

TLC Morning Meditation: by Roz Goddard

Morning Meditation and Writing Practice for Difficult Times

I'm finding in these unsettling, difficult times that a morning meditation practice is helping me to stay grounded and face the day with more resilience.

I am training for ordination in the Triratna Buddhist Order - meditation, Buddhist study and regular retreats have become a strong thread in my life over the past four years. An unforeseen benefit of meditation has been the positive effect it has had on the quality of my poetry. I have found a bigger space has emerged in my heart and mind into which all kinds of images, thoughts, feelings and emotions arise – a big divergent tapestry of them, which, when I turn up at the page, is helping me to write in a less linear and richer way.

It has to do with the way meditation encourages a sort of heightened noticing of things. Firstly, it brings me into a closer relationship with myself in terms of emotions, feelings and moods (not always comfortable to sit with). It's a kind of witnessing. Like many people I'm experiencing spikes of fear and anxiety at the moment, somehow noticing that and turning toward it rather than away from it helps. There are many different meditations to choose from, some suggest that you focus on your breathing as an anchor, or that you use the field of bodily sensations, or sounds to come into closer connection with yourself and the world (see below for useful websites).

I'm going to suggest that you try a **15-minute meditation practice every morning for five days** and follow this with **15 minutes of automatic writing** where you simply write down what you noticed in your meditation – write to yourself about it, tell yourself the story of it, be as honest as you can as you reflect on what it was like being in that still space of meditation.

Currently, one of my favourite meditations is 'Taking our place in the World' from Paramananda's book, *The Myth of Meditation* (pub: Windhorse) which I've adapted below. I like this meditation as it feels particularly grounding at a time when the world is shifting in all sorts of unforeseen ways. It's also a reminder that we can pause at any time and feel the solid earth beneath us. We are also using the earth in this practice to absorb our difficult feelings – it's glorious. Feel free to use this meditation for five days or choose different ones from the many available online.

Taking our place in the world meditation

Sitting in your meditation posture, begin to breathe into your sense of contact with the earth. Allow your body to settle into its posture and simply breathe naturally. Gradually, when you feel settled, imagine that *as you breathe in* you are drawing up earth's energy into your body and *as you breathe out* let go of any tension in your body into the ground. Imagine the earth is quite happy to give its energy to you and to absorb the tension that you are holding back into itself.

Try and imagine that your connection to the earth is going further and further down into the earth itself and that you are drawing up energy from deeper in the earth and at the same time, on the out-breath, you are letting go of any tension into the earth.

Do this for 15 minutes and end the meditation with just sitting for a few minutes without making any particular effort.

Follow this with 15 minutes of automatic writing (see above)

You may wish to set a timer with a non-intrusive alarm, perhaps a bell or chime, so as to transition easily from your meditation into your automatic writing.

Good luck!

Roz Goddard, April 2020

Note: There are many different meditation practices to experiment with. Try Insight Timer and Free Buddhist audio for starters.

www.freebuddhistaudio.com

insighttimer.com