Waking-Up Meditation

As you wake up each morning and before you get out of bed, breathe three in-breaths and out-breaths, repeating the following verse silently for each in-breath and out-breath:

Breathing in, I fill my new day with
joy/ faith/ love/ gratitude/ mindfulness/ ease/ harmony.
Breathing out, I smile.

For the in-breath, choose one of the words that most appeals to you.

-from “Savor: Mindful Eating, Mindful Life”, Thich Nhat Hanh

Evening Meditation in Five Steps

Do the following meditation at the end of your day.

Begin by taking a few moments to breathe deeply and get comfortable either seated or lying down.

When you feel relaxed, be mindful of the words and phrases that follow; read each step and reflect.

1. Gratitude: Recall anything from the day for which you are especially grateful or felt joy; be thankful and smile.

2. Review: Recall the events of the day, from start to finish, and notice how you felt throughout.

3. Sorrow: Recall any actions for which you are sorry.

4. Forgiveness: Decide whether you want to reconcile with anyone you have hurt or who has hurt you.

5. Grace: Put out a request for the grace you need for the next day and for the ability to see your path clearly.

--developed from The Examen of St. Ignatius

Conscious Breathing

As you breathe in, you say to yourself, “Breathing in, I know that I am breathing in.” And as you breathe out, say, “Breathing out, I know that I am breathing out.”

Just that.

You recognize your in-breath as an in-breath and your out-breath as an out-breath. You don’t even need to recite the whole sentence; you can use just two words: “In” and “Out.”

The technique can help you keep your mind on your breath. As you practice, your breath will become peaceful and gentle, and your mind and body will also become peaceful and gentle.

-- from “Peace in Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life”. Thich Nhat Hanh

Sound Meditation

One way of practicing mindfulness is to focus your attention on sounds.

Sit in a comfortable position in which you can be relaxed and alert. Close your eyes. After you’ve settled in, just listen. Do not seek out sounds; wait for them.

Name the sounds to yourself as they arise: “door slam”, “laughter”, “bird song”, “airplane droning”. If all is silent, focus on your breathing, until the next sound arises - then name it.

Don’t try to accomplish anything - just listen.