5 Rules to Stay Zen (and Keep Your Mindfulness Going)

Zen Rule #1: Do one thing at a time

It's an ongoing practice of staying present and keeping things simple, one activity at a time. Our mind’s natural tendency is to overthink—whether we’re watching TV, browsing the web, or sipping tea. The more focused we are on any one task, the better. The best way to keep our minds present is to zap distractions as much as we can. Our personal tech habits must change—get rid of the seductive Facebook and Twitter notifications that repel us into a digital void.

Zen Rule #2: Live simply

Simplify your external and internal environment. The less stuff we have, the less distracted we are. We can also live simply on the inside. Avoiding perfectionism is one of the most important forms of self-care. When we stop striving to be perfect, we can live with more mindfulness.

Zen Rule #3: Devote time to sitting

Don't feel like you have to sit in a certain way or for a specific length of time. The key to meditation is to maintain a consistent practice. Whether it’s a short 5-minute session before getting out of bed or a longer 30-minute session during a break, we should sit in a place we feel comfortable in. It’s all about the practice.”.

Zen Rule #4: Find what works for you

There are countless forms of meditation. I can meditate at the dentist’s office or riding a noisy train, I can easily slip into a super-chill meditation with an app like me, your meditation time and place can shift with your daily schedule. Whether I’m waiting at the dentist’s office or riding a noisy train, I can easily slip into a super-chill meditation with an app or an online app.

Zen Rule #5: Do it slowly and deliberately

We all have our favorite escapes for numbing out from the day. Sometimes we sporadically scan our social feed. Other times it’s a focused quick fix on Words-With-Friends. But there are times when we need a more deliberate escape. That’s when we should turn to an ancient practice from the Orient: meditation. Meditation is a way to refocus our mind, clear our mind, and quiet our mind.

The benefits of meditation are well-documented. It can help us reduce stress and anxiety, improve our sleep, and increase our productivity. But how do we find the time to meditate in our busy lives? The answer is to make it a daily practice. Meditation is a skill that can be taught, but it requires regular practice to become effective.

That is to say: you don't have to escape into the quit-my-job-and-join-a-yoga-ashram fantasy to be more mindful. We can opt to embrace the gifts of our techno-world as gateways to peace. If technological tools—from mobile apps to ancient astrological charts—can also be our greatest mindfulness-boosting tools. It's an ongoing practice of staying present and keeping things simple, one activity at a time. Our mind’s natural tendency is to overthink—whether we’re watching TV, browsing the web, or sipping tea. The more focused we are on any one task, the better. The best way to keep our minds present is to zap distractions as much as we can. Our personal tech habits must change—get rid of the seductive Facebook and Twitter notifications that repel us into a digital void.

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