

## **Helpful Suggestions for Meditation**

*These suggestions, gleaned over the years from Infinite Way teachers and other teachers who align with Joel in the purpose and practice of meditation, are offered simply as ideas to consider. If any resonate with you, they might be helpful.*

### **Preparation for Meditation**

Sometimes, we do not think about “preparing” for meditation; we sit down and expect to meditate immediately. This does not always work, except for those who have attained the ability to go right into the silence anytime, anywhere. If we take time for simple preparations, we can more easily get into a contemplative/meditative state.

#### *Prepare the Environment*

It is helpful to have a specific place where you always meditate. The connections with the Divine experienced in meditation become energetically embedded in the space, just as some cathedrals and other sacred spaces acquire a vibrant spiritual energy because of the devotion and spiritual practice that occurs there.

Make sure the room is at a comfortable temperature, not too hot or not too cold, so as not to distract the body.

Turn off the cell phone or take the phone off the hook to minimize potential distractions. If there is a ritual that helps to set a spiritual tone for you, use it. Depending on the particular spiritual journey you have taken, you might light a candle, burn incense, or ring a tingsha bell or Tibetan singing bowl. If you resonate with these rituals, they can help foster the attitude and altitude for contemplation and meditation.

#### *Prepare the Body*

One reason people have trouble with meditation is that the body is restless or uncomfortable. It can be helpful to begin the meditation period by taking several deep breaths, releasing physical tension, negative thoughts, or anxieties with every out breath. If you practice yoga, a few simple yoga asanas can also help calm, quiet, and balance the body.

When you sit down to meditate, be sure you are comfortable. Joel recommends a specific posture for meditation to ensure that the body is not a distraction. If his suggestions resonate with you, you can follow them. You may also have learned a different posture that you prefer.

#### *Prepare the Heart*

*“If you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has anything against thee, leave your gift before the altar, and go your way. First, be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” (Matthew 5:23)*

Take a minute or two to see if you are in conflict with anyone and release them. If there is someone you need to forgive, do so to the best of your ability with a sincere heart. Then, acknowledge the truth of their being. We cannot expect to experience God, absolute purity Itself, if we are holding any negativity in our hearts.

*“Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight.”*  
(Psalm 19:14)

### *Prepare the Mind*

What is your objective in meditation? Sometimes, we may forget to clarify our intention for meditation, but it is helpful to do so. In *The Infinite Way*, the goal of meditation is always to experience God, become aware of God, or “feel” the Presence within. We come to that calm, peaceful place where we are still enough to become aware of the Presence within and receptive to any impartations It gives us.

Also, as Joel says, “We must never forget that this God to whom we are praying, to whom we are attuning ourselves, is [already] within us. We are not thinking up to heaven; we are not thinking out into the world; we are attuned to the center of our own being, from which the grace of God flows.”<sup>1</sup>

### *Use a Meditation Shawl*

Meditation shawls are used in many spiritual traditions. Metaphorically, a meditation shawl covers the mundane garments of our everyday life with a spiritual intention and creates an intimate space within which to connect with one's spiritual center. A shawl can give a sense of turning within, helping us to focus inwardly. Because the body may cool down during meditation, a shawl can keep the body comfortable and provide a sense of relaxation. Again, like a meditation space, the meditation experiences become energetically embedded in the shawl. A meditation shawl should be used only for meditation so that the garment remains free from exposure to the stresses and associations of the material world.

## **Other Tips**

### *Consistency in Practice*

Joel repeatedly tells us that meditation is the most important practice in *The Infinite Way*. Consistently practicing meditation establishes it as a spiritual “habit” and a priority. Aim to meditate at the same time and in the same place every day. Practice reinforces meditation, and meditation reinforces practice.

### *Remember That Others are Meditating Now*

At any time of the day or night, spiritual seekers around the globe are meditating. If you prefer to meditate with others, it can help to remember that others are meditating, and many are likely *Infinite Way* students. You can join them in Spirit.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Art of Spiritual Living*, Chapter 5, “The New Dispensation of Prayer.”

*Do Short Meditations*

Joel and other teachers have said that if we are having trouble with meditation for any reason, it can be helpful to do short meditations and do them very frequently throughout the day. This helps to calm the mind and makes it possible to meditate for longer periods.

*Meditate with Joel*

Sometimes, if you are having trouble getting into meditation, it can be helpful to “meditate with Joel” to get started. Find a recording on which Joel leads students in meditation and tune in to it. For example, these recordings have beautiful contemplative meditations:

- Tape 8A, Side 2: “The Deep Silence of My Peace”
- Tape 352B: “A Meditation on Life by Grace”
- Tape 74B: “Meditation – Fear Not”