

Class 1: 2/5/2008

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.

Most people are not used to this physical configuration in the beginning, and it causes numbness and soreness in legs and back. However, we should be able to move the legs whenever we wanted to. Or raise the arms whenever we wanted to. Same to our sitting postures -- we should be able to do it as well and as long as we wanted to. Starting from 5 minutes with intense pain, soreness and numbness, over time we will be able to do much longer with less pain, soreness and numbness. It is only a matter of determination. As you are more used to this posture, you will even have the tendency to assume it when sitting in a chair. This is because it feels comfortable and it straightens up the back naturally.

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 (energy) circulation. Wear something comfortable and relaxing.

3. Ideal time

Basically you can practice at any time. The best time, however, is about 6 or 7 am in the morning. For those who need to rush to work or school, 9 or 10 at night is fine also. 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.