

## **Third Virtual Meditation Class Handout**

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### **How to Do the Mantra Meditation**

To do the mantra meditation sit with your back straight and your eyes closed. Use prayer beads to help you concentrate on your mantra. Begin the practice by repeating the mantra you have chosen out loud for a while, followed by a period of whispering and finally ending with mental recitation of the mantra. Giving your mind such variety will prevent boredom and weariness. Saying the mantra aloud will help block the sounds and distractions you might face. The most potent part of the mantra meditation is to repeat the mantra *mentally* because it calls for a much focused concentration. Feel free to alternate, when necessary, especially when you encounter drowsiness (The Divine Art of Meditation, p. 76).

### **Mantra Writing or Likhita Japa**

A supplementary form of mantra meditation is *likhita japa* or mantra writing. To do *likhita japa*, write your mantra with full concentration each day in silence using a special notebook set aside for this purpose. Pay close attention to your writing while you are simultaneously repeating your mantra in your mind. It is a good idea to decide ahead of time on the number of pages or lines and the time you are going to devote to your mantra writing daily. This will help you become more regular and disciplined in your practice.

### **Mantra Writing with Contemplation Practice**

This approach offers a more effective way to practice Mantra meditation, as it combines two powerful techniques: mantra meditation and contemplation on sacred texts. To engage in this practice, visit the Cyber Temple and select a verse for contemplation. Write this verse in the center of your page. Then, as you write your mantra around the verse, simultaneously repeat the mantra in your mind. Refer to the Mantra Writing Sample provided to you for guidance in your practice."

### **Contemplation**

Another form of meditation is contemplation and reflection on the deeper meanings enshrined in the sacred literature of the world's religions.

Through contemplation, we are gradually awakened to our true nature and inner reality. Furthermore, contemplation can lead to changes in our character, wisdom, peace of mind, and spiritual elation.

During contemplating, we seek insight. This takes time and consistent effort. Therefore, developing the habit of reading at least a short passage in the morning will put us in the proper state of mind before leaving home and interacting with others at work or elsewhere, and reading another passage in the evening will conclude our day with contemplation on yet another spiritual theme.

To do your daily contemplation, feel free to visit the Cyber Temple (<https://www.cyber-temple.org/>) for 5-10 minutes. As you read each verse mindfully, see how it can be applied to your life.

### **Daily Accountability**

*"Life's greatest achievement is the continual remaking of yourself so that at last you know how to live." -Winfred Rhodes, Treasury of Spiritual Wisdom, p.293*

A complementary practice to meditation is the "daily accountability" exercise, which can be done at the end of the day through self-examination with the intent of spiritual growth—that is, to become more patient, more compassionate, more honest, more loving, and so on. To do your daily accountability exercise, you can sit in your meditation place and take a few deep breaths to calm your mind. Then you can start by reviewing your day from the time you got up. You don't have to recall everything you have done; the major events and experiences will be enough.

As you remember each event, you can simply reflect on it to see if you can learn anything from each experience. As Roger Walsh says, the aim here "is to learn, not to blame; to grow in wisdom, not to fall into guilt; to appreciate our strength as much as to recognize our weaknesses...Regular self-reflection fosters good choices" (Essential Spirituality, by Dr. Roger Walsh).

### **How to Keep a Gratitude Journal**

A gratitude journal is a great way to keep yourself in a thankful and positive state of mind.

- Make it a rule to write down, once a day, *at least* 5 things you are thankful for.
- You can start by writing down basic material things that you are grateful for, such as your house, your bed, your clothes, your food, etc. Be sure to explain how this makes you feel and why you're grateful for it. The journal is more than just a list of stuff.  
Example - I am grateful for my house. My house warms my body and shelters and protects me. It gives me a sense of relief knowing that there is always a comforting place to come back to.
- Think about your abilities. You may start with basic abilities like your ability to see, your ability to hear, your ability to walk. Then progress to the extended abilities that are unique to you. Think about your talents, like singing and writing, as well as features that make up your character like your listening skills, your skills in cheering up people, your skills in being a good friend.
- Consider the people in your life. Think about all the people you care about, like your parents, your friends, your significant other. Write why you are grateful for each person and how they make you feel. This helps you appreciate them and see only the good in them.
- Write about situations and experiences. We can always find situations that have made us happy. For example, you may be grateful for a fun party, a good day at school or work, a fun vacation.
- Try to include some surprise. What unexpected blessings did you benefit from today? What were you dreading that did not happen?
- Think about and then write down those aspects of your life that you tend to take for granted. Instead, take them *as granted*.
- Let your gratitude last a long time. It is okay to repeat a blessing day after day, but do elaborate on each blessing; give details.
- Don't only write about people who helped you but also about those who have helped people you love. We may overlook these sources of gratitude.
- Be grateful for the negative experiences that taught you a valuable lesson.

**Homework:**

-Visit the Cyber Temple ([www.cyber-temple.org](http://www.cyber-temple.org)) for daily contemplation.

- Do the *daily accountability* practice at the end of the day.
- Practice Mantra Meditation (or Mantra writing) 10 Minutes daily.
- Write in your gratitude journal every evening.