

Sacred Daily Essentials Immersion

Month 1

Dinacharya

Dinacharya can be translated as ‘daily routine’ and is the heart of Ayurvedic self-care. To create and sustain health, we take care of ourselves, body, mind, heart and soul every day by creating routines that carry us into health-promoting activities. Once we are established in these practices, they become the habits that promote our emotional, mental and spiritual wellbeing, and allow us to fulfill our dharma, take care of business, enjoy our relationships, grow as a spiritual Being.

Everyone is different. Some have stronger constitutions than others. We all have our genetic weaknesses, and so our baseline good health and what we need to do to maintain it won't look exactly like anybody else's. Some people will always have more energy to expend than others. Some, even at their healthiest will remain less vital than their counterparts. It is important in this regard that we know ourselves and understand what are personal needs are and not compare ourselves to others.

That being said there are some general rules from the wisdom traditions of yoga and ayurveda that can support us in understanding Natural rhythms and getting in touch with them by creating a daily routine that is most in sync with Nature's rhythms.

The most important time of day is early morning. How we choose to begin our day will have a tremendous effect on how the day goes. Lets look at a healing morning rhythm.

The pre-dawn hours, the hour and a half before the sunrises is the very best time to get up for prayer, contemplation and meditation. So, give yourself **at least thirty-minutes for a morning practice.** Ideally you would have an hour. If you like to sleep in, begin by going to bed 30 minutes

earlier at night, and setting your alarm to get up 30 minutes earlier in the morning.

There are an abundance of styles of meditation and prayer from mantras and mindfulness to silent contemplation of a spiritual truth. What's important is to dis-identify with our discursive mind, and to bring our awareness into a state of BEING. **Take 12 minutes or more in the morning to sit or lie in meditation**—bringing awareness to your breath and your body without thinking about your experience. Every time you start thinking of something else, guide your attention back to your object of meditation.

Next do some kind of an embodiment practice; active or yin style yoga; walking or other forms of exercise. Breathe consciously and be present to what you are doing. 15 - 30 minutes is sufficient.

Rub oil on your skin: Vata and Kapha can use organic, unrefined sesame oil. If you want to get fancy, mix 1/2 and 1/2 with some vata or kapha-pacifying oil. Pitta can use organic coconut oil or sunflower oil (with pitta pacifying oil if you like). Take at least a few minutes with this each day, rubbing the oil into all parts of your body from head to ankles. If you can leave the oil on for a few minutes all the better—wear a robe and attend to your breakfast—then shower and eat a nourishing breakfast.

Now is the time to check e-mail and allow the world into your life, and move along with your morning activities. In this way you have attended to what is most important first: your own wellbeing. Now, you can attend to others with a full(er) cup.

Digestion is strongest mid-day, **so sometime between 10 and 2 PM stop for lunch and have your largest meal at that time.** Eat slowly and with awareness of your food, and ideally without multitasking or talking too much. Relax and allow for digestion to happen.

After lunch relax a bit before returning to your challenging activities

Late afternoon is a very good time to take a short break: have a cup of herbal tea; take a walk, practice some active or yin style asana or

meditation or a breathing practice—set a timer and take savasana for 20 minutes—something to restore your energy and support your mental digestion before moving into your evening activities.

Once, home, or at the end of your work day, change your cloths. turn the lighting down in your home. Do whatever work your brought home as early in the evening as possible. **Have an earlier, lighter dinner. Avoid heavy foods at this meal (meats, dairy).**

The hour before bed is another important time that sets the tone for sleep. Turn off screens most nights at this time. Have a soothing cup of herbal tea. Get whatever you need together for the next day. Do your evening hygiene and once in bed, rub some oil on the soles of your feet. Read something uplifting and calming or write in your journal. Meditation and prayer are great at this hour. Count your blessings as you turn off the lights.

Self-Inquiry/Habit-Change

Where are you out of sync with Nature's rhythms?

How does this impact the quality of your life?

Does this undermine the goals you have laid out for yourself? If so, in what way(s)? (be specific)

What are you willing to commit to now to shift this pattern? Be specific; i.e., I am commit to set my alarm for 7 am 6 days a week, and when my alarm goes off to get out of bed, and begin my morning routine.”

Write out your morning routine and any other part of a daily rhythm to which you want to commit at this time. (If you need some help getting organized, you might find the template at the end of this document helpful).

Here are a few key things to remember as you go:

- This is not about perfectionism. We want the structure of our daily rhythm to support our deeper intentions, without our becoming rigid about it, which will just make us tense. We are playing with **balancing just the right about of structure, and “this is what I’m doing” energy with responsiveness to the changing circumstances of our life.** Enjoy the process. Start to get good at differentiating excuses for not following your routines, (resistance) with responsive decisions in the moment.
- Resistance will come up. It’s part of what we encounter when we are changing patterns, and adding new practices into our lives. Think of it as developing new muscles. Underneath resistance is often a deep desire to be comfortable and safe (totally understandable).
- The Inner Critic will come up. Learn to differentiate your larger self from this psychic structure that believes it is keeping you safe by attacking you, thereby attempting to get you to stay the same (listen to the interview by Renie Hope in the SDE course, or investigate further via [Soul Without Shame](#) by Byron Brown).
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- Use the private online forum via Facebook to get support and reflection back from others. If you are feeling attacked, write about it (a great way to dis-identify and see more clearly what is happening). Check in to the group regularly and offer your reflections to each other. If you are wondering about excuses versus wise discernments, ask for feedback from others. This part of the process will support our learning so deeply!
- Lets help each other see our blind spots by reflecting back to each other what we hear each other saying. We are not here to impose our agenda on others, give advice or fix anyone (what a relief!). Instead, we are here to support each other to see themselves more clearly, and to discern for themselves the right way to go. In the end, we are learning to trust ourselves and deepening our relationship with our own being which is very personal.

My Daily Rhythm

★ Wake Up

★ Before Breakfast

★ Breakfast

★ Late Morning

★ Before Lunch

★ Lunch

★ Late Afternoon

★ Before Dinner

★ Dinner

★ Late Evening

★ Before Bed

★ Bed