

# Yoga Spirit Academy E-zine

Healing body, mind and spirit  
with the wisdom of Yoga, meditation and Ayurveda

September / October 2018

Volume 11, Issue 5

## Mindfulness Meditation

By Janet W. Parachin, PhD

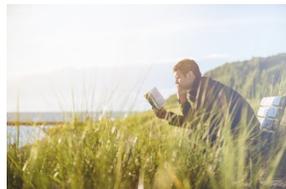
This is part five of a six-part series on Meditation. So far we have covered sitting meditation, walking meditation, chanting, and chakra meditation. Earlier articles can be found at <http://yogaspirittulsa.com/Newsletters>. While meditation is a practice that helps us to know and understand our inner self, meditation can also bridge the divide between our inner self and the outer world. Mindfulness meditation shows us the way! Mindfulness is usually defined as present moment awareness. If you stop at any moment and check in with your mind, you probably find that most of the time it is thinking about the past (remembering or regretting) or the future (planning or worrying). It is a rare moment indeed when we are truly present.

In the yogic understanding of meditation, we should strive to bring our full focus to the object of meditation. In the ancient view, the “object” was God or Nature. In the modern view, it can be anything that is in front of you right now. Are you reading this article? Then read with full attention from start to finish. Are you folding clothes? Then observe the warmth of the dryer, the texture of the fabric, and the perfect stack of shirts. In this way, mindfulness meditation focuses the mind on the immediate tasks of everyday life, making every moment meditative, not just the minutes we sit on a cushion in meditation pose.



It's also necessary to bring mindfulness to our thoughts and emotions. Do you find yourself thinking and saying the same thing when confronted by a similar situation? Then it may be time to look at the situation from a different perspective. Are you having a powerful physical reaction to something that just occurred? Then take some deep mindful breaths and

isolate the feeling by saying to yourself “anger arising.”



Mindfulness is the opposite of mindlessness. Mindlessness is habitual, unaware thinking, acting and talking. If we're honest with ourselves, we have to say that MOST things fall into this category.



In a very practical way, this makes sense: our lives are made up of a series of habits that provide us with the security of routine. It would truly be exhausting if we had to make a list and check off each item every single day, e.g, wake up, have coffee, brush teeth, get dressed, etc.

But this is about the only way routine habits benefit us. Mindless habits also cause much trouble: habitually hitting the snooze alarm, stopping for a donut for breakfast, having a drink with dinner, going to the gym every day even when we are exhausted or sick, etc. In addition, there are the habitual ways of thinking that also cause trouble: always supporting the same political party, bias against certain groups of people, religious beliefs that haven't changed, etc.

Mindfulness is the willingness to honestly look at habitual thoughts, words and actions with the aim of understanding where they came from and how they are shaped by family, culture, experience and privilege. That's a tall order and maybe we're not ready to go there just yet.

So let's take a cue from the master meditation teacher Thich Nhat Hanh, who writes in *The Miracle of Mindfulness*: “Wash the dishes relaxingly, as though each bowl is an object of contemplation. Consider each bowl as sacred. Follow your breath to prevent your mind from straying. Do not try to hurry to get the job over with. Consider washing the dishes the most important thing in life. *Continues on page two*”

Yoga Spirit Academy  
200-hour and 300-hour yoga teacher training  
Tulsa, Oklahoma  
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## Yoga and Ayurveda Constitutional Analysis

According to Ayurveda, each person has their own unique constitution which supports their ongoing health and development. If you know a person's constitution, you know what food and activities will keep them healthy and what illnesses they are most likely to develop. For a yoga teacher, the constitution also reveals best choices for yoga postures, pranayama and meditation for each person. To add this special knowledge to your Yoga practice and teaching, join us for this course where you'll learn the basics of Ayurveda, especially the characteristics of constitution. Plus you'll receive lots of experience recognizing constitution through the ancient arts of pulse, tongue and facial analysis.

**September 29-30, October 20-21, November 17-18,  
December 1 (make-up and review)**

\$675 for the 45-hour course

Prerequisite: 100 hours of yoga teacher training from any school OR 300 hours documented yoga teaching

<http://yogaspirittulsa.com/Training-Workshops/Advanced->

## Mindfulness Meditation *continued*

Washing the dishes is meditation. If you cannot wash the dishes in mindfulness, neither can you meditate while sitting in silence."



Do you know why the present moment is called a "present"? Because it is a gift.

### CALENDAR

September 8-9 Yoga Teacher training weekend

September 9, 16, 23, October 7, 14, 21 Spiritual practices series

September 29-30 Yoga and Ayurveda Constitutional Analysis begins

October 6-7 Yoga Teacher training weekend

*For more information see our website*

## Congratulations!

Congratulations to Alyssa Marie Worth who completed Yoga Spirit Academy's 300-hour training in Ayurvedic Yoga. We are delighted that she will be joining us as Graduate Assistant for our next round of advanced yoga teacher training. Catch up with Alyssa at her studio Recovering Roots Yoga in Collinsville, Oklahoma.

[www.recoveringrootsyoga.com/](http://www.recoveringrootsyoga.com/)



Advanced students just completed an amazing summer of studying Pranayama, Meditation and the Bhagavad Gita together. Look how smart everyone looks! Kandice, Amanda, Jennifer, Janet, Alyssa, Lora, Beth and Victor behind the camera.

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