

# LivingIntegrated®

## FIFTEEN PRACTICES FOR LIVING THE LIFE YOU WANT

### 13 MEDITATION

#### IN THIS PRACTICE:

- Meditation is About Focus
- The Basic Elements of Meditation
- Give Meditation Time
- Practice Thirteen Assignment

Go to <https://youtu.be/XlnaENsbows> now and watch the introductory video for this Practice.

Like prayer and mindfulness in the last two Practices, there is a great deal of resource material available to us on meditation. This is the briefest of introductions to the topic!

If prayer is a conversation with our Creator, and mindfulness is becoming fully aware of the conversation within ourselves, then meditation is a focused aspect of mindfulness that leads us into a deeper experience of prayer.

#### MEDITATION IS ABOUT FOCUS

Let me be honest and clear with you: my road of recovery has been long, hard and uneven. I am profoundly grateful to be where I am today. And at the same time, I'm not yet where I want to be. There is more, much more, to my recovery.

I would not be anywhere near where I am, though, with out utilizing meditation. It has helped me hold together and stay on the road to recovery. Without it I am quite sure I would have fully fragmented and drifted into useless oblivion.

“ Meditation is about focus. But not my focus. ”

Meditation is about self-emptying. It opens us up to what is beyond us that we may incorporate experiences of transcendence within our own consciousness.

While there are different approaches to meditation, they all utilize some approach to focus, and therefore bring direct help to the distracted mind.

One approach to meditation focuses on reading and contemplating the meaning of a text of Scripture. Lectio Divina, for instance, emphasizes a practice of reading, re-reading and prayerful heart pondering of a text.

Another approach to meditation is more focused on contemplation. Continually repeat a recommended verse of Scripture, or another phrase of truth or affirmation, while continually letting go of all other thoughts, reflections or considerations. In particular this approach helps with our human tendency towards distraction.

Whatever approach and whatever resources you employ in meditation, essentially it needs to be a simple, daily discipline.

## THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF MEDITATION

---

Meditation has three basic requisite elements: *silence*, *stillness* and *simplicity*.

**Silence** is the absence of words and noise and also the slowing of our thoughts. Silence is making space for transcendent experience.

**Stillness** is the intentional quieting of ourselves from all other demands and desires. We don't keep popping up to refill our coffee cups, for instance, and if a three-year-old is demanding our attention, this is not a time for stillness.

**Simplicity** is our commitment to surrender all other points of time for the sake of the present moment. I don't have my past. I don't have my future. Nothing to think over which has happened and no anticipation of what is to come. I am here. I have this moment. Only this moment. I may never have another. This one moment is enough.

## GIVE MEDITATION TIME

---

Meditation takes time. You can't do it in a few minutes. And you can't do it multi-tasking. You cannot drive and meditate.

You will have to balance meditation with the other demands on your time.

It's important to create space—like 20-40 minutes, even if at first you don't use it all. Start with a smaller period if that helps, and build up your time.

While the goal is to meditate daily, you'll need to be realistic with your time. Begin with a reasonable, achievable goal, say once a week or a few times a week and then steadily work until it's a daily discipline.

You should expect resistance both from within yourself as well as from your environment. Most things of real quality take sustained effort. Overcoming resistance is part of that effort.

Sometimes meditation has immediate rewards. Other times we may not realize any particular reward from meditating. But it always helps, always makes a difference. It is sowing and reaping work. It opens the portal to experience and integration. It offers something we simply cannot get any other way.

## ASSIGNMENT FOR ENGAGING THE THIRTEENTH PRACTICE— MEDITATION

1. One of my very favorite resources is the website for the Center for Action and Contemplation, [cac.org](http://cac.org); spend some time there; specifically look for ‘daily meditations’ on meditation; there are a good number of articles on various topics related to prayer and meditation on this site
2. A highly used approach to prayer and meditation is Thomas Keating’s Centering Prayer; look for material on the [cac.org](http://cac.org) website or do an internet search on centering prayer
3. Find a simple approach to meditating that appeals to you; try it for a period of time—weeks not days—and if it doesn’t work for you try another
4. Look over your schedule and think about your routine; find the best time of day and throughout your week to carve out time to meditate
5. Share with a friend or sponsor what your plan for meditating is and periodically tell them how you’re doing; keep this up until your daily meditation is as natural and routine as anything else in your life.

### THREE BIBLE TEXTS FOR MEDITATION

---

“For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken.”

Psalm 62:6-7

“You keep them in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because they trust in you.”

Isaiah 26:3

“And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.”

Mark 1:35

### PRAYER

---

*Pull together the fragmented parts of my mind and my soul, loving God, and help me to surrender myself to you. Give me a picture and a hope of my settled self, that I may pursue the life of love you desire for me. Amen.*

### IN THE NEXT PRACTICE,

---

we will look at utilizing professional help.

