



CORNERSTONE 2025 RESOURCE

Soulful Breaths, Sacred Words:

Meditating with the Psalms

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Summary: This experiential session integrates mindful breathing techniques with the poetic depth of the Psalms, offering participants a pathway to spiritual connection, introspection, and inner peace. Through guided meditation, chanting, and personal reflection, we will explore how the Psalms can become a tool for grounding, resilience, and emotional expression.

Goals:

1. Connection – Participants will engage with the Psalms as a source of emotional and spiritual grounding.
2. Reflection – Participants will explore how breath and meditation can enhance their connection to sacred texts.
3. Practice – Participants will leave with accessible meditative tools they can use in their daily lives.

Audience: Everyone, 10-25 participants.

Timing: One session, 60 minutes

Materials:

- Comfortable seating or meditation cushions
- Printed Psalms (selected verses for reflection and chanting)
- Journals or paper for reflection
- Soft background instrumental music



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Set-up:

- Arrange seating in a circle or semicircle to encourage communal connection.
 - Ensure a quiet and calming atmosphere.
 - Provide accessible materials in print and audio formats if needed.
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SESSION TIMELINE:

- 00:00-00:08 – *Opening centering and intention setting*
 - 00:08-00:18 – *Introduction to Psalms & breath as a spiritual practice*
 - 00:18-00:38 – *Guided Psalm meditation and breath synchronization*
 - 00:38-00:53 – *Journaling and personal reflection*
 - 00:53-01:00 – *Closing communal chanting and integration*
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SESSION OUTLINE:

Opening Centering (8 min)

- Welcome and brief explanation of the session's purpose.
- Short guided breathwork exercise to bring focus to the body and breath.

Introduction to Psalms & Breath (10 min)

- Discussion on the Psalms as a source of emotion, longing, and divine connection.
- Overview of breath in Jewish tradition (e.g., *Nishmat Kol Chai*, "*Kol Haneshama Tehalel Yah*").

Guided Psalm Meditation (20 min)



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- The facilitator recites or chants select verses from a chosen Psalm (e.g., Psalm 23 for comfort, Psalm 27 for courage).
- Participants synchronize breath with the rhythm of the verse, focusing on a specific word or phrase (e.g., “shalom,” “or,” “ahavah”).

Journaling & Reflection (15 min)

- Participants write about what came up for them during the meditation.
- Prompts: “What emotions arose?” “How does this Psalm speak to me today?”

Closing Communal Chanting & Breathwork (7 min)

- Group chant of a Psalm-based phrase.
- Slow exhalations to integrate the experience.

BRINGING IT TO YOUR CAMP:

- Adapt the Psalm selection to fit specific camp themes or age groups.
- Integrate this practice into morning or evening reflections at camp.
- Encourage participants to continue using breath and sacred text as tools for emotional regulation and spiritual growth.
- Offer an optional follow-up session for deeper exploration of additional Psalms.