"If you want to find God, hang out in the space between your thoughts."

— Alan Cohen

So you want to live a spiritual life, but you're not sure where to begin. You know that organized religion isn't for you, and you're not about to go on some kind of spiritual journey to India or Israel or join a monastery in Tibet.

You've got a lot going on. You're a typical 21st-century human living in the developed world and that means a lot of doing. Wake up, drink coffee, go to work, come home and take the kids to soccer practice or work on some creative project you try to squeeze into your limited "free time." You barely have time to see your loved ones, much less pursue a spiritual path.

Everything is always do, do do, do do. You're always doing something while fantasizing about making time stop for a while so you could catch up and maybe even stop and relax for a minute. Welcome to modern life.

Meanwhile, what's going on in your head? If you're like most people, it's a constant litany of something else to do: plans, schemes, worries about the future, endless repetitions of "what's my next step?".

Or there's the ubiquitous self-analysis: replaying what happened in the past, analyzing, critiquing, wishing you'd done something different.

There's not a lot of room left in your head with all of the worrying about the future and the fretting about the past. Where's the meaning in it all? Where's the sense of purpose? Where is God? Does He/She/It even exist?

"Some people think that meditation takes time away from physical accomplishment. Taken to extremes, of course, that's true. Most people, however, find that meditation creates more time than it takes."

— Peter McWilliams

So how do you make time for your spiritual life without taking away from all this stuff you're trying to accomplish? Or, put another way, how can you just be when there's so much to do?

Luckily, it's not an either-or proposition. Being and doing are not necessarily at odds. Of course, you could decide to ditch your life and career and obligations and go to an ashram to meditate and do yoga nonstop for a while. If you did, it might be the best thing you ever did for yourself.

But let's be realistic: most of us aren't going to do that. So it's a good thing that you don't need an ashram to meditate. You don't even need a guru or special incense or a statue of Ganesha. All you need is a bit of quiet and a willingness to take a few minutes out of every day to simply sit and be with yourself and your thoughts.

Give yourself 15 minutes in the morning (later you might want to take longer). Sit comfortably with your back as straight as possible. Focus on your breathing, or make your awareness peripheral and just observe your thoughts without attachment to any of them. Allow your mental chatter (which you can be certain will carry on endlessly) to pass over you and through you like clouds.

And don't resent the time it takes: you'll gain much more time in increased productivity when it is time to get back to doing.