



Connecting in Community

with Dr. Shana Johnston

Week 2 - Mindfulness, Meditation and Creating Sacred Space

This week's key points

- 1) Mindfulness is not about being in a perpetual state of Zen or having no thoughts. It's just about noticing our thoughts with curiosity and kindness. It's about developing a "beginner's mind" and noticing our thoughts without judgment. As we bring our thoughts into our conscious awareness, we can begin to create a pause between what is happening and how we choose to respond
- 2) Meditation is the formal practice of mindfulness - carving time out of our busy lives to sit in our own experience, to notice our thoughts and become more aware of them. Our minds are very busy and will quickly wander. Having an anchor, such as the breath, can help give us something to focus on so we can allow our thoughts to float by rather than getting attached to them. Noticing them with curiosity and kindness.
- 3) Creating sacred space for ourselves can give us a place where we can come "home" to ourselves, to be present with ourselves. A place that is just for us, where we can take a few minutes each day to take care of ourselves, tending to our sweet human who's working so hard to get through each day.

Journaling prompts:

What did I notice during the meditation? What was happening in my mind? In my body?

What judgments did I notice during the meditation? How could I approach these thoughts with curiosity and kindness?

Invitation to continue to explore this week's theme:

- 1) Begin to notice your thoughts with curiosity and kindness
- 2) Consider a 5-10min meditation practice every morning when you first wake up or at night before you go to bed
- 3) Consider creating a 'sacred space' for yourself - a sanctuary, a place where you can go to settle yourself and be present with yourself



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Course Resources:

Meditation MP3 (7min) - for those wanting to try doing a short meditation once a day. For those wanting a longer meditation, the insight timer has a ton of different guided meditations

Additional Resources:

- 1) BC Art of Living Mindfully (BCALM) - <https://www.bcalm.ca/>
Victoria based organization that offers 8 week mindfulness group medical visits (covered by MSP) and website that's full of lots of resources
- 2) Insight Timer - free meditation timer - available on your phone through app store
<https://insighttimer.com/meditation-app>
- 3) The Daily Meditation Podcast with Mary Meckley - 10 min daily meditations with a new theme each week - over 2000 past episodes to choose from as well

Authors referenced in this talk:

- 1) The Untethered Soul: The Journey Beyond Yourself - Michael A Singer
- 2) Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain and Illness - John Kabat-Zinn
- 3) Man's Search for Meaning - Viktor Frankl

The Guest House

*This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.
A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.
Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.
The dark thought, the shame, the malice.
Meet them at the door laughing and invite them in.
Be grateful for whatever comes.
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.*
— Jellaludin Rumi