

Living from the Heart

A fresh take on ancient wisdom for living a wholehearted human life.

Shamatha – Vipasyana (Mindfulness-Awareness) Meditation

Six Points of Posture

1. The **seat** is centered and balanced on the cushion or chair, not leaning forward, backward, left or right.
2. The **legs** are crossed in front of the cushion, resting easily without tension. Sitting in a chair, the feet are flat on the floor and the knees bend at a 90 degree angle.
3. The **torso** rises from the seat, with a strong back and a soft front. The spine and ribs support the body's weight and the muscles are relaxed. Sitting in a chair, the back is upright rather than leaning on the back of the chair.
4. The **hands** rest neutrally on the thighs, palms down, without reaching forward or pulling back. The elbows form a 90 degree angle and the muscles of the shoulders and arms are relaxed.
5. The **lips** and jaws are relaxed and partially open. Breathe through the nose if possible.
6. The **eyes** are gently open and rest with a soft gaze on the floor about 1.5 to 2 meters in front of the seat. A *soft gaze* means you could see the headlines of a newspaper but not read the article.

Place the Attention on Breathing

From the stable base of the posture, lightly place the mind's attention on the sensation of breathing in the body. Find one specific sensation to be the object of attention. This could be anywhere between the tips of the nostrils where air enters and leaves the nose, through the back of the mouth and windpipe, down into the chest, lungs and diaphragm. The attention is very gentle, resting easily rather than focusing or concentrating.

When Thoughts Arise

As you rest the attention on the sensation of breathing, thoughts will likely arise. When this happens, gently acknowledge the thought (you could say "thinking" to yourself) and return the attention to the sensation of breathing. Then, when the next thought arises, do the same thing. This is the practice of mindfulness meditation.