

Scriptural Meditation

Mindfulness Worksheet

Date / Time:

What have you brought mindful awareness to today? Check all that apply.

Heart

Mind

Body

Breath

Environment

To begin this Meditation, please bring kind awareness to

- why you chose this topic
- how your belly, chest, and head each feel when you reflect on this topic
- the emotions that you can associate with these visceral feelings
- the positive or negative impact of any stories you believe in regarding this topic
- the fact that many others are feeling similarly about this topic as you
- how you might feel with increased awareness around this topic
- when you can apply increased mindfulness to this topic in your day-to-day life



PURPOSE / EFFECTS:

For many people, “holy reading” generates a distinct feeling of being connected with God, being blessed, and feeling loved.

It will also promote relaxation, wellbeing, and groundedness. Although the term *lectio divina* (“holy reading”) comes from the Christian tradition, the practice can be done with any text that you feel is sacred, holy, or profound.

METHOD:

Summary

Read a section of holy scripture. Then think about it deeply, pray on it, and, finally, meditate on God.

Long Version

- Before beginning this practice, choose a scripture from which to read, and decide upon a small section or passage (a page or less) from the scripture.

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- Next, prepare the reading space. It should be comfortable, clean, and free from all distractions.
- Now prepare yourself by closing your eyes and getting centered and still.
- Holy reading of the scriptural passage is traditionally done in four steps, which have Latin names.
 - **Lectio (reading)** – Read the passage slowly and carefully several times. You may do this aloud or silently. You may wish to make notes of anything that particularly captures your attention or seems significant.
 - **Meditatio (thinking about)** – Think about the text in a deep way, opening your mind to any nuances. You may wish to actually visualize any scenes in the text, or to write notes about your understanding of it. Traditionally, during this step the Holy Spirit is thought to help aid in scriptural understanding.
 - **Oratio (praying)** – Open your heart to God. Imagine that you and God are conversing about the passage, its meaning, and what it means for you. Allow intuition and “the small voice within” to participate. Your intellectual mind is of no use here.
 - **Contemplatio (meditating)** – Now let go of all words, and sit in silent communion with God.

Typically, lectio divina requires about an hour.

HISTORY:

Lectio Divina has a long and venerable history in the Christian Church. Holy reading is considered (according to the rules of Pachomius, Augustine, Basil, and Benedict) to be one of the three bases of monastic life.

(The other two are labor and liturgy.) In 2005, Pope Benedict talked about lectio divina, saying:

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“I would like in particular to recall and recommend the ancient tradition of Lectio divina: the diligent reading of Sacred Scripture accompanied by prayer brings about that intimate dialogue in which the person reading hears God who is speaking, and in praying, responds to him with trusting openness of heart. If it is effectively promoted, this practice will bring to the Church - I am convinced of it - a new spiritual springtime.”

Although it goes by many other names, the practice of holy reading is done in virtually every tradition that has scriptures.

NOTES:

If you are an atheist, try doing this meditation with a copy of *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, or something with similar import.

You may notice that the Latin terms for meditation and contemplation mean exactly the opposite of their English cognates. In Latin, *meditatio* means “contemplation,” and *contemplatio* means “meditation.” Strange!