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Ahmad Kutty

Buddhism, Meditation techniques

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FATAWA

Question:
Respected scholars, As-salamu 'alaykum I have a question concerning meditation. Sometimes when I get very stressed I like to meditate to calm myself down. Basically, all I do is some breathing exercises that come from Buddhist techniques. Do you find anything wrong with doing these exercises as it comes from Buddhism? I don't worship the Buddha or anything, but I find that meditation gives me some benefit. Jazakum Allahu khayran.

Answer:
Wa 'alaykum As-Salamu wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh. In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger. Dear sister in Islam, first of all, we'd like to voice our appreciation for the great confidence you have placed in us. We hope that our efforts meet your expectations. May Allah help us all keep firm on the straight path. Ameen. Muslims are encouraged to think and ponder over every wonder of Allah's creation. Meditation is a means of calming down, especially when it is connected with making dhikr (remembrance of Allah). Such techniques are not particular to Buddhism or Hinduism; they are part and parcel of religious traditions all over the world. Using such techniques to calm the mind and gain focus and perspective is indeed a beneficial method. Islam does not forbid such things; rather it encourages all trusted methods of emotional, spiritual, and physical healing provided they do not contain pagan elements contrary to the concept of tawhid (Oneness of Allah). Having said this, however, I must rush to add that while meditating, you should strictly repeat the words of dhikr as taught by the Qur'an and Hadith rather than the typical mantras as taught by Buddhism or Hinduism. May Allah grant us the wisdom to see truth as truth and follow it, and discern error as error and shun it. Ameen. You can also read:
Meditating (Tafakkur) on Allah's Creation
Refinement of the Soul (Tazkiyat an-Nafs)
Watching Comet to Meditate on the Wondrous Universe
Allah Almighty knows best.

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