



Jain Relaxation and Meditation

Jain scriptures offer extensive guidance on meditation techniques to achieve full knowledge and awareness. Meditation is one of the most pleasant, serene, and joyous feelings. We can gain tremendous energy by managing our fickle mind. It

offers us tremendous physical and mental benefits. The following table describes a simple, six-stage technique which you can use for yourself or to guide a family or group meditation session.

10 Minute Group or Individual Body Relaxation and Meditation:

Stages	What to Do	What to Say (to yourself or to a group you are guiding)	Notes and Options
Start: Breathing	Close your eyes, keep your back straight, and relax. Take three deep breaths: (count) Inhale, 2, 3, 4 – Hold, 2, 3, 4, Exhale 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 Inhale, 2, 3, 4 – Hold, 2, 3, 4, Exhale 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 Inhale, 2, 3, 4 – Hold, 2, 3, 4, Exhale 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	<i>First we'll relax the body, then relax the mind; let the full energy flow through your spine.</i> Take a deep breath. Make a nice strong sound. Let all the negativity out.	When inhaling, stomach should come out (because your diaphragm pushes down and your lung capacity expands). Be sure your chest is not expanding while inhaling.

Stages	What to Do	What to Say	Notes and Options
Body Relaxation	Toes: Move your toes around; stretch your leg muscles, and your thigh muscles. Stretch your fingers out wide, and bring them in; rotate your wrist in one direction, and then in the other direction. Raise your shoulders to your ears and down (3x). Bring your chin to your chest and head all the way back slowly. Feel the stretch. With your right ear, touch your right shoulder. Head back, left ear touch your left shoulder, and chin to your chest, (do this 3x) and reverse direction; Open your mouth wide, close (2x). Raise your eyebrows and close your eyes tightly. Take a deep breath. Relax.	Let's relax the body. Release some of the tension in the muscles. Relax the facial muscles.	Keep your eyes closed, back straight. Do it gently ... relax, think about which muscles you are relaxing, feel the tension leaving. Many muscles here; need to relax them.
Mind Relaxation	Keep your eyes closed; observe your breathing. Slowly observe your mind... see the thoughts... observe your thoughts. Gently escort your thoughts out. Don't get upset at yourself.	Now that the body is relaxed, we'll relax the mind. Keep your eyes closed.	(1) The mind is like a monkey running around in a cage... moves from one thought to another... like a stormy ocean... many thoughts arise. And as you go deeper and deeper in meditation, the ripples become smaller and smaller. (2) Focus on your breathing. Feel the cool air as it enters your nostrils, goes into every part of your body, and as you exhale all negative thoughts and energy are exhaled.

Stages	What to Do	What to Say	Notes and Options
Meditate	Topic 1: Body/Soul Meditate on: I'm the body and the Soul; The Soul is the real me and is eternal and divine but full of negative Karmic bondages. As I'm meditating, I'm getting stronger and many of the Karmas are getting weaker ... the bonds are getting weaker. They cannot influence me as my will power is getting stronger.	Now that the mind is relaxed, we will go deeper in our meditation.	See below for more topic ideas.
Silence	Meditate on the subject. Go deep on the subject.	Keep your back straight, keep you mind focused.	
End Session: Say a Mantra	In your mind, say namokar mantra, then on your lips and then all together: Inhale – (stomach out) say Oooooooooooooommm while exhaling Inhale – Oooooooooooooommm Inhale – Oooooooooooooommm	Now we'll end the session with three Namokar Mantras: once in the mind; once on the lips; and once together.	Think of the meaning of Namokar Mantra when chanting. (Bow to the Arihants – Siddhas – Ächärya – Upadhyas, and all Sädhus.)
You may ask yourself or the group about their meditation experience, or ask how the meditation was and get them to give a one minute guided meditation.			

Guided Meditation Topics

The following are some sample topics on which to meditate. You can get some of these topics from scriptures or make your own topics.

Topic 1: Body/Soul Meditate on (and say it out loud) I'm the body and the Soul; The Soul is the real me and is eternal and divine, full of karmic bondages. And as I'm meditating, I'm getting stronger and many of the Karmic bondages are getting

weaker ... bonds are getting weaker ... they cannot influence me as my willpower is getting stronger.

Topic 2: Out of Body experience Meditate on (and say it out loud) observe yourself sitting in this posture; see from the top of the room, school (or house where you are doing the meditation), town, state, country, world. Now imagine you are

in outer space passing the planets, the solar system, the galaxy, and the Earth which is just a tiny tiny spec of this vast universe. You are free, eternal; you have infinite perception, power. Your Soul has infinite energy, infinite potential. Slowly, let's make our way back. We head toward Earth, pass the galaxies, pass the planets, and see our world from the top, [pause to appreciate the beauty of our planet Earth], see our country, our state, our town, our home, and observe ourselves from the top of the ceiling.

Topic 3: Sameru Parvat (mountain where Jain Tirthankars meditated) Meditate out loud that we are on top of the mountain. The clouds are dark and the mountain (Parvat) is surrounded by an angry, violent ocean. There is a huge storm. It is violently raining and thundering. The outside tumultuous ocean and clouds reflect your mind. As you go deeper in your meditation, the ocean waves become calmer. The clouds move out. You begin to see the light. A small beam of white light, full of energy spraying you as you are meditating. You go deeper in your meditation. Slowly the clouds move out, the thunder stops, the ocean is serene, and you are immersed in the beautiful white light. You are full of energy.

Meditation in Jain Scriptures⁸

Aayaro is the oldest Āgam of Jainism. It defines one who meditates as one who always knows the reality of the body's every moment. Described is another type of meditation called "Dristiwad." This meditation is to experience within oneself "as it is" and not as it appears or seems.

Vipasana is one of the techniques of meditation. Although this technique is in the tradition of Lord Buddha, it teaches yourself to remain apart from clinging and hatred (Raga and Dwesh) and to be liberated from all Karmas/bondages through Right Perception (Samyak Darshan), Right Knowledge (Samyak Jñān) and Right Conduct (Samyak Charitra).

Jain texts particularly describe the removal of Rag and Dwesh (clinging hatred), keeping Samta (equanimity) and awareness through meditation. Most Jain practice of meditation is in the form of Samayik and Pratikraman.

Add Meditation to Your Daily Life

- Do it for at least a few minutes a day.
- At temple and festival celebrations, divide up the prayer time such that meditation is done for 20% of the time.
- When going to bed, take a few minutes to meditate.
- While at a stop light, take a deep breath and meditate.
- Take a moment to meditate before starting a meal.

"A person who meditates for two and a half minutes purifying the mind surpasses one who has done a penance of fasting for two days. The power of meditation is infinite because a pure state of mind, consciousness is worth more than a thousand years of penance."

— Āchārya Mahaprajñāji