

How to Create Your “Being Love” Sadhana

I believe a spiritual practice of some sort is the foundational piece for a rich inner life—and for spiritual health. However, daily? Like, *every day*? Faithfully? Ah, there’s the rub, for me anyway. Sometimes I just get busy and don’t do it, other times I simply forget. And on some occasions, I am just plain lazy. Yes, that’s the truth.

A Sadhana is a form of daily spiritual practice, one of your own creation, that has the power to sustain you and plug you in to the Divine. This is what Fr. Anthony De Mello, a Jesuit priest with roots in the Indian tradition, said of Sadhana:

“Sadhana, (Sanskrit): an instrument, a way to attain our goal, the spiritual means we adopt, the sacred path we walk. Over the years this word has also meant for us our inner quest, our being on the way, our willingness to be led. That is why we understand that Sadhana is every means we employ for finding inner freedom, for attaining wholeness and integration and for discovering the divine in all things and all things in the divine.”

The key here it seems is *exertion, i. e. commitment*. I do believe many of us *are* committed and willing to extend the effort needed to have a meaningful spiritual life and the practices that support it. But, admit it, we are human. We forget to do our practice. We get lazy. We get bored with it and, before we know it, we’re no longer doing it regularly. Or we’ve never really found a Sadhana we can truly commit to with passion and verve. That’s alright. No need to beat ourselves up on this one. In fact, self-compassion is often needed when it comes to sustaining a spiritual practice.

So how do you create your own personal Sadhana, one that is yours and yours alone, and reflects your character and soul? Our Spring Sadhana prompts will help.

Each day I will help you create a container for **silence**. Spend at least 5 minutes in this silence before you do anything else. I will provide you with a few **Guided Meditations** during the 14-day period to help you access silence.

After that, what elements might you like to incorporate? I will provide you with a **quote to reflect on** or pray with, and encourage you, if you are a journaler, to write a little bit about that. (This is optional. You could purchase a new little notebook to hold your ponderings. I will also send you various interfaith **prayers or poems**.)

Listening deeply to what you want to include in your daily Sadhana is key. Knowing what you like is too. Do you like complete silence for example, or the presence of music? Do you like visuals to be present, like a sacred image to focus on; flowers, offerings, books? Giving yourself permission to put all of these elements together is an exciting process. You might think of it as a "spiritual practice recipe," blending just the right elements so your attention is captured and your devotion is ensured.

If you are rooted in a specific spiritual tradition, are there certain rituals of that tradition you could incorporate more of into your home practice?

- Physical elements, like candle lighting, bowing, or kneeling. Using your voice with oral prayers, singing or chant. Making offerings. Sun salutations or dancing.

- Mental elements, like silence, reciting a mantra or reading scripture. Using "The Prayer of Quiet" or other specific prayers like "The Shema. Focusing on an image, Prayer of the Imagination, visualization of a deity. Using prayer beads.
- Heart/Spirit elements like Metta (Loving-kindness practice), blessing others, loving awareness through your heart chakra. Spontaneous praying from the heart, communing with the Sacred in nature.

In my Sadhana today, I have included these elements: candle lighting, bowing, ritualistic use of incense to bless the space and send off prayers. Silence and devotional reading. Chant/mantra with my own voice, internal spontaneous prayers from the heart, and loving awareness visualization practice.

In the end, the duration and quality of your Sadhana is completely up to you. It can be as short as 10 minutes or as long as an hour. A practice of 20-30 minutes feels just right to me but use your own discernment. And try to find the best time of day to do your Sadhana. Morning is usually best so you start your day in a relaxed way.

You can always e-mail if you have questions, concerns, or want to share privately. I welcome your response.

I am glad we are journeying together this February. Blessings upon your precious heart.

All Love to you,
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