

## Candle Flame Meditation

An excellent concentration meditation that is particularly suitable for people that are visually orientated.

In the following meditation a candle-flame is the object of our meditation. In a somewhat dark environment we stare at a burning candle. Try not to think of the flame or the candle. Every time we wander away in our thoughts we return to the candle-flame without judging. Instead of a candle you can also choose any other object to focus on, as your object of meditation.

If you want you can blow out the candle at the end of your meditation, you can close your eyes and visualize the flame on the inside of your eyelids. Look at this image as long as you can and do not be alarmed if the image changes form, color, size or shape. With some practice and some concentration you may soon be able to see the flame as long as you had looked at it with your eyes.

You can choose whether you will just do the first part of the exercise or add the second part, which is a technique in itself. The first part is an excellent exercise for concentration and for training living in the NOW and the second part, is both a concentration exercise and a visualization exercise.

Creative people that are really visually orientated are likely to achieve an exceptionally strong focus and concentration with the second part of the exercise. Do not be alarmed if your mind constantly wanders away and you cannot even remain concentrated for a few seconds. This is quite normal and only goes to show how active our mind is. But in the course of time you will certainly develop the ability to keep your mind concentrated on the object for ever longer periods and to deepen your concentration further and further.

Good luck and enjoy yourself!

## Exercise: Flame Meditation

1. Put your object of meditation (your candle) at a place where you can see it well.
2. Sit down, close your eyes and concentrate on your breathing.
3. Be aware of each breathing in and each breathing out.
4. Breathe automatically and freely, do not try to control your breathing.
5. Pay attention to how the air slowly passes through your nose, fills up your lungs and goes out again.
6. If, after taking a few breaths, you feel fine and at ease you open your eyes and focus all your attention to the object.
7. Breathe deeply and steadily and stare at the object. Try not to think of the candle, the flame, this exercise or other matters. When you start to think of something else than the object, just return to the object.
8. Breathe deeply and steadily and stare at the object.
9. If all of a sudden you notice twinklings in your body or relaxation reactions in your muscles, that is all right....just observe and return to your object.
10. Continue doing this during the period of time you had set apart for this exercise.
11. If you like you can now close your eyes and try to see the object at the inside of your eyelids.
12. With your mind's eye look at and visualize the object as long as you can.

### Flame Meditation

<b>Kind of meditation</b>	Concentration/focus
<b>Degree of difficulty</b>	Beginners
<b>Recommended duration</b>	5 to 45 minutes
<b>Posture</b>	Sitting
<b>Advantages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It improves your concentration</li><li>• It gives you a clear, calm mind</li><li>• It helps against stress</li><li>• It teaches you to live in the NOW</li></ul>
<b>Remark</b>	This concentration exercise is excellent for everybody. Creative people and that are visually orientated can reach a deep level of concentration through this exercise.

13. When the image disappears or you start thinking of other things, just try to get the image of your object projected in front of your eyes again.
14. Do this as long as you like or for the duration of the period you had in mind.
15. All right, now slowly take your thoughts back to the rest of your body and the sounds in the room. Move a little, stretch your muscles a little and open your eyes.