

Sitting Practice: Quiet the Mind



This practice is a simple way of quieting your mind, giving stillness and clarity among stress or pressure. It will have relaxing effects and ultimately influence other areas of your life, such as being more mentally present; solving problems; experiencing a more restful sleep; creating calm among chaos; or having a more open mind. It facilitates greater possibilities of understanding, listening, and decision-making. It's impossible to do this incorrectly, if done with sincerity. **You do not have to believe anything to do sitting.**



Designate **5 minutes** each day to sit quietly without interruption. Feel free to increase the duration only after you successfully master 5 minutes. Within two weeks work up to 10 minutes. Consistency is the key. So stick to it as you practice and learn a new way of being. The more you practice, the greater your ability to spontaneously draw upon it for self-management, whenever and wherever it's appropriate.



Sit comfortably in a chair with a straight back and feet flat on the floor, or lay flat on a comfortable surface. Center your body, not leaning or slumping in any direction. Either close your eyes or gaze at a designated spot. Relax your jaw.



1. Take in a **deep** breath, bringing awareness to the air as it enters and leaves your nostrils, or your mouth. Breathe deep into your chest to ensure it fills completely and expands to rise and fall. Do not change your breathing; begin to observe it. Say quietly to yourself "in" when you inhale and "out" when you exhale.
2. Between breaths, bring your attention to where your body touches the chair and where your feet touch the floor. With each breath conduct a physical self-check from top to bottom. With the first breath, notice if your eyes are tight. Then with the next breath notice if your neck is forward. Continue with each breath to notice are your shoulders up; are your arms tense; is your back touching the chair; can you feel the ridges of your fingerprints; are your feet comfortable on the floor? Look for tension and give it willingness to relax. Do the same with any emotions or feelings that may occur. Acknowledge any sensations in your body, relax them, and return your attention to your breathing.
3. If you find your attention wandering to thoughts, notice the thought without judgment or analysis and simply return to your breathing. You can simply say "thought" and put it into your visual filing cabinet, close the drawer and bring your attention back to your breathing. You may likely do this countless times, which is ok. Be gentle with yourself. It's part of the practice.



It takes time and practice to develop a new way of being. Success and transformation is in the ongoing practice of getting out of your head and into your physical body. Then you can spontaneously draw upon it throughout the day. Give yourself permission to have the experience. It will be your most challenging and rewarding five minutes.