Calming the Chaos with Mindful Meditation

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Attitudes of Mindfulness

1. **Non-judging** – Observe whatever you are experiencing as it is, rather than classifying it into good or bad, like or dislike.

2. **Patience** – Change takes time. Foster your capacity to be patient.

3. **Beginner’s Mind** – Nurture your sense of being a beginner rather than an expert. ‘In the beginner’s mind there are many possibilities, in the expert’s mind there are few.’

4. **Trust** – Have confidence in the practice of mindfulness and in your inner self to guide you.

5. **Non-striving** – Allow yourself to experience whatever your experience is, rather than creating a goal for some other experience and then striving to attain that different experience.

6. **Acceptance** – Acceptance doesn’t mean resignation. Mindfulness is about accepting how you feel right now, rather than denying it. Acceptance first, change comes later.

7. **Letting Go** – You don’t need to try and hold on to pleasant experiences and push away unpleasant experiences. Have a sense of a light touch to your experience.

Meditation Poem

I know I am breathing in

I know I am breathing out

Breathing in, I calm my body

Breathing out, I smile

I dwell in the present moment

I know this is a precious moment

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"We are simply inviting ourselves to interface with this moment in full awareness, with the intention to embody as best we can an orientation of calmness, mindfulness, and equanimity right here and right now."

— Jon Kabat-Zinn, "Wherever You Go, There You Are"

"You should sit in meditation for 20 minutes a day, unless you are too busy, then you should sit for an hour."

— Old Zen saying

"Peace. It does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. It means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart."

— Unknown

Quotes

Source: *Being Peace* by Thich Nhat Hanh (1987, p.5)
Walking Meditation is an important meditation to use when you are too restless or anxious to sit still. It is also useful for people who fall asleep when they try to do sitting meditation. In walking meditation the sensation of the feet contacting the floor, rather than breath sensations, is the primary focus. The walking is very slow so be careful you don’t lose your balance and adjust by walking faster. You may prefer to walk barefoot. As always, you will notice how your thinking mind wants to be active. You will find yourself lost in thought over and over; and over and over you will bring your attention back, with gentleness and compassion, to the sensations of your feet.

Find a place where you can walk comfortably back and forth for 10-30 steps. Begin with standing, centering yourself, and closing your eyes. Feel the bottom of your feet. Then open your eyes and walk very slowly, with a sense of ease and dignity. With each step, feel the sensation of lifting each foot off the floor. Be aware as you place each foot on the floor. Feel each step mindfully. When you reach the end of your path, pause, center yourself, and carefully turn around. You can experiment with the speed, walking at whatever pace keeps you most present.

Remember:

“Be gentle with yourself.”

“You don’t have to do it ‘right’.”

“Let go of trying to change; instead, just pay attention to each moment, as best you can.”