

Class 1 8/29/06

Sitting Postures

We call the posture of your legs in Sitting Zen as "lotus posture." There are three kinds of lotus -- half lotus, full lotus and easy lotus.



No matter which posture that you practice with, sitting stably is most important.

The following two kinds of mudra are simple, easy to learn, wonderful, absolute and meaningful --- Diamond Lotus Mudra & Meditation Mudra

Five Key Principles Concerning Zen Meditation

1. Sit like a colossal bell

Regardless of your sitting posture, whether in half lotus, full lotus or easy pose, you need to sit motionlessly like a stable, colossal bell. You must not lean or slouch in any way.

2. Sit up straight like a soaring pine

In meditation, a straight spine like a soaring pine can help to maintain all your organs in their proper positions and function efficiently. And sitting up straight can facilitate Qi circulation and help you enter meditative states.

3. Relax physically and mentally

Modern life is so fast-paced that people easily tense up without realizing. Therefore in meditation, remember to relax your body and your mind. Let go of all unrelated

sensations and focus completely on the target Chakra (or breathing). Only through complete relaxation can you fully focus and enter meditative states.

4. Empty your mind

With wondering thoughts no one can attain any state of meditation. It is important for you to remove all the thoughts from your mind and try not to think of anything. How? A good way is by concentrating on the target Chakra (or breathing). As you know, when you focus intensely on a task, there could be nothing else in your mind except the task at hand. Focusing on a Chakra (or breathing) achieves exactly the same effect.

5. Focus

Focusing on the target Chakra (or breathing) is very important in meditation. Intense concentration can help you to have less random thoughts as well as to prevent falling asleep. The reason that some practitioners fall asleep in meditation is because with a relaxed body and mind they tend to lose spiritual focus too.

Guidelines for Sitting Zen

1. Create a suitable environment

- * Good Ventilation
- * Avoid wind from your back
- * Quiet surroundings
- * Adequate Brightness

2. Wear loose-fitting clothes

Tight clothes and belt are not suitable for Zen meditation. You just can't breath with them. Tight clothing makes you uncomfortable as well as disrupts your Qi circulation. Wear something comfortable and relaxing. Women should not wear

shorts or short skirts for they are not suitable for the meditation posture.

3. Ideal time

Basically you can practice at any time. For example, 6 or 7 in the morning, or for those who need to rush to work or school, 9 or 10 at night. This is the time you usually took a shower already, too early for bed and no one bothers you. It is not recommended to practice Sitting Zen between midnight and 5am. This is the time for sleeping. Don't mess up your body clock.

4. Good mood and not tired

You cannot benefit from Zen meditation when you are either exhausted or in a bad mood. Therefore, if you must meditate even when you are in a bad mood, try to cultivate your mood first. If you are exhausted, you may fall asleep during Sitting Zen. Also keep in mind that you need always be joyful while you meditate.

5. Practice Sitting Zen daily

"Rome wasn't built in a day." Similarly, in order to benefit from Zen meditation, you must focus on the fundamentals, such as breathing, Chakras focusing, Qi utilization, etc. And meditate at the same time daily is highly recommended.

The Qi incubation is more than just breathing correctly. Yes, breathing does directly relate to our life force. Life ends once the breathing stops. Breathing correctly is very important and is the first step toward Qi development.

Belly Breathing

After you are able to breathe smoothly and slowly, you can move on to practice

belly-driven breathing. That is to inhale by expanding your tummy, and exhale by contracting it. Breathe naturally. Not fast nor slow. Do not breathe too full. At the beginning, do intentionally over expand your tummy. After you master it, and you can breathe with your belly more naturally, you can then expand your tummy naturally. You need to realize that healthy breathing is silent. Noisy breathing is a sign of unhealthiness.