

Passage Meditation

One easy and elegant way to find a still, sacred place within is *meditation*.

“And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide; and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and behold, the camels were coming” [Genesis 24:63]

“Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer” [Psalm 20:1]

One way to meditate is called “Passage Meditation”, inspired words that change us from the inside out. Eknath Easwaran [www.easwaran.org] devotes a whole book [[Meditation](#)], Nilgiri Press, 1991] teaching us how to do this meditation [www.easwaran.org]. Easwaran says...

The secret of meditation is simple: you become what you meditate on. When you use an inspirational passage every day in meditation, you are driving the words deep into your consciousness. Eventually they become an integral part of your personality, which means they will find constant expression in what you do, what you say, and what you think.

In passage meditation, you choose a spiritual text, or passage, that embodies your highest ideals, memorize it, and then go through the words slowly, silently, and with as much concentration as possible.

This method brings two important benefits. First, by training our mind to stay on the words of the passage, we gradually build the precious capacity to place our attention wherever we choose.

Second, we begin to resemble and actually become whatever we give our attention to. As the inspired words from the great spiritual traditions of the world slowly come to life in us, they bring with them quiet joy, the capacity to face challenges squarely, and a deep sense of fulfillment.

Basic guidelines for Passage Meditation:

- Select a simple, positive inspirational passage from one of the world’s great spiritual traditions.
- Choose a time, every day, to devote half an hour of uninterrupted quiet.
- Sit with your back and head erect (a back support may be helpful) and with your eyes closed.
- Go slowly, in your mind, through the words of the passage.
- Do not reflect on the meaning of each word; with your full attention the meaning will sink in.
- When distractions come, do not resist them, simply return your attention to the passage.
- When you reach the end of the passage, begin again.

There are many examples of inspired passages from every religion, and from none. Select one holding ideals you respond to. Here are a just a few suggestions...

Select one of the following or another inspired passage holding ideals you respond to from one of the world’s great spiritual traditions.

The Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console,
To be understood as to understand,
To be loved as to love;
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
It is in dying to self that we are born to eternal life.

Attributed to Francis Bernadone, born in Assisi, Italy, in 1181 or 1182. At the age of twenty-two, after a sudden illness that brought him almost to the point of death, he left his home and inheritance to follow an injunction that he felt he received from Christ himself: "Francis, go and rebuild my Church." Three great Franciscan orders quickly grew around the monks, nuns, and lay disciples who responded to his joyful example of universal love and selfless service.

Serve the Lord with Gladness

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord,
all ye lands.
Serve the Lord with gladness:
come before his presence with singing.
Know ye that the Lord he is God:
it is he that hath made us,
and not we ourselves;
We are his people,
and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving,
and into his courts with praise:
Be thankful unto him,
and bless his name.
For the Lord is good;
his mercy is everlasting;
And his truth endureth
to all generations.

Psalm 100, King James Version

Let Me Walk In Beauty (first stanza)

O Great Spirit,
whose voice I hear in the winds
and whose breath gives life to all the world,

hear me.
I am small and weak.
I need your strength and wisdom.

This prayer is thought to be Native American in origin and is sometimes attributed to the Sioux.

The Way of Love (first 2 stanzas)

Arjuna:
Of those who love you as the Lord of Love,
Ever present in all, and those who seek you
As the nameless, formless Reality,
Which way is sure and swift, love or knowledge?

Sri Krishna:
For those who set their hearts on me
And worship me with unfailing devotion and faith,
The way of love leads sure and swift to me

Chapter 12 of the Bhagavad Gita, translated by Eknath Easwaran. This "Song of the Lord" is India's best-known scripture which guides daily practice. The Gita is a dialogue between Sri Krishna, an incarnation of the Lord, and his friend and disciple Arjuna, a warrior prince who represents anyone trying to live a spiritual life in the midst of worldly activity and conflict

