

## Purposeful Meditation

Why meditate? First, meditating helps you find a sense of center, calmness and self-control. When you meditate, your breathing slows, your blood pressure lowers and you feel calm and relaxed. But in advanced practice, meditation is used to create a "focused intention" as well. That is, if there is something in your life you want to be, have or do, you can create an intention, meditate on it and let it flow to you.

Meditation is a wonderful means of finding peace, joy and happiness in your life. Learning to meditate easily and well is a key to finding success in all areas of your life. The first step in realizing a sense of well-being is by acknowledging that it is only through the acceptance of personal responsibility for your life can you change your life condition to one that reflects success. No one can make you happy; no one can hand you peace; and joy is illusive if you can't find it within yourself, through your own efforts.

Until you have had some meditation time under your belt, it might be helpful to have a meditation tool to help you focus your attention. Many use a candle in low light, or listen to soft music and follow the notes with their mind and imagination. There are many ways to learn how to focus your attention, but one of the most successful ways is to have an object that you can infuse with your intention as a reminder of your desired results that you can carry with you. A favorite stone, a crystal, beads, a meditation tool or some object that you can carry with you will work well for this purpose, reminding you of your calm, purposeful intentions with a simple touch and the resulting calmness your meditation brings. Exploring the world of meditation will lead you to a new depth and purpose in your life.

An important foundation in this understanding: You get in life what you focus on. Focusing on the miseries of your life will only bring you more misery. If you turn your attention to the joys of life, to those things in life that you can appreciate, then you will receive more joy. Through practicing good meditation techniques you can develop strong, positive focusing skills.

There are those who feel that this approach to life is unrealistic but cannot understand why their lives are out of control. Another perspective might be in order. If your life is filled with stress and turmoil and it never seems to end, how about changing your viewpoint? Look for the good, the balanced and forward-moving aspects in your life - and there are always reasons to be grateful and appreciative in even the worst of conditions - can break that momentum. Not every moment in one's life is stellar and lovely, but every moment has in it an aspect of truth, of clarity and a seed of potential for whatever you want to create.

The next time you find yourself suffering from anxiety, look beyond, look ahead and visualize a better now that will become a better future. Realize that you have survived every crisis in your life only to become stronger. At the darkest moment, you sometimes feel hope slipping away. But just remember how you have made it through every single period of turmoil, wiser and stronger. Treat the successes you've experienced in life as the stepping-stones you will use to get you through the next crisis. Focus on someone you love rather than someone who causes you to feel hurt. Or, better yet, find something about the one who is hurting you to appreciate. Honestly, it's there. Even in the worst of times with the worst of people, it is there.

So how do you get out of the rut of reaction and into the healthy pattern of self-determination? You go within rather than continue to allow yourself to be drawn outside into the world of reacting to whatever

is happening around you. You learn to relax at will; you teach yourself to find an inner calmness with which to identify and connect; and you begin to focus your attention where you want rather than be helplessly drawn to every outside stimulus that wanders into your view. Meditation is the path that gives you back your control.

There are many techniques of meditation and with the use of some special meditation tools, supplies and products; it becomes easier to develop the necessary meditative skills to direct your life positively with directed intention.

In short, choose a technique of meditation -- and there are lots of choices -- that will put you on a path of self-determination to success. You may find yourself experimenting with many different approaches and perhaps a combination of methods that fits you well. But you have to start the process and get on with it.

Good luck! The journey will be exciting and enlightening, but more importantly, the destination brings you whatever joy you seek.

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