

HOW TO DO WALKING MEDITATION

Rosh Chodesh Cleveland, June 2020

We acknowledge that walking meditation is an ancient spiritual practice, and a Jewish one. From the Australian aborigines' walkabout, to the Christian meditation labyrinths built into gardens and the floors of cathedrals, to our Rabbi Nachman of Breslav's practice of *hitbodedut* – walking meditation is a natural extension of our human walking presence here on earth, connecting us to the divine origins of the universe.

Six steps to walking meditation:

1. **Stand** connected to the earth. Like the mountain pose in yoga, still as a mountain, hands to your sides, standing tall and breathing. Feel your connection to the earth through your feet, going up your spine and neck to your head.
2. **Set an intention** for your meditation – whether it is in reflection of our discussion of this month, or something or someone in your life that needs attention.
3. **Begin to breathe** in rhythm, concentrating on your breath, slowly in and out, calm and relaxed and natural.
4. **Position your hands**, either at your sides, behind your back, or crossed in front of your chest.
5. **Begin to walk** in rhythm with your breathing. Some people walk very slowly, others more quickly. Feel each step as you transfer your weight from heel to toe. You might breathe in and out for two steps, three steps or four. Fall into a rhythm, aware of your breath and your steps in harmony. If your thoughts are distracted, gently bring them back to the rhythm of your steps and your breathing.
6. **Open your awareness** to what is around you, as you become part of the rhythm. Allow your breathing and walking rhythm to carry you along. Concentrate on that, or on the sounds and sights of nature. Open yourself to the messages that the universe is giving you.