

Episode 5 - Mindfulness Based Financial Planning Meditation

Hi and welcome to Jenny-in-the-Corner-Office, Episode number 5: A financial planning meditation. I'll be hosting today's podcast and all of the other ones... Who am I? I'm Jen Schell—an Investment Advisor with CIBC Wood Gundy.

Hello listeners and welcome back to Jenny in the Corner Office.

Today, I will be walking you through my first ever Financial Planning Meditation. My intention is that this will be the first of many. This first meditation will address acknowledging the truth about your how you feel around your sense of financial security.

During this meditation, we will explore deep inside our minds to find out what really matters to us. Sometimes we get caught up in all of the advice that's prescribed to us. Often, we're told how we are supposed to think about money. Sometimes, this just adds to our daily to-do list and leads to stressful make-work projects or sometimes it just serves to fulfill someone else's targets as opposed to our own. An example of this is when someone tries to sell us things that we don't need, or introduce products that aren't aligned with our goals.

Financial planning is a technical term that is essentially financing your inner truth. Through this financial planning meditation, we are going to identify our inner truth so that when we apply strategies to finance our plan. This way, we have reassurance that it is aligned with our goals. No one will know how you feel except for you. So, you can be reassured that this is completely confidential.

The target is to make your own personal goals and requirements for fulfillment to come alive and not to satisfy someone else's monetary targets. Let's get started!

To give you an expectation of what we are going to do, first we will relax the mind so that we can create imagery. The best stories have pictures and so we will begin with some exercises on relaxation so that we can create amazing illustrations in our minds. Maybe you would like to relax, because when we are relaxed, we are more trusting of ourselves and of our intentions and we can visualize more effectively. The more relaxed we are, the more we can listen to what it is that we need and the more our thoughts can flow.

Find a quiet place where you can relax that is free from distraction and please do not operate machinery while listening to this podcast. Take a moment to look around for a comfortable

spot. Lie down or sit back and know that you are safe. You have nowhere else to be but right here. Turn all distractions off, mute your phone and hide any electronics and leave them to the side where they will not occupy your thoughts. The outside world can wait for you to focus on yourself. You deserve some time to you, to look after your wellbeing. Maybe after hearing these words, you feel a smile cross your lips, because it's been a long time since you paid attention to yourself and your needs. And now the time is right, for you to take the time to find out what's important to you, in your life.

Close your eyes and listen to my voice as I guide you through a mindful exercise on financial planning. Keep in mind that this is your time and that this time is all about you. This time is for you and as you hear my words, become more relaxed and more focused on what it is you need from this session.

There are no right answers or wrong answers. This is simply a reflection of where you are at in the current moment. It doesn't matter what you want, but maybe it's about time that you think about what you truly need.

Focus on you and you do you. You are doing a good thing for yourself by being here. Perhaps you would like to listen to my voice as we switch from lots of thoughts to a path of guided thought. Allow your thoughts to dwindle and let them fade away... Allow your body to become still and become aware of your breath as you breathe in and out. I will use the word relax, because it sounds nice, but you do not have to try and relax, you just have to be and accept each moment and each breath as it passes.

The first thing we are going to do is to release some stress so that we can have clear minds that will enable us to focus on our thoughts so that we can listen to what we need from our minds and from our bodies. You deserve this. Allow yourself to receive this time for yourself. Feel the satisfaction inside your stomach and feel the warmth of the satisfaction. Maybe we can focus on the feeling of satisfaction—the satisfied warm feeling that you have nowhere else to be but here and that you are alone and that it's ok to be alone with just you.

Let's start by taking 5 deep breaths. We will take five. Five breaths gives you enough chances to get at least one good deep breath into your system. Inhale through your nose and take a deep breath, feel your ribs rise from your belly into your lungs as you find all of the air deep within your chest and stomach. And let it go.

Breathe again and as you hold your breath, think of a frustration that you have regarding the financial system or of your own personal financial situation. Identify it and hold it for 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1... slowly let the air escape from your lungs and release the financial burden that you held in your mind.

Let's do it again, slowly take in another breath. Focus on the negative stressors in your day-to-day life. Be with them and capture them in your breath as they are pulled from your body and identified in your mind. Once the breath is released, give 2 coughs and feel your diaphragm flex to release all of the air that you no longer need.

Let the clouds of stress go without judgement, and release them guilt-free. Know that they are there and that they are no longer serving you. Hold them for 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and release them into the atmosphere around you.

For our final breath, let's cleanse out the whatever is left. Breath in and take out the last of what's bothering you and hold it for 5, 4, 3, 2 and one. And release. You may feel light headed from the release of brain fog and that's ok.

For our final breath, feel the coolness of the air go down into your lungs and refresh your cells with new oxygen and energy.

As you breathe, pay attention to the stillness and the rhythm of our breath as it fills our lungs. You might feel your head sway from side to side, rocking like a boat, and that's ok. Let your mind relax and bring your awareness to your brain. Feel the space between your ears and the rhythm of your being gently beat on your forehead. Just relax and allow your mind to release any thoughts that you do not want. Simply acknowledge that they are there, hold them and let them go.

As you drift, you become aware of your surroundings. Maybe you are looking at a peaceful lake at the edge of a dock. You are on a nice comfortable lounge chair and you can hear the waves plunk against the rocks and the wood. The cedar trees fill the air with the smell of pine and you can hear some birds in the distance. In five, you feel more relaxed and the tension is released from your forehead. In four, your eyes and your eyelids relax as your cheekbones release their tightness. In three, your muscles around your jaw and your face let go so that your thoughts are free to float like the gentle waves along the surface of the water. In two, you feel your breath flow through your arms and through your fingers, delivering oxygen as you go. And one, feel your breath as it flows down the rest of your body,

renewing the blood flow in your system and letting all that is no longer serving you go. And now, you are completely at one in your space and the temperature is perfect for some contemplation.

Maybe we will contemplate our relationship with financial aspects of your life. Now we will bring awareness to the word, finance. It's just a word, but allow your mind to flow towards the thought that comes to mind when you hear the word finance. Being here with whatever feeling or sensation come up without judgement. Just be here and aware of the thought that comes up. Thoughts will drift and you may feel different feelings. Observe what feelings come up when you hear the word... finance.

What is the most important financial issue in your life right now. It can be good or bad, it's just an issue related to finance. Let your mind wander over there . Observe what that looks like. Picture it and maybe imagine in your mind's eye what it looks like. It is just a thought. Perhaps we will observe what it looks like, knowing you are safe and being aware that it is just a thought to observe. Maybe we would like to take a look at how it appears to you in your mind. Here, you are in control of your thoughts and you can see them. Hold it and then let it go with a deep breath.

Now let's be aware of any worries or concerns, because at this moment, we are strong enough to explore them. You are safe and far from these worries or concerns and you are stronger than you think. Perhaps we can observe as though we are watching a film. Think to that time where you had a sleepless night and maybe we can see why you were kept up at night. Take a look at that thought and look at it without judgement. See the worry and hold it with the strength of your mind. Be aware that your mind is strong and can hold a worry very easily. Picture the worry being trapped so that you can observe it. Then let it go when you feel that the time is right and watch it crumble from a distance.

Now picture what your life may look like without worry. Maybe imagine that you are somewhere you like and that all of your worries have been resolved. Take some time and picture a life without worry. (Pause) What will you be doing? Who is with you?

In your life, you have done some amazing things. What has been your greatest life achievement so far? Take a moment and reflect on your achievements. Maybe you feel good about what you have accomplished. What was it? How did it feel when you achieved something great?

Now let's reflect on what is it that you want that you haven't already achieved? You have already reached your goals, now what does your mind want to do? What is the first thought that pops into your mind about what you would like to do. What does this achievement look like?

Maybe you are working at a job or maybe you want a new job. Would you work part-time, not at all or would you work. Maybe this achievement isn't work related at all. What is it?

Maybe you are thinking of retiring or selling a business. What does retirement look like? Maybe you are already retired and you have some activities that you enjoy doing. What are they?

Think back to a time when you felt financially secure? Maybe that time is now, maybe it was in the past....

Now, picture in your mind what it feels like to be financially secure. How much money is in your bank account? Where is your money? Is there money invested in properties, in a house or a building or in a cottage? Is it managed by someone you trust or are you in charge of managing your money?

Take some time... we have lots of time, and be aware about the feelings about your finances. Are you happy, are you indifferent, are you sad, are you feeling guilty or are you afraid? Understand that you are in a safe place and that finances are just a word. Wonder how it feels to be financially secure. What does that look like? Picture yourself in a place where all of your finances allow for full financial security with the people you love. Where are you? Who are you with? What are you doing? When are you feeling financially secure. Why do you feel financially secure? Take a moment and picture this.

Now, suppose you have a million dollars to spend. Imagine that your other needs are taken care of and you have a million dollars to spend as you choose. Suppose that you have a million dollars to buy anything you want. What would you buy?

Suppose you had a million dollars to give away. Imagine that all of your other needs are taken care of and you must give away to 1 million dollars to someone or something. Who would you give it to? Maybe it's to a person, a loved one or a charity. Maybe it's for a special cause.... Let your thoughts wander... who would you give a million dollars away to?

Suppose you were to live until the age of 100. What would that look like. Is there anything keeping you from living until 100?

Now let's come back to the present and appreciate that we are relaxed and living today. Slowly start to feel your mind focus on bringing yourself back to the now. I will count down and as I do, feel the renewal and energy flow back into your mind and through your face. Wiggle your hands and your toes and slowly open your eyes in five, four, three, two and one. Feel the vitality flow back through your arms and your legs and your lungs as you get ready to embrace a life charged with fulfillment and financial security.

I hope that you enjoyed this financial planning meditation. Please feel free to reach out to me at Jennifer.schell@cibc.com or on Facebook at JenniferSchellIWG or on Twitter at WGSHELL.

This meditation is based on the CIBC Wood Gundy Comprehensive Factfinder. For your copy, please e-mail me and I will happily send it to you.

Thank you for joining me and now I will read the corporate disclaimer.

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