



a division of  
Living Lotus Group  
316 sea cliff ave  
sea cliff ny 11579  
516 759 1217

### THREE WAYS TO MEDITATE

By Catherine Russo Epstein  
LivingLotusGroup.com

“Meditating in the head is like being in Grand Central Station, meditating in the heart is like being in a solitary cave in the Himalayas...” - anonymous

Meditation is a concept that some people find intimidating. They believe that they have to empty their minds. Quite the contrary, our human minds are built to be constantly running and trying to work against it causes struggle from the start. Allowing ourselves to be- that which we are, is the first step toward developing a meditative mind. Accepting the fact that some days will be easier than others, that the thoughts will always trickle in, there will always be inner distractions as well as outer distractions, and that all of us have different ways of “getting there” - this acceptance is the key. Rather than starting with the premise of having an “empty mind,” begin with the thought of having an “open mind” and be receptive to whichever form of meditation suits you best. Some ways of meditation are: guided meditations, losing oneself in a creative project, mindfulness in everyday living, breathwork, dancing to favorite music, or chanting.

There are many others of course, but for tonight, we will focus on 3 different methods. These are great ways for the beginner mind to begin training for further opening- and can be done at times convenient to the practitioner. The only prerequisites are to relax and open to the possibilities. When you drop your awareness from the mind to the heart- anything is possible! Set your intention to commit to at least 10 minutes a day- preferably at the same time- and view it as an act of self-love. This will help you develop a commitment to yourself- and will indeed make a profound difference in your life. Experiment with different ways until you resonate with one that speaks to your inner abilities and gifts. Everyone is guided to use the method that suits them best. Sometimes it takes a few, or many, tries to find that way. Enjoy this exploration into your inner self and get out of Grand Central Station! May this exploration lead you full circle back to the Joyful Life!

### Method One-

Breath Awareness: For a few minutes when laying down at night  
One hand on chest, one on abdomen (whichever way is comfortable for you)  
Breathe in the word "Love" and breathe out the word "Peace"-  
Focus on the rise and fall on the in and out breath- Use other words if they are more comfortable to you. When your thoughts wander, gently bring them back to the breath. You also may want to count the breaths, as a helpful focusing point.

### Method Two

Mindfulness: Believe it or not, this can be done- during the height of your day! I once read to bring mindfulness to everyday acts is to bring joy into your life- and I didn't connect with that at first. But, ever the experimenter, I tried it. I brought full mindfulness to the act of folding my laundry. It is not a favorite chore, and I had a zillion other things to do, but- I wanted to see if it worked. And it does! All it requires is for you to be fully present during the act. No zooming out- but rather a focused awareness. Feeling the fabric as I fold, smelling the clean clothes and the fresh laundry scent, folding the fabric with love instead of haste. And, noticing as thoughts come in- and they will- but also seeing them float by- and knowing in my heart, that I am not my thoughts. I am the observer- ever present, ever mindful! Fascinating, I thought!

The time is passing differently- and a chore that I usually detest is getting done...So, try this; with cooking a meal for yourself or family, cleaning your house, or when you are out walking, get out of your head, and into the heart of your every day acts! Even eating one meal fully conscious can make a difference! You will see the beauty, feel the beauty and begin to live life instead of it zooming past! Welcome to the NOW moment!

### Method Three

Visualization- Using the imagination and the mind, you can take yourself on an inner journey! The best way to do this is to listen to a voice leading you through-  
either

Colors, scenery or a combination. You can also lead yourself into a visualization- again , experiment with what fits for you. Tonight, you will be taken on a guided tour of a beautiful beach. You will breathe in colors and stimulate your senses from inside. Become very centered and calm, relax your body and your mind, and let yourself float free.

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