



Relaxation Tips*

Meditation

There are many meditation methods; some require teaching from a certified practitioner on the specific practice and some allow you to enjoy the benefits without extensive training. While I have been trained in Vedic/Transcendental Meditation, I sometimes I need to take a relaxation break throughout the day. When this is the case, I have some easy go to practices which are listed below:

- **Visualizing a calm and peaceful place (sitting at the beach and looking at the ocean, sitting in a park and looking at the birds etc.)**
 - You can sit upright in a chair – no need for sitting on the floor or in full Lotus Position as you may have seen (legs crossed and with index fingers folded and touching the base of the thumb)
 - Close your eyes and begin a series of deep breaths – on the inhale allow your stomach to expand and on the exhale allow your stomach to relax. Repeat 2-3 times and then allow yourself to breath normally.
 - Now imagine the place
 - Sit quietly for 5-20 minutes while visualizing your peaceful place
 - It is common to have thoughts while mediating, the key is to acknowledge them but not concentrate on them for example you may think “I have to stop by the grocery store today” Acknowledge the thought but do not focus on it to a point where you are now making a grocery list in your mind
 - This is also a good time to acknowledge issues with your body. For example you may feel the ache in your lower back so you acknowledge the pain but you do not focus on it
 - As you end your meditation, slowly open your eyes and allow yourself a moment of sitting quietly to reacquaint before you move on to another activity
 - This can be done anywhere- work, home, park bench, passenger seat of a car, airplane etc.
- **Walking meditation**
 - Can be done outside or inside
 - Begin a series of deep breaths – on the inhale allow your stomach to expand and on the exhale allow your stomach to relax. Repeat 2-3 times and then allow yourself to breath normally.
 - Ensure you are standing straight with your shoulders relaxed
 - As you begin to walk, coordinate your steps with your breathing by inhaling as you step with your left foot and exhaling as you step with your right foot
 - As you walk feel your connection to the earth below and visualize the earth’s energy moving throughout your body
 - As you look around simply take in the beauty around you, birds, trees, animals etc.
 - Allow yourself to feel the sun radiate on you and visualize its energy filling your body and radiating from you with burst of light
 - If you are inside, follow the steps above but replace the actual seeing of things with visualization –this is true for the sun as well
 - As you come to the end of your walk, take a few deep breaths as noted above, stand still and allow yourself to reacquaint

Breathing Exercises

* All practices noted above can be varied and there more extensive versions of each practice as well. Remember to always consult with a health care provider before starting any new wellness practice.



There are times when you will not have even a short 5 minutes to mediate, especially if you sit in an open area at work, are presiding over a hearing, in a staff meeting or about to give a speech. For these times, the following breathing exercises have proven helpful for me.

- **Deep breathe breathing**
 - As noted above for beginning mediation, this breathing can also be used solo as a way to calm or relax the mind and body
 - Instead of 2-3 breathes, do 2-3 sets with 8-10 repetitions
- **Alternate nostril breathing**
 - Begin a series of deep breaths – on the inhale allow your stomach to expand and on the exhale allow your stomach to relax. Repeat 2-3 times and then allow yourself to breath normally
 - Close right nostril with thumb and exhale out the left nostril.
 - Inhale through the left nostril, after the inhale, seal the left nostril with your ring finger and release your thumb from your right nostril, take a short pause and exhale out of right nostril now breathe in through the right nostril with the left nostril sealed, take a short pause and exhale out of the left nostril
 - Repeat 8-10 times or more if needed
 - Helps to balance left and right brain, promotes energy, calming and relaxation
 - Great to do just before you start mediating

Essential Oils

Simply inhaling the scent of some essential oils can produce a calming/relaxing state. Oils can be used on the body with one or two drops behind the ear and on the wrist. They can also be used in a diffuser. For the office, I recommend battery a powered diffuser.

- Lavender
- Frankincense
- Rose

Herbal Teas

There are some herbal teas that also produce a calming/relaxing effect two of my favorites are:

- Ashwagandha
- Chamomile
- Rose
- Green Tea – while many know of green tea for is metabolism benefits, it also contains theanine which is known to produce a relaxation effect in the brain

About the Author:

Invigorate Your Essence was founded by Ericka Reynolds who is s an Energy Healer and certified Reiki Practitioner. She serves as a Soul Invigoration Guide supporting individuals and groups in rediscovering and connecting with their souls to discover their life's purpose and live limitless lives. Ericka holds a certification from the Washington Institute of Natural Medicine as a Reiki practitioner and is a member of the American Naturopathic and Holistic Association. She is currently pursuing certification in animal communication and will begin canine massage therapy training the Spring of 2020. Additionally, she holds a Master of Business Administration from Oklahoma City University and a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from Alabama State University.

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