

Sit Happens Meeting Format

Welcome to the *Sit Happens* Buddhist 12-step study group. My name is <name> and I will be your peer facilitator for this meeting. Please join me in a moment of silence to reflect on why we are here followed by a Buddhist Serenity Prayer.

<After a few moments of silence...>

A Buddhist Serenity Prayer

May I be serene, accepting those things I cannot change: the Four Noble Truths, impermanence, dependent origination, not self, and past karma.

May I be courageous, changing those things I can by being mindful in the present moment so that my thoughts, words, and actions will bring greater joy and not harm myself or others now or in the future.

May I be wise, knowing the difference between skillful and unskillful action.

Sit Happens is a fellowship of people who seek to connect our recovery with our Buddhist practice. We welcome everyone in all recovery paths and all Buddhist traditions. We are a peer support group, not meant to be a substitute for 12-step meetings or dharma teachings.

The meeting agenda is as follows:

First, we do a quick check-in with each person sharing what has been going on with them lately. This gives us a chance to get to know each other better. Please limit your time so that everyone has a chance to share. Next, we take turns reading aloud from the current book selection on Buddhism and recovery. Then, we do a 20 minute silent meditation. After meditating, we have an open discussion about the material we read. If time permits, we have a 5 minute closing meditation. Finally, we end with a dedication of our practice.

This meeting ends at 9:00, please help clean up afterward.

Are there any announcements for the benefit of the group?

Please silence your cell phones, including vibrations, for the duration of the meeting. Recovery from addiction is a sensitive subject, so who you see here, what you hear here, let it stay here when you leave here.

Start your check-in by introducing yourself with your first name only, so we can get to know you. There is no need to identify with an addiction, we are all here because we seek to end suffering.

<Go around the room, allowing everyone to check in.>

<Take turns reading from the book. Allow about 20 minutes for reading.>

Promises of Meditation

If we meditate patiently, our distracting thoughts will gradually subside and we will experience a sense of deep relaxation. We can see from this practice that it is possible to enjoy inner peace just by controlling the mind, without having to depend upon external conditions. When the turbulence of distracting thoughts subsides and our mind becomes still, happiness and contentment naturally arise from within. These feelings of well-being help us to cope with the difficulties of daily life. Much of the stress we experience comes from our mind. Many of our problems are caused by this internal tension. Just by doing breathing meditation for a few minutes each day, we can reduce stress. Difficult situations will become easier to deal with. We will naturally feel warm and well disposed toward other people. Our relationships will gradually improve.

Meditation Instructions

<To save time, only read this section if there are people new to meditation present.>

If you are new to meditating, here is a suggested practice to follow.

- Sit in a comfortable position with your back straight.
- Begin by breathing naturally.
- Let your body relax completely.
- Try to become aware of the sensation of your breath as it enters and leaves your body. Do you feel it in your chest as it rises and falls? Perhaps you feel it in your stomach. Maybe you feel it in your nostrils as the air moves in and out. Focus on which ever area feels most natural to you.
- Count your breaths as they move in and out:
Breathe in... count silently to yourself, "One"
Breathe out... count to yourself, "Two"
Breathe in... "Three"
Breathe out... "Four" and so on.
- When you reach 10, start over again at 1.
- If you are like the rest of us, your mind will soon wander. Just notice this, return your attention to your breath, and start over again at 1. It is important not to judge your wandering mind.

<20-minute silent meditation>

<Open discussion about the reading.>

<If time permits, do a 5-minute closing meditation>

Dedication of Practice

We dedicate the merits of this practice to all suffering addicts and those who love them.

May all beings be free of suffering, and the causes of suffering.

May all beings enjoy happiness, and the causes of happiness.

May we be mindful.

Don't just do something, sit there.