

MEDITATION MONDAYS

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Class led by David Eck

Daniel A. Helminiak, Meditation Without Myth

"My advice is to remember that different kinds of meditation fit different people, and the same people may need different meditations at different times in their spiritual quest. It is important to know which kind of meditation to practice and when to switch tracks."

"As it turns out, silence plays a key role in all spiritual pursuit, and especially in the practice of meditation. In silence one can move beyond thoughts, emotions, and images and come to rest at peace in an experience of mere presence, just being there."

TAI CHI BREATHING: EXPANDING HANDS

1. Close your eyes. Sit still and upright, relaxed and alert.
2. Focus on your breathing. With each exhale let your body relax more deeply.
3. When you are ready, begin breathing slowly and deeply. With each inhale, expand your hands. With each exhale, close them together.

FALLING LEAVES MEDITATION

1. Place the image of the tree in your lap or on a table in front of you where you can see it.
2. Sit still and upright, relaxed and alert.
3. Focus on your breathing. With each exhale let your body relax more deeply.
4. When you are ready take a look at the tree. Focus your attention on the TRUNK of the tree. This represents a GOAL you'd like to accomplish in this season of your life. When a goal comes to mind, write it next to the tree trunk. Don't force a goal to materialize. Spend some time in silence listening to your heart and spirit until it emerges with absolutely clarity.
5. When you have a goal in mind, turn your attention to the LEAVES on the tree. Think about the THINGS YOU NEED TO LET GO OF in order to make room in your life for this goal to be accomplished. This is a time to think about the things that no longer serve a useful purpose in your life. When these things come to mind, write them next to the leaves on the tree. If you have trouble letting go of things, remember that they will

become the compost that provides nourishment for the tree. (Some people might find it helpful to close their eyes during this part of the meditation.)

6. Finally, turn your attention to the ROOTS of the tree. Think about the PEOPLE AND RESOURCES you will need to bring into your life in order to accomplish your goal. What kinds of things will feed and nourish your goal as well as yourself? When these things come to mind, write them next to the roots of the tree. (Some people might find it helpful to close their eyes during this part of the meditation.)

7. As a last step, close your eyes and take the image of this tree into your minds' eye. Sit with it for a while and see if any additional insight arise. If they do, write them down on the page after you open your eyes. Keep this image with you and refer to it on a daily basis until you achieve your goal. Continue to write insights on the leaves and roots as they come to you.