

Meditation manual: body posture and mental calming

1. General principle: (1) body posture and (2) mental calming

= two stages we have to maintain during the meditation.

1.1. The basic physical posture

We really need to be aware of. This is the main point, to maintain these seven points:

1. Lotus pose or crossed legs. On a chair: don't let your two legs hang on the ground.
2. Hands in mudra of meditation: right one on the left, two thumbs slightly touching, placed under the navel. Or: two palms just rest on your knees
3. Relax your shoulders, don't lift, just relax, drop your shoulders
4. The neck slightly back
5. The spine straight or aligned, but not stiff, try to maintain this
6. The eyes: in the beginning slightly open your eyes, then throughout the meditation you might close spontaneously
7. The teeth and the lip: naturally relaxed

Maintain these 7 points in a relax manner. Do not put too many tension.

1.2. Mental calming:

Method 1: natural breathing:

We are anchoring the mind with an object.

The object we choose is our breath: incoming and outgoing breathing.

You try to anchor your mind on your breathing, natural breathing.

Whenever you distract your mind, then:

- simply ***come back to the object again and again,***
- ***without any reaction towards your thoughts.***

Basic mental attitude: patience:

You must accept challenges and difficulties on physical and mental level: this is called: patience. Patience will help you overcome challenges during the practice. Patience is the most important tool to develop in meditation.

Method 2: counting the breath:

Incoming outgoing = 1: counting like this.

Until you are distracted.

If you are distracted, then start counting from zero.

You can go up to 10, 20 50.

2. Recognize obstacles:

In general there are two obstacles in meditation.

1. Agitation

= *wandering mind*: your mind is too much scattered. Not in one place: just moving, generating thoughts.

- gross agitation: could be like destructive emotions, like anger or maybe fear, resentment,
- subtle agitation: is like discursive thoughts

What to do if this is happening:

- then you have to recognise as soon as possible,
- then come back to the breathing as soon as possible.

2. Drowsiness or dullness

= there is no clarity in your mind. Your mind is not very clear, is a kind of unclear, foggy mind.

What to do?

- You have to recognise it is not clear.
- Then you put more focus on your breathing.

What to do with the obstacles?

1. **Recognise** the obstacles like agitation (thoughts, emotions) or dullness (no clarity in the mind) and **don't stay with them**.

Simply recognise and **come back**. It means: we should not really stay with the drowsiness nor agitation. Otherwise the mind will get used to it and that is not very helpful.

2. Accept reality as it is.

We are **not going to push them away**: we are not going to fight with our emotions or thoughts.

Simply we need to **create more presence of awareness**, vigilance, thoughtfulness...

Recognise this awareness within:

In fact, this awareness is within, but we need to recognise this awareness.

So we are not really overshadowed by our destructive emotions.

We are not really swept away by our thoughts.

So simply by this awareness, we really need to watch, **simply watch**. We are just the **observer** of what is happening here, now.

Just observe.

Therefore we use the same method: meditation object of the breath.

Accomplish what you start:

And also it is very important, that once you started, you must accomplish.

If you need to **take a rest**, then take a rest, for example every 15 minutes you can.

3. What to learn from this course? And how to engage in your learning process:

What is guided meditation?

Guided meditation means to really practice together, rather than talking. It is really practice.

Through the practice we can develop meditation.

We are not going to escape from the reality.

What is our reality in this moment or now? ***We really need to confront our reality in this moment, whatever it is, pain or pleasure it doesn't matter.***

The objective of meditation is: we learn to live, even in these difficult situation, painful situations.

We are not really escaping or creating some imagination for a short period of time.

Steps in the meditation:

1. 3 deep cleansing breaths:

First we are going to breathe in and out **3 times: deeply breathe** in and out, in order to cleanse all our blockages and all our channels.

2. Posture:

Then sit comfortably on your cushions or on your chair.

Upright your back again, relax your shoulder, your thorax, close your eyes.

So again and again we need to develop this physical posture.

3. Method :

We are going to use the same method: same object: our breath: this is the most common and very effective meditation object.

Optional: 1 day of fasting:

- It is very good for your cleansing of the body.
- Avoid breakfast and lunch. You can have a very light dinner.
- You can drink as much as you can, but no tea, milk, no coffee, just water and tisane (herbal tea).