

LIFESTYLES

SHARE YOUR STORY

The Journal welcomes ideas for stories about people in our community who have gotten married, graduated, joined the military, etc.
Call the Journal at 285-7411

Eastern methods of meditation

[This is the last of three columns on meditation.]
Meditation is classified as a mind-body practice. It is used to move the focus of your attention away from the noise of the mind to the inner self where there is silence and peace.

Meditation has been practiced for thousands of years. Most meditation originated in ancient spiritual traditions. There are many types of meditation. In this column, I will give you step-by-step instructions based upon several eastern methods.

1. Choose a quiet, dimly lit location. Total darkness can put you to sleep. Bright lights can distract you.

2. Sit with your back straight. You should be erect, but comfortable. This position will keep you from dozing off and will enable you to breathe deeply and easily. You want to achieve wakeful calm. However, if you are having trouble sleeping, meditation will help you to go to sleep. Just try it lying down in bed.



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3. You can meditate sitting on a chair with your feet flat on the floor; or you can sit down on a padded floor mat. Most Zen Buddhists sit on the front third of a firm cushion placed on a floor mat. This keeps their spines straight. They usually sit in several cross-legged configurations.

4. You can also kneel on a mat. Some sit on a low bench with their legs tucked under. Choose a method that is most comfortable to you.

5. Place your hands in your lap or on your knees. Again, choose a position that is comfortable. It's important

that your hands don't distract you. I find that folding my hands in my lap works well.

6. Close your eyes. Many meditators leave their eyes open just a crack and let their vision go out of focus. Do what works for you.

7. Your mouth should be closed with the tongue up against the roof of your mouth. Breathe through your nose. If you have a cold, it's okay to breathe through your mouth. Keeping your tongue against the roof of your mouth reduces salivation, which can distract you.

8. Inhale slowly and deeply. Exhale slowly. Do this several times.

9. Concentrate on relaxing your body in stages. Start by thinking of your feet, then your legs, abdomen, chest and head.

10. Begin to breathe slowly and rhythmically.

11. There are several devices for moving your attention away from the constant activity of your mind to a place within you that is silent and peaceful. You can use

one or more of them. What ever works for you. You can count your breaths, repeat a word or sound to yourself, concentrate on a pleasing mental image, chant out loud, recite a prayer over and over.

12. I like to dwell upon the sounds of my breaths entering and leaving my body. I also focus my eyes on the back of my eyelids.

13. As you meditate, your mind will want to intrude. Don't fight it or worry about it. This is normal. Just move gently back to your breathing and your device(s). In time, the mind will become less and less intrusive. You will become calmer and you should get a sense of self unattached from the outside world.

Meditation will make you happy. That's why it's been around so long.

If you would like to ask a question, write to fred@healthyeezer.com.

Cicetti is a health care writer with more than 40 years of journalistic experience.

BBB: 10 things to do when hiring a contractor

BBB REPORT

Though it seems far off in the distance, spring will be here soon and homeowners, as always, will be raring to get to work on their homes and properties. Some are handy enough to tackle their own projects, but many will turn to contractors to make their visions a reality. Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota is offering a Top Ten list of things people should do before hiring a contractor.

"Remodel/build projects can be very exciting, but they can also be very stressful," said Dana Badgerow, president and CEO of BBB of Minnesota and North Dakota. "A great way to manage a good deal of that stress is by getting things right on the front end of the project."

Here are 10 things everyone should do when hiring a contractor:

1. Check out their track record. Contact BBB to obtain free Business Reviews on any company you're considering hiring. Visit bbb.org or call 1-800-646-6222.

2. Solicit multiple quotes. Shop around and get at least three written estimates.

3. Verify license and insurance. Ensure that companies have a current license to perform work in Minnesota (doli.state.mn.us), as well as liability and workers' compensation insurance.

4. Ask for references. Get references from recent jobs and verify them before signing a contract. Be leery of people who say they have leftover materials from a nearby project; ensure they are an employee of the business they claim to be

representing, and take time to research the business.

5. Inquire about a lien waiver. A lien waiver is a statement from the contractor that all suppliers and subcontractors have been paid for their work. Be sure to ask whether the contractor will provide you with a lien waiver upon completion of the work.

6. Don't forget building permits. Permits are for your protection and help ensure work will meet local building codes. Check with your contractor before starting your project. Homeowners bear the cost of building permits, but companies should be responsible for obtaining any necessary permits.

7. Consider future service issues. Keep in mind that if you choose a contractor or company that isn't local you need to know who to contact


in regard to any service needs that may arise after completion of the project.

8. Get everything in writing. Don't allow work to commence without a signed, written contract that includes project start and completion dates, exact costs, specific work to be done and warranty information. Be aware that anything you sign is a contract.

9. Don't rely on verbal promises. Any promises made orally should be written into the contract, including warranties on materials and/or labor.

10. Arrange a payment schedule. Never pay in full in advance of a project. Stagger your payments according to agreed-upon stages of work completion and don't make a final payment until all work is finished. Never pay in cash; use check or credit card.

"Happy 80th Bette"
Bette Simon "Organist/Tax Lady" is now 80 years young on February 27th.



Come help us celebrate and share birthday cake at First Lutheran Church, Memorial Hall
Saturday, March 1st
2:00 – 4:00 pm
Absolutely No Gifts

COMMUNITY CANCER WALK

Wishes to thank
International
Voyageur Snowmobile
Club and our
community for their
awesome support
through the
Radar Race.



SENIOR MENU

Hot meals for people 60 or older are served at noon Monday through Friday at Koochiching County Senior Center, 307 Fourth St.

Meals are for anyone, regardless of income. A \$3.50 donation is suggested. Meals are subject to change. Participants under age 60 are welcome at \$6.50 each.

For reservations call 283-3460 the day before the meal. Cancellations may be made the day of the meal.

| MONDAY |
|--|
| Swiss steak Sauce Mashed potatoes Wax beans Mandarin oranges |

| TUESDAY |
|---|
| Tater Tot casserole Beets Pudding |

| WEDNESDAY |
|---|
| Tilapia with lemon pepper Baked potatoes Mixed vegetables Oatmeal cake with brown sugar frosting |

| THURSDAY |
|--|
| Baked ham AuGratin potatoes Spinach Carrot bars |

| FRIDAY |
|--|
| Chili 24-hour coleslaw Corn bread Jell-O with fruit |

BIRTHS

Matt and Terri-Lee LaVigne, International Falls, announce the arrival of their daughter, Harper Quinn LaVigne, 8 pounds, 3 ounces, 20 inches long, born Thursday, Feb. 20, 2014, at Rainy Lake Medical Center hospital campus.

Grandparents are Norm Liboiron and Louise Johanson, Copper Cliff, Ontario, Canada, Pete and Gayle LaVigne, Ranier, and Lyle and Diane Mathews, International Falls.

been reported from La Verendrye General Hospital, Fort Frances.

Born to: Stephanie Nelson and Elijah Boshkaykin, Fort Frances, a son, Lucas Andrew James Keith, 9 pounds, 2 ounces, Feb. 8, 2014.

Sarah and Chris Faragher (nee Noonan), Fort Frances, a son, Theodore Cashton Faragher, 6 pounds, 11 ounces, Feb. 8, 2014.

Micaela Jack, Fort Frances, a daughter, Sophia Rose Sharon Jack, 10 pounds, 2 ounces, Feb. 11, 2014.

The following births have

HRA Section 8 Waiting List opens March 12

HRA REPORT

The opening of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority of Koochiching County's Section 8 Waiting List has been announced. Applications will be accepted beginning March 12.

Those interested may call or email the HRA office to receive an application, or go to Koochiching County Family Services, KOOTASCA, the Work-Force Center, or Friends Against Abuse for assistance in obtaining an application.

Be aware that the Administrative Policy for this HRA requires that each ap-

plicant live in Koochiching County for the first year following the receipt of a voucher.

The following information is required for each household member to be submitted along with the application:

1. Full legal name as stated on the Social Security Card
2. Social Security Card and number
3. Date of birth
4. Annual Income from all sources, employers name and address
5. Phone number and mailing address and/or alternative contact information



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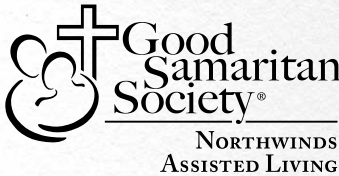
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To learn more about Good Samaritan Society – Northwinds Assisted Living, call (218) 283-1329.



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All faiths or beliefs are welcome.