

Making Meditation a Priority in Your Life...

Hello Healthy Nurse Nation!!

If I'm being honest with you, I was initially resistant towards meditation. I thought that in order to meditate, one had to sit in a darkened room, atop a pillow, with incense burning. I also thought this required an empty mind. Fortunately, I was wrong.

A couple of years ago, as I embarked on my journey of personal development, I was hearing some talk about meditation. I especially became more interested in the topic because many of my role models were doing a lot of meditating. Eventually I started diving into that world, one breath at a time.

As nurses, we see, smell, hear, feel and maybe even sometimes (in the worst of times!) taste many, many different things during our careers. We take care of people's lives day in and day out. Even if we spend a shift never once stopping to eat or void, we show up the next day ready to do it all over again. Truth? Yes. Healthy? Absolutely not. However, we have nurses' hearts, and we began our careers knowing that our patients would always be our priority. But how do we start to relearn how to fill up our own cups so that we don't run on fumes? How do we honor our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being so that we are also reaping the benefits of a healthy and happy life?

Nurses, this is where meditation can be one of the most useful things in life's toolbox. Meditation can become something that you look forward to turning to, especially after the hardest of shifts.

I have learned that meditation can be done anywhere, without incense, without a pillow---and completely emptying your mind is actually not possible. Allowing yourself the gift of time to meditate is one of the first steps to inviting this beautiful practice into your life. Knowing that you will still have many thoughts running through your mind while you are learning how to meditate will also help you see meditation as more of a welcoming practice than a threatening unknown.

When our world was hit with the Covid-19 pandemic in March of 2020, I started doing weekly, guided meditations via Zoom with my brother Tim's CrossFit® community. Each week, we would gather remotely from the comfort of our own homes, and I would guide these beautiful souls through a meditation.

Although I was nervous at first, with each passing week I found myself looking forward to this time to help others and myself as well. We learned how to be *with* our thoughts, instead of running away from them or trying to numb them. I learned that you are able to calm your thoughts and nerves with your breath, as well as with positive thoughts and affirmations.

As nurses, it is vital to our well-being to remember that our minds *also* deserve the love and attention that we so willingly give to our patients. Even though we are used to being the ones who administer the medications, hold our patients' hands when they are scared, and comfort our patients' family members during the hardest of times, we have to remember that our lives are just as much of a gift as the lives that we help to heal during each and every shift.

Namaste.

With so much love and gratitude for this community,
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Here are some interesting resources on meditation:

<https://www.mindful.org/free-mindfulness-apps-worthy-of-your-attention/>

<https://mindworks.org/blog/why-is-meditation-important-facts-you-need-to-know/>