MARQUETTE CONTEMPLATIVE COMMUNITY

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION GUIDELINES

1. Take a comfortable sitting position on a cushion, chair.
2. Keep your spine erect but relaxed, not strained.
3. If sitting on a cushion, loosely cross your legs. If sitting on a chair, keep your feet flat on the floor. Sit a little forward on the chair rather than leaning back.
4. Place your hands comfortably on your thighs, palms down.
5. Eyes are open, gaze is soft and comfortably down (4-6 feet in front of you)
6. Relax your arms and shoulders, face and jaw.
7. If you need to adjust your posture while you’re meditating, go ahead.
8. Place your attention on your breath. Breathe naturally, however you happen to be breathing.
9. Attention to the breath should be light. Thoughts and feelings and sense perceptions can come and go. Just don’t engage them. Let them be and go by. Keep your primary light attention on the breath. The rest is background.
10. If you find that you’ve become distracted, that you’ve lost track of your breath altogether, notice that your mind has wandered and gently return your attention to the breath. No judgment. This is the training of meditation. Not wrong or bad to become distracted, great to notice this. Then gently return your attention to the breath.
11. HINTS: We each have different body proportions, so explore what feels best to you. It may take a little time to settle into sitting up straight—many of us aren’t used to it. If your legs are long, it may be helpful to sit a little higher on a cushion, use an extra support cushion so that your knees are lower than your hips—this often cuts down on strain and feet going to sleep. If sitting in a chair, if your legs are short it may be helpful to rest your feet on a cushion so your legs aren’t strained. Unless your arms are long, it’s usually a good idea to rest your hands on your thighs just above your knees. Cupping your knees with your hands also tends to create strain.
12. A daily meditation practice is very helpful. Even a short period of meditation (10 minutes) is useful. It’s great to meditate for longer periods of time but not essential to begin to experience the benefits.

Mindfulness practice helps us to live fully in the present moment, aware of our experience of what is going in within us and in the world around us, enabling us to better take care of ourselves, other people, and our world.

For more information on mindfulness-based activities see our website:
http://marquette.edu/contemplative/

For meditation instruction or to talk about ongoing meditation practice contact:
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