

If you don't have much (or any) experience with mindfulness meditation, don't despair! Below, you'll find instructions to get you started. But first, here are a few tips:

- Choose a time when you can be alone, quiet, and undistracted for 5 minutes. I recommend putting your phone on "Do Not Disturb" and setting a timer.
- To meditate, you will need an "anchor." An anchor is one specific body or sensory experience—such as the breath or sound—that you bring your attention back to over and over again to anchor you in the present moment.
- If you don't have an anchor, I suggest starting off with the breath at the nostrils. In other words, you will pay attention to the physical feelings of the breath as it goes into and comes out of the nostrils. Use that anchor for the whole 5 weeks of class unless it really doesn't feel right for you. (If you need a new anchor and are unsure how to find one, I would be happy to help. Contact me through the office.)
- You might find the CIMC Beginner's Drop-In to be a helpful complement to our RAIN group. It meets at 6-7 pm on Tuesdays. <https://cambridgeinsight.org/what-we-offer/drop-in-programs/>

Basic meditation instructions

- 1) Take a few minutes to arrive in the present moment.
 - a. One way of starting this is to spend a few moments becoming aware of your immediate environment. Can you get some sense of the space around you? Can you notice any sounds that come and go? You don't need to do anything to make sounds happen. Just let your awareness receive them when they arise, through their duration, until they pass away.
 - b. Next, it can be very helpful to start bringing the mind more fully into the body. What is the overall feeling of your body right now as it is sitting, standing or lying down?
 - c. You might want to notice that the breath is going into and coming out of your body. Where do you feel it? What does it feel like? Let the sensations of breathing come into your awareness. You don't have to do anything to make it happen. Just let the breath come and go.
- 2) When you are ready, bring your attention to your anchor. (As an example, I use the breath at the nostrils. Please adapt the instructions to whatever your anchor might be.) What does the breath feel like as it comes into and moves up the nostril/s? What does the out-breath feel like as it moves down and exits the nostril/s?
 - a. Remember, you don't have to do anything to make the breath happen. The body breathes itself.
 - b. Your main activity now is to return your attention to your anchor whenever you realize that your mind has gotten lost elsewhere.
- 3) Your mind *will* wander—guaranteed! There's no need for panic! It's just the way it is.

- a. Once you realize that your mind is lost in something other than your anchor, calmly but clearly bring your attention back to the breathing, once again tuning into its visceral sensations.
- b. Often, this stage of the practice is about returning to the breath again and again (and again and again and again...)!