

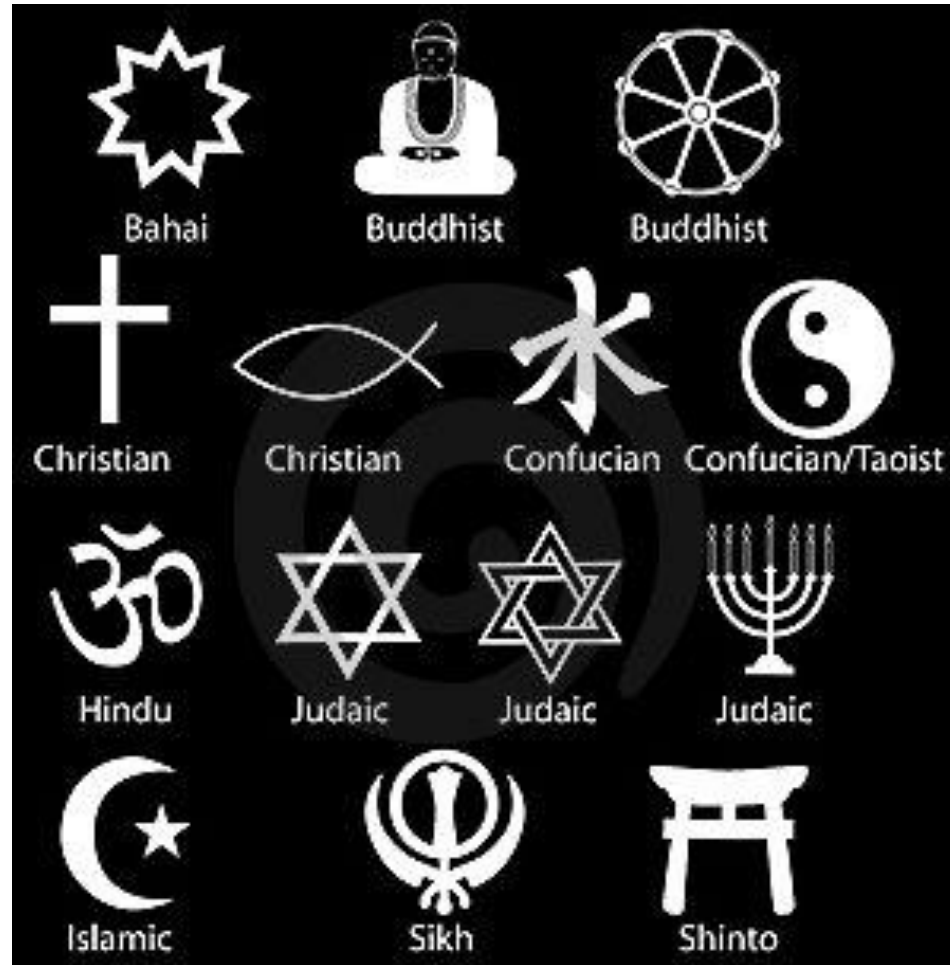


Secular Meditation

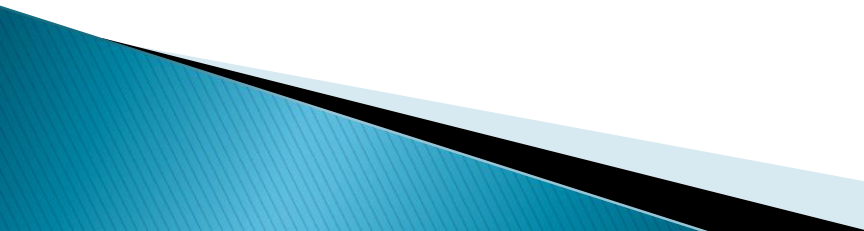
The Practice of Mindfulness

Dana Nourie

History of Mindfulness Meditation



Breaking Assumptions & Myths

- ▶ Mindfulness meditation does not make you psychic.
 - ▶ . . . Does not give you special powers
 - ▶ . . . Does not put you in a state of bliss that lasts forever
 - ▶ . . . Does not help you to levitate
 - ▶ . . . Is in no way other worldly
 - ▶ . . . Is not Transcendental Meditation or other woo types
- 

What are the claimed benefits of mindfulness meditation?

- ▶ Helps you cope with stress, dissatisfaction, etc.
- ▶ Helps you deal with pain management
- ▶ Helps increase concentration
- ▶ Helps lower blood pressure
- ▶ Enhances memory
- ▶ Helps you develop compassion
- ▶ Helps regulate moods/emotions

Note: research and links listed later on. Be skeptical about these claims.




Why Should Atheists Care?

“While atheism helped me be skeptical of the ideas and beliefs of others, mindfulness meditation taught me to be skeptical of my own mind.” ~ Dana Nourie

- ▶ Mindfulness teaches you to be more objective, so you respond instead of react.
- ▶ Mindfulness helps you see through *your own delusions*.
- ▶ No one can help you understand how your mind works better than you!

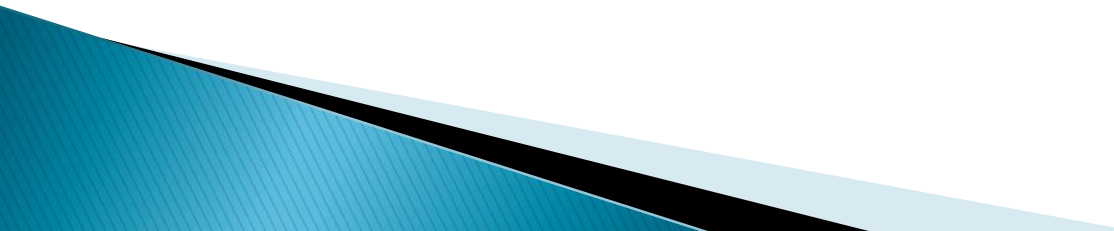
How do we practice mindfulness meditation?

- ▶ Sit comfortably with eyes closed.
 - ▶ Put your attention on your breath, focusing on it going in, going out, going in, going out.
 - ▶ If a thought, sound, or sensation takes you off of the breath, note it, and return to the breath.
 - ▶ Pay attention to your breath, going in, and going out. Repeat . . .
- 

How does mindfulness Meditation Work?

- ▶ Thoughts that interrupt your concentration teach you thought patterns, circular thinking, etc.
- ▶ You learn how emotions interrupt, how they feel in the body, and how your thoughts feed emotions and vice versa.
- ▶ You learn to be with whatever arises in your experience, which increases your mindfulness abilities.
- ▶ You learn to let go of obsessive thoughts, negative thoughts that are not to your benefit, etc.
- ▶ You learn to pay attention to your life as it happens.
 - “I think what I want to think and only when I want to think it.” ~Buddha

Mindfulness in Daily Life

- ▶ What you learn in meditation, you extend to your daily life . . .
 - ▶ Practice mindfulness while driving, grocery shopping, waiting in line, etc.
 - ▶ Recognize how mindfulness helps you be more aware of thoughts and feelings *as they arise* . . .
 - ▶ Being mindful of others, helps you become more aware and sensitive, compassionate to their suffering, fear, angst, etc.
- 

Resources & Studies

- ▶ [Present Moment: Mindfulness & Science](#)
- ▶ [Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society](#)
- ▶ [Mindful Magazine](#)
- ▶ [Mindful Universe](#)
- ▶ [UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center](#)
- ▶ [UCSD Center for Mindfulness](#)
- ▶ [Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction SF Bay Area – Stress ...](#)
- ▶ [Mindfulness Meditation Course – Stanford Hospital & Clinics ...](#)