



Tratak Meditation: Candle flame gazing

A candle flame is most often used for Tratak Meditation since it symbolizes the light in our souls. The flame symbolically eliminates the darkness of ignorance rooted deep in our minds. However, there are many other light source options available for doing *Tratak*: moon, star, mountain peak, mandala, etc.

Benefits of Tratak Meditation:

- Reduces stress & tension
- Calms mind
- Creates inner peace
- Builds concentration , mental focus, work efficiency
- Improves memory & intelligence
- Improves motivation & willpower
- Develops patience
- Stimulates & activates 3rd/Eye Chakra to increase wisdom, intuition & foresight
- Helps penetrate veil of duality to allow you to see unity (7th/Crown Chakra)

Caution:

- Be careful not to excessively strain eyes. Over time, your eyes will adjust & allow you longer periods of concentrating on the flame

Preparation:

- Darkened room, no breeze of any kind
- Light candle ~ 3 feet away from you, at eye level
- Sit up in any comfortable relaxed position, spine straight (chair is fine)
 - *Goal is to be absolutely still while you do this meditation.*
- Place hands in Gyan Mudra
 - Tips of thumb & index finger touch, extend other 3 fingers
 - rest wrists gently on knees/thighs, palms face slightly upward
 - *Gyan mudra will help you with your concentration*
- Begin with slow & deep breathing
 - As you inhale, let stomach expand; breathe out fully (complete contraction)



Instructions:

- While taking full breaths, begin to gaze steadily at flame without blinking for as long as comfortable
- Keep eyes focused only on flame (Don't gaze at wick or candle)
- As thoughts arise, simply ignore them (Don't struggle to remove them)
- Imagine flame is entering your body through your eyes & illuminating your inner being
- Once eyes tire OR start to tear up, close them & position afterimage of flame at 3rd eye chakra
 - With eyes closed, try to imagine the same flame as you were seeing with open eyes
- Focus on this afterimage, trying to keep it steadily fixed in region of 3rd Eye
 - As image wavers, moves or loses clarity, concentrate & try to restore it
- Once image fades out completely, open eyes & begin again to focus on candle flame
- *Gradually you'll find that your gaze has grown more peaceful & tranquil*
 - *You may experience yourself observing your thoughts (you become the silent witness)*
- Continue this cycle for 5-10 minutes (or ~10x)
 - *As your capacity to concentrate and meditate grows, you can increase the time by increments of 5 minutes until you reach 20 – 60 minutes.*