



Top Leadership MINDFULNESS PRACTICES FOR LEADERS

JOURNALING

Neuroscience behind journaling indicates that this practice provides unexpected benefits. Studies and theory on behavioral change say journaling activates significant internal motivation. Develop better comprehension about the following concepts:

- Clarity in thoughts and feelings
- Clarity in comprehending different situations
- Improved problem-solving capacity
- Tracking of patterns and trends that lead to improvement and growth over time
- Reduced stress and improved physical health

For journaling to be effective, you must do it regularly. Here are my top steps to help you make this mindful habit your own.

Steps to bring more mindfulness and self-awareness into your life through journaling:

1

SCHEDULING

Aim for 10 minutes of daily journaling. Morning or night, doesn't matter.

2

TO DO LIST

Write out your to-do list with specific times to work on your task(s). Include specific deadline(s).

3

PROMPTS TO GET YOU STARTED

Create a trigger log in which you write out what happened in your day that triggered you. Capture details of the emotions you experienced, how long you felt the emotions what you could've done differently, and solutions that will help you move through the challenge.

4

CAPTURE GRATITUDE

Gratitude. Write out one to three things you are grateful for in that moment. Journaling about gratitude helps train your mind train to capture the things you appreciate most in life.

RESOURCES

Many resources are available to support you in your journaling. My favorite is the “Progress Journal” by MIGOAL, which is available at MiGOALS.COM.

MEDITATION WITH MANTRA (aka as Japa)

The practice of mantra meditation uses the silent repetition of a word or phrase as the point of focus to help create greater awareness. It aids in the slowing down of mental activity and thought. Mantra meditation is not meant to stop thoughts altogether. Instead it helps you strengthen your ability to focus. When you notice you’re lost in your thoughts, gently guide your focus back to your mantra. This practice helps you train your mind and gives you confidence to know you can control what you want when your awareness is present.

STEPS TO APPLY MANTRA MEDIATION:

- Step 1:** Aim for 10 minutes a day to sit in silence.
- Step 2:** Create a mantra or find one that works for you. An example mantra would be, “I no longer have time to judge myself.”
- Step 3:** Use a Mala if you want to bring in an object to your practice. The traditional Mala has 108 and beads, so you count a full cycle of 108 repetitions of your mantra while you’re focusing on the sounds, vibration and meaning of what you’re saying.
- Step 4:** Find a space in your home and a time of day when you will be least distracted. Mornings and before bed are my favorite. This may require you to wake up before anyone in your house.

As humans, we are wired to crave “peak experiences.” We can give these to ourselves by trying new things and adding in elements that will make the experience more enjoyable and exciting.

Many resources are available to support you in your meditation. One of my favorites is the app Headspace, which you can download and try for free for 30 days. Go to headspace.com.

MINDFULNESS BREATHING

Mindful breathing is a very basic yet powerful mindfulness meditation practice. The idea is simply to focus your attention on your breathing—its natural rhythm and flow and how it feels to inhale and exhale. You may find it helpful to say internally or out loud, “I am breathing in, I am breathing out.” This will help you use your breath to bring you back into the present.

STEPS TO APPLY MANTRA MEDIATION:

- Step 1:** Tune into your breath multiple times during the day.
- Step 2:** Set reminder alarms on your devices for mini sessions to focus on your breath. Aim for three minutes each session.
- Step 3:** Use your breath to anchor you to the present when you are in a challenging situation.
- Step 4:** Celebrate the times in your day when you used your breath to calm you down and bring you back to the present.