAT BY AS A CLOUD

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FLOATING BY. TRY NOT TO BECOME ATTACHED TO THE THOUGHT. IF YOU FIND YOURSELF DISTRACTED, TAKE A DEEP BREATH AND COME BACK TO YOUR CENTER. MANY TIMES WE HAVE TO START AGAIN AND AGAIN. THAT IS FINE. IT IS A PRACTICE.

AS YOU CULTIVATE A DAILY PRACTICE YOU WILL BE DEVELOPING A BEAUTIFUL TOOL TO BRING YOURSELF INTO CENTEREDNESS, BALANCE AND PEACE. ENJOY!