

5 MINUTE MEDITATION

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(from *Knowing HER Intimately*, pg. 55-56)

If you're not sure how to start a simple daily practice of meditation, follow these beginning suggestions. Find a quiet place where you won't be interrupted. I find that a locked bedroom or office is best. Sit comfortably on a sofa, chair, bed, or floor. I prefer sitting cross-legged on the floor, on a small decorator pillow, sitting upright against the bed.

You might start with a couple of cleansing breaths. Breathe in through your nose. Exhale through your mouth like you are blowing out a candle. Close your eyes and simply observe your breath, as you inhale and exhale.

As you inhale, slowly say to yourself, "in." As you exhale, simply count each breath by repeating the number "one" in your mind. This helps your mind stay better focused on your breathing. You might even repeat some other calming word, such as "Relax," "Calm," "Be Still," "Sunshine," or "Peace," or whatever feels good for you.

Each time you notice your thoughts wandering, just turn your attention back to focusing on your breath. As you move into a relaxed, meditative state, you'll notice your breathing slowing down, and your mind being more at ease and calm. Just keep practicing each day until this becomes a natural and welcome part of your daily routine.

I also suggest clients add an element of mental imagery to their meditation. This often helps to engage one's attention even better than just focusing on one's breath. Here is a sample imagery you might use, in addition to the above steps:

Close your eyes and observe your breathing ... Notice your inhale, and your exhale ... Notice your breathing slowing down as you let it flow in and out.

See yourself standing in a beautiful place surrounded by trees, mountains, and a clear blue lake ... Notice the leaves gently rustling in the trees ... Notice the beautiful blue sky above, and the majestic mountains in the distance ... See the sunlight sparkling across the lake, and the small river you can hear flowing nearby ...

Feel the warmth and aliveness all around you. Breathe in the fresh spring scent in the air. Feel the warmth of the sun shining down, as if creating a pathway of light reaching from you into heaven. See yourself ascending this pathway of light into God's presence.

With this imagery, you might either bask silently in the heavenly presence, or pour out your heart to God mentally in a private and very personal conversation. Sometimes I like to just be there in God's presence, repeating the words in my mind, "I'm listening..."

Whenever you feel ready, return to the present moment by opening your eyes. You might also let a slight smile cross your lips just before opening your eyes.