Meditation Scripts for Adapting Mindfulness for Conservative Christians
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Regular (Secular) Breath Meditation

Make yourself comfortable, sitting in an upright posture with your feet on the floor. You may like to close your eyes or find a spot in the room for your eyes to focus on. Allow yourself to change gears from the usual busy or doing manner to a manner of simply being. As you allow your body to become still, begin to notice the simple fact that you are breathing. Observe the movement of your breath as it enters your body and as it leaves your body. No need to change the breath in any way, simply observe it and any feelings associated with breathing.

And now focus on your breath more attentively. Sometimes your mind may wander to other things. When this occurs, there is no need to criticize yourself. Simply return to your breath. Notice the breath as it rises in your belly as you breathe in. Feel the belly fall back down as you breathe out. Be fully present here in each moment with each breath, observing the belly as it expands when you breathe in, and as it falls when you breathe out…Expanding and falling…Expanding and falling. And when your mind wanders, just gently return to the breath.

Notice how your breath feels as it goes into your body and as it leaves your body. Again, no need to change the breath in any way. Just be aware of it and of any feelings associated with breathing. Feel the temperature of the air as it goes into your nostrils…Are there any difference in air temperature as you breathe out?…Perhaps one way feels cooler and the other warmer or perhaps not. See if you can sense the air going into your nostrils, into your sinuses, and down into your lungs…Observe how it feels as the air travels in and out…And when your mind wanders, just gently bring it back to your breath.

Notice the wave-like, rhythmic pattern of your breath, fully conscious of the duration of each breath from moment to moment. No need to go anywhere, no need to do anything. Simply be here with your breath. Your breath can re-anchor you to the present moment when your mind gets caught up in other things. A simple turning back to the breath is all that’s needed.

In a moment, the breathing meditation will end. Whatever way you would like to end this time will be fine. When you are ready, bring your awareness back to the room, opening your eyes.
Christian-Adapted Breathing Meditation

Make yourself comfortable, sitting in an upright posture with your feet on the floor. You may like to close your eyes or find a spot in the room for your eyes to focus on. Allow yourself to change gears from the usual busy or doing manner to a manner of simply being, of resting in God’s caring presence. As you allow your body to become still, bring your attention to the fact that you are breathing. The breath is a reminder of God creating us, “And the LORD God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;” … “and man became a living soul.” [Gen. 2:7]. With every breath in, you can recognize God breathing His life into you. With every breath out you can place yourself in His hands, resting in the Lord…Breathing in His life, breathing out resting in Him. There is no need to change anything…Just breathe naturally…Breathing in His life, and breathing out resting in Him. He is with you in your experience, giving you life, love, and grace...

And now focus on your breath more intently. If your mind wanders into other things, this is normal. No need to criticize yourself. Simply release those thoughts into God’s loving hands and return to your breath. There is no need for a long prayer, a simple yielding and turning of your focus back to the breath is releasing these things to God.

Notice the breath as it rises in your belly as you breathe in. Feel the belly fall back down as you breathe out. Be fully present here in each moment with each breath, observing the belly as it expands when you breathe in, and as it falls when you breathe out…Expanding and falling…Expanding and falling. And when your mind wanders, gently release those thoughts to God and return to the breath, a simple heart turn is all that’s needed.

Notice how your breath feels as it goes into your body and as it leaves your body. Again, no need to change the breath in any way. Just be aware of it and of any feelings associated with breathing. Feel the temperature of the air as it goes into your nostrils…Are there any difference in air temperature as you breathe out?…Perhaps one way feels cooler and the other warmer, or perhaps not…See if you can sense the air going into your nostrils, into your sinuses, and down into your lungs…Observe how it feels as the air travels in and out…And when your mind wanders, gently release those things to God and bring yourself back to your breath.
Notice the wave-like, rhythmic pattern of your breath, fully conscious of the duration of each breath from moment to moment. No need to go anywhere, no need to do anything. Simply be here with your breath. Your breath can re-anchor you to God’s presence with you in the present moment when your mind gets caught up in other things. A simple taking in of a breath can remind you He is with you, a simple breathing out can release things into His hands.

In a moment, the breathing meditation will end. Perhaps you would like to end it with a prayer to the Lord or perhaps in another way. In whatever way you would like, begin bringing this time of prayerful meditation to completion. And when you are ready, bring your awareness back to the room, opening your eyes.
Secular Lovingkindness Meditation Script

Start by repeating quietly to yourself, “May I be happy, may I be peaceful, may I be free from suffering.” Just repeat the phrase, intending or wishing this for yourself… Eventually your mind wanders… gently return your attention to the phrases, “May I be happy, may I be peaceful, may I be free from suffering”… once you’ve directed compassionate intentions towards yourself, you can try passing it on to others… It’s usually easiest to begin with someone who is a dear friend or relative… “May you be happy, may you be peaceful, may you be free from suffering.”

(adapted from Siegel, 2010, pp. 84-85)

Christian-Adapted Lovingkindness Meditation Version 1

Instructions: Take a look at this prayer that we can try out together. The prayer that we will repeat is, “I receive Your grace, Your peace, Your love.” Feel free to modify the prayer phrase into one that fits you better if you like. We then branch out to pray for others with a similar prayer, “May Your grace, peace, and love fill [insert name of someone]. You may modify this prayer as well.

Make yourself comfortable. Start by repeating this prayer quietly to yourself, “I receive Your grace, Your peace, Your love.” Perhaps some thoughts or reactions pop into your mind as you pray this. Simply notice these, and allow yourself to return your focus to your prayer. Just repeat the prayer over and over to yourself, receiving this gift from God to yourself. “I receive Your grace, Your peace, Your love.”… Eventually your mind wanders… gently return your attention to the prayer, “I receive Your grace, Your peace, Your love.”… Once you’ve prayed for yourself sufficiently, you can try praying others… It’s usually easiest to begin with someone who is a dear friend or relative… “May Your grace, Your peace, Your love fill [insert name].” And just keep repeating that prayer. In a moment, I’ll end this prayer time with an “amen”, in whatever way you would like to reorient yourself to the room, do so. Amen

[In later sessions, more types of people can be added to the prayer on a case-by-case basis. For example, in addition to someone who is a dear friend, one might pray for acquaintances, strangers, someone who has disappointed you, someone who has hurt you, etc.]
Christian-Adapted Lovingkindness Meditation Version 2

Instructions: Take a look at this prayer meditation that we can try out together. The meditation has key prayers that are typed in all capital letters. Feel free to modify these prayers into ones that fit you better if you like.

This prayer meditation focuses on the love, mercy, and grace of God. To start with, make yourself comfortable, sitting upright with your feet on the floor. You may find it helpful to close your eyes, or perhaps find a spot in front of you to focus on. As I read this meditation, you may find a better way of phrasing some of the prayers for you. This is fine, modify them in whatever way is most helpful for you, tuning me out in those portions and returning attention to my voice when I’m saying something helpful again.

Begin by noticing how the temperature feels to you overall as you are sitting there. How does the temperature feel on your hands compared to the parts of your body that are clothed? Perhaps you sense a subtle difference in temperature, perhaps not…Notice the temperature around your arms on the unclothed parts compared to your chest area. How does the air feel on your face? Maybe you can sense the small air currents or temperature differences there. It’s fine if you do and fine if you don’t. Whenever you mind wanders, just gently return it to this meditation.

Now turn to your breathing. Simply notice how you are breathing. In the Hebrew, the Holy Spirit Himself is called the breath of God. Spend some time just breathing in the presence of God and releasing your cares into His hands as you
breathe out…breathing in His presence and releasing your cares. As you welcome God’s presence and release your cares, consider this prayer. THIS MOMENT O LORD I ACCEPT YOUR MERCY TOWARDS ME. Observe any thoughts or reactions that pop into your mind as you pray this. Simply notice these, and allow yourself to return your focus to God and your prayer. The Lord delights in giving us mercy. THIS MOMENT O LORD I ACCEPT YOUR MERCY TOWARDS ME. I RECEIVE YOUR GRACE AND UNCONDITIONAL LOVE…Perhaps your mind questions this prayer or argues with it, perhaps not. However your mind reacts, simply observe the response and return to your prayer as an act of trust…The Lord’s love, grace, and mercy endure forever. They are a part of His character. It is out of His grace that we pray, LORD JESUS, I ACCEPT YOUR ACCEPTANCE OF ME. However your mind may be responding to His grace, gently ponder His acceptance…His love…His forgiveness…His grace…and faithfulness…LORD JESUS, I ACCEPT YOUR ACCEPTANCE OF ME. I REST IN YOUR GRACE AND LOVE. There is safety, peace, and rest in the acceptance, grace, and love of the Lord Jesus. Spend some time pondering His grace and love…I REST IN YOUR GRACE AND LOVE. In a moment, I’ll be ending this prayer meditation with the word “amen”. In whatever way you would like to bring closure to this time, you may do so…Amen.
Quick Christian-Adapted Mindfulness Exercises

These are helpful short exercises if you find yourself caught up in your thoughts, worried about something, or ruminating. They enable you to re-center yourself, connect with God, and re-engage with your environment.

Exercise A

Pause and take three deep breaths, reminding yourself that God is with you each time you breathe in and releasing your stress to Him each time you breathe out. After three or more deep breaths, return to what you were doing.

Exercise B

Take a deep breath and pause for a moment.
Listen intently and notice four things you can hear
Look around and observe four things that you can see
Inhale and see if there’s anything that you can smell.
Notice four things that you can feel in contact with your body (for instance, your clothes on your skin, your feet in your socks & shoes, the air on your face and hands, your hips and back on the chair)
Connect with as many of these sounds, sights, smells, and sensations as you can right now and ask, “Lord, what are you doing around me right now?”
See if anything comes to your mind or you notice something in a different manner.
It’s fine if nothing comes to your mind or you don’t notice anything differently, too.
(Adapted from ACT Made Simple by Russ Harris, New Harbinger Publications)

Consider additional question options for the above exercise (B) or the exercise below (C):
“Lord, what is your purpose for me right now in this moment?”
“Lord, how can I express love to You in this moment?”
“Lord, what are You wanting to do in me right now?”
“Lord, what are You wanting to do around me right now?”
Other questions can be created in collaboration with your clients. If the questions seem counter-productive, just omit them and do the regular exercise without them.
**Exercise C**
Here is another short exercise to help you when you are caught up in your mind.

Place both your feet comfortably on the floor.
Now, push them down, observing how the floor beneath you feels as it supports you.
Shift focus to the muscle tension in your legs as you are pushing down your feet.
Notice how they feel.
Relax your leg muscles and now observe your entire body. Sense how gravity feels flowing down through your head, upper and lower back, your legs and into your feet.
Take a look around and notice what you can hear and see around you. Ask, “Lord, what are you doing around me right now?” and see if anything comes to your mind or you notice something in a different manner. It’s fine if nothing comes to your mind or you don’t notice anything differently, too.
(Adapted from *ACT Made Simple* by Russ Harris, New Harbinger Publications)