

Meditation: Expansion

Sit quietly: Enjoy the fruits of your practice – feelings of deep peace, joy, love, or other divine qualities. Absorb yourself in whatever quality you feel. Yogananda defined meditation as “one-pointed concentration on God or one of His attributes.” You can call to God with deep devotion, “Reveal Thyself,” and then try to feel His response in your heart. After some period of stillness, you can also pray for others, do a visualization, or practice devotion, absorbing yourself in God’s inward presence.

Meditation Tips

Regularity: Try to commit to even 5 minutes a day of meditation. It will help you to choose a time and regularly meditate at that time, even for just a brief amount of time, to help establish a habit of daily meditation. If you do only 5 minutes of meditation daily, this can help to create a habit of meditation. Then, as you enjoy meditating, try to lengthen your meditation times.

Ideal times to meditate are: dawn (or soon after awakening), noon, dusk, and midnight (or just before bed). See which times work best for you. It’s ideal to meditate on an empty stomach, if possible.

Exercise: If you have time, exercise a little before meditation. Yoga postures are excellent, and Yogananda’s Energization Exercises are highly recommended.

Location: Set aside a room or small part of a room as your meditation area. Try to find as quiet a spot as possible; you can use earplugs or headphones to help block out noise. Be sure the room is a bit on the cool side, not stuffy; you might like a blanket or shawl around your shoulders. Have a place to sit, and a simple altar or focal point, such as pictures, flowers, candles. If you consistently meditate in the same place, you will find that the vibrations of meditation build there. Face east if possible. Yogis say that there are certain natural currents, flowing east to west, which help you meditate better. North is also a good direction for meditation.

Sitting: Protect yourself from the downward pull of earth currents by sitting on a natural fiber, such as wool or silk. *Sit erect!* Whether you use a chair, a cushion on the floor, or a kneeling bench, keep your back straight, chest slightly raised, head erect, eyes closed.

How long? Do not set unrealistic goals for yourself. Best to meditate 5-15 minutes and be very consistent about it, and then increase your time as you can. One longer meditation each week is very helpful. Also, it helps to meditate with other people, especially devotees who have been meditating longer than you have.

Begin your meditation with a prayer either aloud or silently to God and the Masters, to guide and help you. You might enjoy beginning with some chanting also.

Meditate with joy, with devotion! Don’t wait for God’s joy to make you joyful, be joyful first yourself! Meditation simply helps you remember, on ever-deepening levels of awareness, who and what you really are! You are a child of God; you are one with the Infinite Light.