

Key Points to a Meditation Practice

- It is ideal to practice in a clean, clutter-free, and quiet room. It also helps to have the room dimly lit.
- Sit in a comfortable seated position with your spine held erect. If you choose to sit on the floor a cushion will add comfort. For those who find it challenging to sit on the floor you may sit in a chair.
- Breathing through the nose at a rate that is calm is essential during meditation. If nose breathing is challenging, simply breathe slowly and consciously to help relax the body.
- Choose a specific time and duration for your practice. If possible try to meditate at the same time each day to build consistency. Start with shorter durations, 5-10 minutes, and gradually increase your time spent during each sitting.
- Live in present moment awareness. During meditation it is common for people to experience a myriad of thoughts, emotions, and bodily sensations. Include these things in your practice without trying to suppress or engage them. Let them come and go.
- It is also common for people to drift off into sleep. If you find yourself drifting off, bring your awareness back to your body, your breath, and your sitting posture.
- Lastly, some students may find it helpful to incorporate a focusing tool. Here are a few suggestions:
 1. A simple technique would be to follow the rhythm of your breath, focusing on the inhalation and exhalation.
 2. Silently repeating a short, positive affirmation, prayer, or mantra
 3. Focus on a specific Chakra
 4. You may also try listening to soft, soothing background music which aids in relaxation and can also help you focus. Listen and focus on the vibration of the music and how it resonates in your body. Feel how your breath and the vibration of the music flow and intersect throughout your body.

It is most important that you find a technique that adds grace and ease to your meditation practice. Explore different techniques and remember there is no right or wrong. Each individual will have a unique experience. Each sitting offers an opportunity to explore ourselves without expectations, to quietly witness the subtle dimensions of our inner self, and to be open to what is present.

Bija (Seed) Mantras

Mantras are spiritual sound formulas that hold energy and have the power to clean and purify. Chanting a mantra can have a deep effect on the physical and energetic body because the power they possess can shift and override negative thought patterns. When repeated, the vibration of sound expands through the body to the cells, helping to heal imbalances. They are a useful tool for energizing and balancing a specific chakra. Mantras can also be used during meditation by repeating it silently which creates an internal vibration. You can increase the intensity by combining your mantra with the intention you set for your meditation.

Practice:

- Japa is the practice of repeating your mantra. You may repeat your mantra throughout the day or set a specific time. A simple mantra you may want to try is “OM.” This sacred mantra is connected to the higher self.