

*Stilling
the Mind*



by
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Practice 1: Stilling the Mind



Create a sanctuary within your home; a quiet place where you can step away from the noise and bustle of the outside world and will be completely undisturbed. This may be a separate room within your home, or a closet. It's my recommendation to meditate in low or no light, so this should also be a space that is somewhat sequestered from bright fluorescent lighting and sunlight.

Your attire should be loose and comfortable. Avoid any garments with elastic banding that hug the waist, or that is close fitting. It is also suggested that your garment be made of natural fabrics, for clothing like everything else carries a specific frequency. Cotton and linen will suffice. Light and neutral colors are also advised.

Make yourself comfortable. You may sit cross-legged on a cushion, chair or stool maintaining an erect spine, or lie on a yoga mat. Whatever position feels most relaxed.

Your hands too – place them in the position that feels most natural. Below are a few common mudra practices for your reference. Try them out to see which one fits best.

- *Apana mudra*: This mudra is known to aid digestion and promote the release of toxins from your system. Touch the tips of the thumb, ring and middle fingers, with the palm facing upwards, while keeping the remaining fingers outstretched.

- *Bhairava mudra*: This mudra is known to promote deep reflection and fosters a sense of security and inner peace. Place the right palm within the left and allow your hands to rest gently on your lap if sitting, or on your stomach if lying down.
- *Chinmaya mudra*: This is a very grounding mudra that is very effective at calming the mind and soothing the nervous system. Touch the tips of the thumb and index fingers, with the palm facing downwards and the remaining fingers outstretched.
- *Dhyana mudra*: This mudra allows for intense focus and promotes deep meditation. Place the right hand on top of the left, interlacing the fingers and allowing the thumbs to lightly touch. Allow the palms to face upwards, with your hands resting gently on your lap. Doing so closes the energetic circuit of the body.
- *Gyan mudra*: This mudra is known to enhance wisdom and knowledge, while promoting a feeling of balance and calm. Touch the tip of your thumbs and index fingers together, with the remaining fingers extended out. You may rest your hands on your legs if seated cross-legged, or along your sides if lying down.
- *Prana mudra*: This mudra is known to revitalize your life force energy or chi. Allow the tips of the pinky and ring fingers to gently touch the tip of the thumb, with the palm facing upwards and remaining fingers outstretched.
- *Prithvi mudra*: This mudra is known to reduce stress and promote healing, stability and calm. Allow the tip of your thumb to gently touch the ring finger, with your palms facing upwards, and the remaining fingers outstretched.
- *Shunya mudra*: This mudra is known to promote a state of tranquility by balancing the ether element of the body. Touch the tips of the thumb to the middle finger, with the palm facing upwards, and remaining fingers outstretched.

You may also light a candle or incense stick, as you may find these to be most soothing, or play soft, ambient music in the background. However, if you are a beginner, my recommendation is that you start without any sounds.

When you are ready – start by inhaling deeply through the right nose and exhaling completely through the mouth three times, and alternate nostril. This practice of breathing prior to meditation relaxes the body and synchronizes the left and right hemispheres of the brain.

Now close your eyes. Breathe normally.

Do not seek – for what will come next. Be still. Allowing the thoughts and concerns of the day to fall away.

As thoughts arise, do not struggle to tamp them down, but allow down to gently fade like clouds adrift within your consciousness. Imagine each as a whisp of cloud, nimbly floating away.

Just like you would discipline a small child that is acting out, do not pay them any mind. With repeated practice, the mind will eventually acquiesce and be still. If you're new to meditation, this may take a bit of time.

As you continue to sit or lie, you may feel the urge to squirm or feel an itch. Or your legs may feel cramped, achy and stiff. To the degree possible, notice these sensations, without succumbing to the impulse to shift position or relieve the itching. In time, these sensations that are a result of the energy shifts within the body, will melt away.

Focus your gaze on the third eye, the area right between your brows. Notice the space that is there. This space may be initially dark and devoid of light, but with

practice, you may start to notice orbs of light or subtle colors or shapes. Allow yourself to notice them, without ascribing any meaning to them.

As the conscious mind relaxes, in the resultant stillness – you may receive various bits of information, mental images and visuals, audible messages, noticeable smells and sensations in various parts of the body. Do not attempt to analyze what you're seeing or otherwise sensing with the logical mind. Just allow what's coming through to be.

It is recommended that you repeat this practice daily, or at the very least a few times per week. If you are new to meditation, you may start out with 15 minutes, and gradually increase the duration. It takes most people on average 15 minutes to calm and hush the mental chatter of the mind.

Keep a journal near to record any insights that may come up during the practice.

