

Raja Yoga

The Art of Seated Meditation

By Darren Main

Learning to meditate is not hard, but practicing can be challenging. There are many forms of meditation, and it is good to explore many techniques until you find a style that is suited for you. If you haven't had much experience with meditation, I recommend you take a meditation class or workshop from an experienced teacher. There are many classes around, and I offer regular workshops myself. Visit the 'Schedule of Events' page of my website for a listing. (www.darrenmain.com)

If you don't know a technique, I invite you to use this simple yet effective one. Sit in a comfortable upright position. Some people sit cross-legged, and others prefer to kneel. It is also acceptable to sit in a straight-backed chair. Allow your body to relax and take a few deep full breaths to shift into a quiet space.

As you quiet down, focus on the sensation of the breath flowing in and out of the nose where it touches the upper lip. There is no need to change the quality of the breath. Simply watch it move in and out. You will find that the mind will frequently wander. This is natural. Once you notice that the mind has wandered, bring the mind gently back to the breath.

The whole process is one of bringing the mind back to the breath over and over again. Try not to be discouraged by how much the mind will wander. You have been letting your mind wander without discipline for many years. You can't expect it to sit still overnight. Rather

than chastising yourself for letting your mind wander, praise yourself for noticing and gently bring it back.

I recommend you sit for at least twenty minutes each day. You can time yourself by placing a watch on your lap. Figure out where the big hand will be in twenty minutes, and then crack your eyes when you think you are getting close. In time you will be able to feel how long to sit.

One last thought. If you have a roommate or partner who is willing to meditate with you, you will find it is much easier. There are also meditation groups in most cities and towns. See if you can find one to sit with.

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