

## An Explanation of Meditation

*The following can be used as a set induction to a seated meditation at the start of a session. It provides inspiration and brief instructions based on following the breath...*

“When we sit in meditation with other people, breathing the same air, hearing the same sounds, thinking thoughts in the same rhythms and patters, we experience our connection to each other in a very immediate way. This connection is not merely an idea; it is our heartfelt, visceral reality. This is an important part of the process of seeing ourselves. Meditation helps us inhabit ourselves more deeply, and it constantly throws us up against the very things about ourselves we are trying not to see. But it carries the process of insight one step further; it helps us to see that we are not merely our individual selves, but part of something much more vast as well.”

- Rabbi Alan Lew “This is Real and You are Completely Unprepared” (pp.71-72)

If you are new to meditation then a good place to start is on the breath. You can say to yourself "Breathing in I know I am breathing in, breathing out I know I am breathing out." It is natural for our minds to wander. In fact, it is that moment when we realize our minds are wandering and we bring our thoughts back to the present moment that we get a glimpse of being truly “awake.”

It is a fleeting moment. But over time, and with regular practice, you will become more skilled at being in the present moment. Being in the present moment allows you to rediscover your original nature, to begin to see things as they really are, and to start to understand that everything is part of the whole - striving to break through the illusion of our separateness.

In Jewish life we have blessings to help us appreciate the present moment. One that is appropriate for this moment is called "the Shechecheyanu".

Blessed are you holy oneness who gives us the life force to bring us to this present moment.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁחַיֵּינוּ וְקִיְּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה



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