

MEDITATION IDEAS

Below are some different ideas you may like to consider for meditation. I usually teach the traditional methods of meditation but sometimes I too like to change my practice and try different things.

In July 2021 one of our themes was around the feeling of being “united” and we used this practice...just find a comfortable position to be in and spend as much time on each line as you wish...just mentally repeating the words.

Breathing in I know I am breathing **in**
Breathing out I know I am breathing **out**
Breathing in my breath grows **deep**
Breathing out my breath goes **slowly**
Breathing in I feel **calm**
Breathing out I feel **ease**
Breathing in I **smile**
Breathing out I **release**
Breathing in I am **aware**
Breathing out we are all **UNITED**.

In August 2021 one of our meditations was a Tonglen Meditation, a traditional Tibetan Buddhism practice. It's actually a visualisation practice and it means giving and taking. This is relatively new to me but I am enjoying the journey with it. Our theme was around compassion and this practice is simply about using your breath to take, or inhale, the suffering of someone, and then you give, or exhale, compassion. Give it a go:

- To begin, find a comfortable position allowing you to feel relaxed yet alert. Take the time to settle and feel and natural breath; allow the mind to settle.
- Now bring to mind a person who is experiencing suffering, and imagine he/she is standing in front of you. Imagine their suffering as a dark cloud surrounding them.
- As you inhale, imagine breathing in the dark cloud. As you breathe it in, the cloud transforms into a bright, warm light of compassion at your heart area.
- When you exhale, you extend that light of compassion to him/her, alleviating their suffering.
- Continue breathing in the dark cloud of suffering, allowing the cloud to transform into warm, bright light, and directing your compassionate warmth to your loved one as you exhale.
- When you are ready to return to the present moment, take a few deep, mindful breaths.

This practice can be overwhelming for some people, so make sure you are in a good frame of mind when trying it. If you find it difficult to breathe in a dark cloud, you might want to experiment with imagining the dark cloud as a white or brightly coloured cloud or as cool air instead.

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'Those who make compassion an essential part of their lives find the joy of life. Kindness deepens the spirit and produces rewards that cannot be completely explained in words. It is an experience more powerful than words. To become acquainted with kindness one must be prepared to learn new things and feel new feelings. Kindness is more than a philosophy of the mind. It is a philosophy of the spirit.'

~ Robert J. Furey

Morning Meditation:

When you get up, take five minutes to simply sit peacefully inside or outside. Feel connected to the day and the ground. Connect with the breath.

Let go of any expectations.

Listen to yourself - let go of self criticism

Send yourself loving compassionate messages

Enjoy this time on your own.

Take the time to honour your inner light.

Great Compassion Mantra

Famous for its powers of healing, protection, and purification, this mantra is one of the most popular mantras chanted by Mahayana Buddhists. So you could just sit and listen to the mantra recording below.

They will always meet good friends.

They will always be born in a good country.

They will always be born at a good time.

Their place of birth will always have a good king.

Their family will be kind and harmonious.

Their heart will be pure and full in the way.

They will not violate the prohibitive precepts.

The organs of their body will always be complete.

They will obtain everything they seek.

They will always obtain the help and respect of others.

Their riches will not be plundered.

They will always have the necessary goods and wealth in abundance.

In the place where they are born, they will see the Buddha and hear the Dharma.

Dragons, gods, and good spirits will always protect them.

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They will awaken to the profound meaning of that Proper Dharma which they hear.

See Ani Choying Drolma version on YouTube (she's Nepalese)

