**When you want to meditate but need a bridge to get there….**

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Meditation: An Essential Part of Self Care

* Pick an amount of time and make the intention to stick with it. Use a timer or watch. When your mind bucks and wants to stop, intend to keep focusing on your breath as restlessness arises and passes. Insight Timer is a great app to use for smart phones where you can program your own chimes and lengths of time.
* Limit distractions/ noise that’s in your control while allowing for other noise to be in the environment.
* Get in a comfortable and sustainable seated position remembering it’s okay to move if you need to. Try not to lay down unless you are sick or injured.
* Work up to meditating daily. Work up to your goals in increments just like you would with an exercise program, with the ideal being twice a day, once early in the morning and once in the late afternoon, “happy hour.” However, don’t hold fast to these times as a self chastisement. In the beginning, it is helpful to build the practice in the way that works for you. Notice your meditation time emerging, depending on your schedule and follow that.
* Remember that 2 minutes expands to 5 and to 7. One session a day expands to twice. It’s a practice, build up to it.
* Prepare for both resistance and breakthroughs/ it comes in layers.
* Don’t wait to feel good before you meditate, come as you are. You’ll feel better afterwards.
* Remember that you will never have a meditation that you will regret. You will not feel worse after meditation and you’ll probably feel a whole lot better! This is a good motivator when resistance is high. Every meditation may not be transcendent or a “feel good” experience but it’s the cumulative effect of a meditation practice that changes your life for the better.
* It’s okay if you don’t have a special dedicated place for meditation, you can do it anywhere, sitting up in bed, quiet office, your car, outside. But you may want to think about creating a dedicated space in your home or workplace at some point, a nice reminder to meditate, making space for it in your life.
* You will begin to love it and your meditation time and desire to do it will expands. You work hard and want rest and renewal and that’s what meditation is, an essential part of self care. For example: the early morning meditation sets a tone, a new normal for the day. The late afternoon meditation sets a tone for the upcoming evening, re-energizes from the afternoon lull.
* Remember to come out of your meditations slowly and gently, treating yourself as if you’ve had a nap.