

Week 1 Meditative Practice “Practicing Emptiness”

Reverend Emily Meyer, Director of [The Ministry Lab](#), invites you to wonder through breathing and contemplation. Please note, this content is also available as an audio recording on the website: www.uccmn.org.

Tips:

- You may listen (audio file on www.uccmn.org, or read text included here).
- Non-judgmentalism is key: This is called a “practice” because it is never “perfect”.
- This practice contains two moments of silence introduced by the phrase, “Continue to breathe...” Recorded silences last one minute. You can lengthen this time by pushing pause; push play when you are ready to continue.
- And, don’t be afraid to stretch the silences: extended time can deepen our connection with the Divine and has the delightful side-effects of developing patience, compassion, and attention spans!
- This practice concludes with an invitation to journal and reflect. Both are highly beneficial. You may want to have paper and writing/drawing materials handy.
- If circumstances prevent all forms of reflection, please be kind to yourself and others by moving slowly from the practice back into “normal” life: the jump from silence to normal-volume life can be jarring.
- Take your time. Breathe. And be...

Preparation

The audio file does not include these 3 preparations.

1. **Work out the Wiggles:** Do a squiggly dance, air-hula hoop, or simple jumping jacks to work out the kinks and sitting of the day.
2. **Stretch:** When you’re ready, stretch high to the sky, then flop to touch your toes/ankles/calves/the floor - whatever is accessible. Roll up slowly, roll the shoulders up and back and down, and bring this tall posture into your seated position.
3. **Sit:** Take a seat! Sit up tall, with both feet on the floor, knees above ankles, hips behind knees, shoulders over hips, hands resting in the lap, chin slightly tucked: tall, yet relaxed. Some participants may want to sit cross-legged on the floor. This is another great option!

Meditation

Naming Our Intent

- ~ Today we practice being empty and being full.
- ~ Notice each breath.
- ~ Let each breath fill your lungs all the way.
- ~ Let each breath out empty your lungs all the way.
- ~ Notice how your lungs have to become empty before they can refill.
- ~ Notice how once your lungs are full, they want to be emptied.
- ~ Notice how both emptiness and fullness are essential to life.
- ~ Sit for a moment and simply notice the breath: emptying and filling; filling and emptying.

Continue to breathe... *Take as long as you like - from 1-3 minutes or more.*

Practice

- ~ Continue to notice your breath.
- ~ As you breathe in, notice how the Divine Breath is filling you with everything you need for this moment.
- ~ As you breathe out, notice how the Divine Breath is emptying you of everything you no longer need.
- ~ Breathe in: notice how you are filled with all that you need.
- ~ Breathe out: notice how you are emptied of everything you no longer need.
- ~ Breathe in: being filled with all that you need.
- ~ Breathe out: being emptied of everything you no longer need.
- ~ Continue to breathe...

Take as long as you like - from 1-3 minutes or more.

Rest

- ~ I invite you to wiggle your toes and fingers; gently roll your head or shoulders...
- ~ Take a few deep breaths: in and out...
- ~ And rest for a moment.

Take as long as you like - from 10-30 seconds or more.

Reflect

I encourage you to reflect a bit on what you experienced. Today's practice might be a fun one to draw: what did you see or how did you feel as you noticed God's Breath filling and emptying you? Draw a picture, doodle, or write out your experience.

Consider this week's Wondering Questions:

- What are the things that tempt you that aren't healthy, physically and spiritually?
- How can you ask for help to overcome some of these temptations?
- What are some healthy things or habits you can use to fill up when you "empty" yourself of the unhealthy things?

I encourage you to keep your reflections in a book. This gives you something to look back on, to see where God has been in your life and in the world. It might help you notice God in new ways, too. This way you can write or draw your own personal story of God.

Bless

Thank you for taking this time to practice being emptied. A simple practice like this, every day, can empty and fill your soul, body, and mind. I hope that you find this to be true. Blessed be.

