



The practice of meditation in connection

ActivePause.com March 30, 2023

This is a PDF version of the web page at <http://activepause.com/meditation-connection/>. There is a date on top of this PDF, because these instructions may change as more people give their feedback.

The practice I will be describing here is a hybrid, as it combines meditation and mindful connection. You do it with a friend or a small group of friends. In a relatively short amount of time, you can both go inside and feel connected with people.

The mix of meditation and sharing is a great format for people who want to deepen their practice of meditation, as well as people who are new to it. It enables you to learn more about the process and about yourself.

It is very easy to set up. There is a short introduction (giving people a sense of what is ahead), a moment of meditation, and then, sharing in a meditative way.

The rest of this article gives you a sense of what it's like.

Introduction:

We are making time now for a special moment of meditation in connection.

Essentially, what we're doing is combining meditation (that is, going inside, connecting with our inner experience), and connection with other people.

Let's first break the ice, by briefly introducing us to each other. A very brief, one sentence introduction.

We're going to start with 20 minutes of meditation and then we'll talk about it. At that time, I will explain how we share. Right now, let's get ready for our 20 minutes of meditation.

You can use any way of meditating that you're accustomed to. If you're not very familiar with meditation, think of it as some kind of a pause. A moment when you're going inside, paying attention to your inner experience. You're especially paying attention to what happens in the body. Noticing thoughts as they come, yes, noticing feelings as they arise, but also curious about what happens in the body.

Often, what happens in the body is fairly subtle, so it may feel like nothing is happening. Or it may feel like your attention is highjacked by tension or aches. Or by worries, or even anxiety. And it's OK. It's not going to last more than 20 minutes, and then we can talk about it together if you want to.

So, relax and enjoy the show! Notice where your attention gets pulled, and gently come back to the pause, and to what is happening in your body.

Meditation

Set an alarm for 20 minutes (or the time that your group would prefer).

Connection (after the alarm)

Now, we're taking turns sharing what it was like to meditate.

Prompt # 1: What was it like for you to meditate?

As we share our experiences, we do so in a meditative mode. We speak slowly and err on the side of using fewer words rather than too many. A lot of what there is to say might be left unsaid, and it's OK. The point of the practice is to gently open the door, not open the floodgates.

It may be that what you experienced is pretty vague, and it's tempting to say "nothing much happened." I encourage you to embrace the vagueness. Just say: "there was something I can't quite put my finger on" and you might just stop with that. Or, as you say it and pause, it is possible that something more comes up. For instance: "it was like something was churning in my stomach, a little bit, not too strong... not quite churning, but something like that." It doesn't have to make logical sense.

So, it's totally okay to share something that is not quite formed.

Now, after people have shared, we introduce Prompt # 2.

Prompt # 2: What is it like to hear what other(s) have shared?

And you take turns sharing in the same meditative way, slow and thoughtful.

After people have shared, we conclude with Prompt # 3.

Prompt # 3: What do you want to carry from this moment into the rest of your week (or the rest of your life)?

After a short pause, each person comes up with a “bookmark” for that experience, a word or two, a sensation, or an image, that comes up as you pause. You share it, and there’s a little bit of you left with the group. And something to carry with you, into the rest of your life.

Gently transitioning away from the space of meditative connection

If this is the first time you’re doing this with a friend or a small group, it’s a good idea to plan on having a little time to talk a bit about the experience, and about possibly doing it again, maybe regularly.

My suggestion is to have a short pause, and each person comes up with a “bookmark” for that experience, a word or two, or a sensation, or an image, that comes up as you pause. You share it, and there’s a little bit of you left with the group.

Try it with a friend, or a small group of friends. And let us know about your experience through the feedback form <http://activepause.com/feedback/>

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