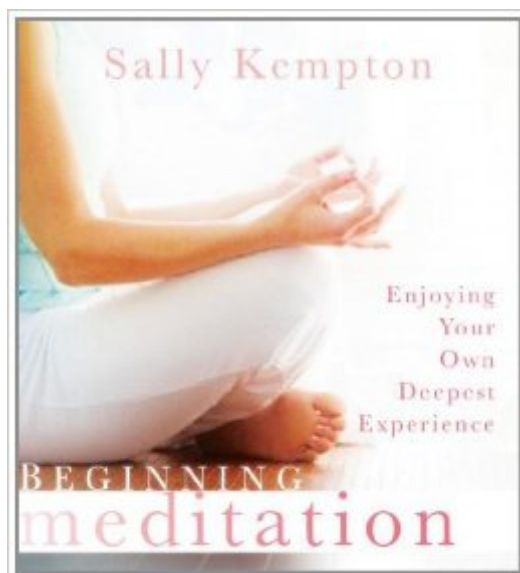


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Beginning Meditation: Enjoying Your Own Deepest Experience



Synopsis

What if you turned to meditation for the sheer enjoyment of it? That may sound unlikely, but when we approach the practice with playfulness, receptivity, and excitement, meditation can become one of the most intimate and fulfilling relationships we will ever have. On *Beginning Meditation*, master teacher Sally Kempton welcomes newcomers to a practice based on embracing the fullness of our experience and reconnecting with the love, compassion, and wisdom that we are in our essence. *Beginning Meditation* gives you a richly informative program for a rendezvous with your innermost self, through insights and techniques including: - How to choose a core practice that will become your meditation home base; - The key principles of practice and their inherent paradoxes; - How to experiment with other techniques and ultimately transcend technique entirely; - Six guided meditations to support your evolving practice; - Meditation is a journey, says Kempton, and the secret is to stay on the map. *Beginning Meditation* offers a struggle-free way to create a practice infused with love and fueled by the spirit of adventure.

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Customer Reviews

To learn to meditate has been in my one-of-these-days-to-do list for a while. I've read about the multiple benefits of meditation as a stress reducer so I was eager to give it a try as long as I could find the time or the right location to take a class. Neither one really materialized but when I saw Sally Kempton's "*Beginning Meditation*" on the list, I thought it was time to stop making excuses and put my mind to the task. "*Beginning Meditation*" is comprised of two sessions. The first session or CD runs a little over 73 minutes long and covers the basics of meditation. Though Ms. Kempton

acknowledges its proven health benefits, she hopes listeners will go beyond doctor's orders and practice meditation for the love of it. Meditation should feel natural but technique is the doorway. Therefore, she also emphasizes the importance of setting one's intention to meditate, of paying attention to both posture and physical surroundings, and of finding a core practice. Listeners will surely find her advice on how to deal with distracting thoughts during meditation helpful too. This CD contains two basic techniques or short meditations, one on the breath and another one, on the sound "ah". Using either one or both can help ease the mind into a meditative state. In the second CD, Ms. Kempton gives the listeners the opportunity to try and explore four practices, each one concentrates on a different focal point. The first one lasts about 16 minutes and brings the mind's attention to the spaces between breaths. The second one is the longest one at about 22 minutes and focuses on a feeling. The third practice is on the inner teacher. The final meditation focuses on the heart and belly centers and on the mantra, "I am." The last two practices are about 16 minutes long each.

The original review is below but I'm so please I want to add something to the top here as I think it's important. After using some of Sally's techniques I've found that I consistently reach a place in my meditation that I like to call "liquid sunshine" It's as if I've somehow managed to capture the warmth and life of the sun within my body, especially in my shoulders and abdomen. I had experienced this state in fleeting moments previously but now I seem to be able to find this place (or it finds me perhaps) and I can stay there for much longer periods of time. It's incredible, almost like it's activating opium receptors - not that I've ever taken opium but when I had shoulder surgery I had to take Hydrocodone and I recall the brief pleasant high that used to bring. This is almost that same sensation but much better and it's somewhat controllable. Not sure what all this means, would love to meet an experienced meditation teacher who could comment.=====original review Sally Kempton's beginning meditation is exactly the instruction I needed. This is an elegantly packaged 2 CD set from "Sounds True" and contains almost 180 minutes - that three, yes THREE hours of instruction. Now, here's why it was exactly the right product. I've been meditating daily for the past eight months. I actually look forward to getting out of bed at 5:00am, even on a cold winter's morning. I know that sounds nuts and if you told me I would type those lines a year ago I would have replied "no way am I doin' that!" But Sally makes a good point. Meditation can and should be a joy, you are building a relationship with your inner-most being. In some cases, that's someone you really don't even know!

I have been putting off writing this review for sometime now as I would not want to discourage anyone from learning about meditation or experimenting with different methods. Perhaps I am my own worst enemy here, as I have been practicing meditation for 40 years and perhaps what works for others simply does not work for me. Each time I listen to these CDs, the one thing that bothers me the most is the excessive attention to every detail, every nuance. There is no actual space for meditation in Ms. Kempton's breathing exercises on the start of the second disc, for example. She talks about everything, her timing disrupting any depth or rhythm to the breathing, constantly calling attention back to her instructions on everything from how to sit to what you should be feeling and experiencing. I find I cringe a bit instead of letting go, knowing that the next disruption will be coming, so that, for me, this is an not really mediation as much as some sort of guided imagery. Throughout these sessions, Ms. Kempton is constantly quantifying and orienting the experience, again, nudging the listener toward what she calls "one space" but not allowing any quiet or pause to experience what one is feeling. She describes what should be a neutral experience in overzealous terms, calling it the natural space, the doorway to self, etc. all of which may or may not resonant with a listener. She forces the notion of "awareness" onto the experience when many meditation practices transcend the here and now, offering a experience that may be fundamentally different from the techniques here. Here use of jargon such as "meditation bandwidth" and "energy of the heart" are jolting reminders that you are listening instead of experiencing.

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