



FIRST-SUNDAY CONTEMPLATIVE SITTING

MAY 2022

ATTENTION

*"For lack of attention a thousand forms
of loveliness elude us everyday."*

— Evelyn Underhill,
Modern Guide to the Ancient Quest for the Holy

This month is a time of transition from the cold days and rains of March and April to the warmer days in May. This month brings the gift of spring with its hints of summer. Flowers and warmer days and the promise that after every storm comes the return of sunshine.

Sometimes our lives are busy with sensory activity constantly inserting itself into our awareness. We are bombarded with color, flavor, shape, and sound, but do we take time to notice the loveliness?

We may attend to beauty in two ways: one through the broad attention to the whole or focusing our attention on detail.

Broad attention to the whole allows us to discover the splendor present as the elements of our world come together. We can notice the greens of the leaves against the blue of the sky or the harmony of sand dunes next to a large body of water.



Focused attention on detail allows us to see the beauty of individual elements around us. We might experience the crunch of potato chips or the unique sharp notes of a trumpet in the orchestra.

What beauty might I attend to this day?

Will I see loveliness in the whole or in the detail?

*"For as the Earth springs forth its shoots, and as
a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so
God will cause righteousness and praise to spring
up before all the nations."*

— Isaiah 61:11

CONTEMPLATIVE MEDITATION

Opportunities to find deep powers within ourselves come when life seems most challenging.
— Joseph Campbell

Mindfulness meditation is a practice that helps you to see things as they really are. You can discover a stillness and a presence in the midst of activities such as talking, eating, listening, asking, responding, and waiting. Mindfulness meditation is not an activity we do once in a while. Rather, it is a way of being that we carry with us throughout the day. The more quietly you sit, you begin to notice how everything you can see is in a state of change and is an invitation to grow more at ease with uncertainty.

Mindfulness Practice: Decide a time when you will practice sitting or walking meditation. This might be 5, 10, or more minutes every day or three times a week or ...

First, come gently into your body; find a comfortable posture, let your shoulders drop, rest your hands on your lap or knees, allow your eyes to gently close or soften their gaze.

Now bring your awareness to the present moment. Notice if the mind offers you thoughts, emotions, or feelings to think about. If so, let them go like clouds in the sky. Gently place your focus on the breath at the tip of the nose or on your chest or abdomen.

As you follow the breath you can say softly “in” and “out” with each breath yet resting most of your attention on your actual breathing. It does not matter how often the mind wanders, as long as each time it does, you bring it back to the breath. Awareness with no judgment or self-criticism is key.

At the end of each meditation, express gratitude to yourself for your blessed effort. Remember there is ~ *Nothing to do, No place to go. Only Rest on the Breath.*

Draw your meditation to a close with these Loving-Kindness prayer intentions ~

May I live in awareness this day. May all beings live in awareness this day.

May I tend to my suffering with love. May all beings tend to their suffering with love.

May I live and awaken with ease. May all beings live and awaken with ease.

May seeds of compassion flower in me. May seeds of compassion flower in all beings.

May I know that I am beloved of God. May all beings know they are beloved of God.

May I....
