



## **Exercise 10: Silent Meditation**

### **SILENT MEDITATION**

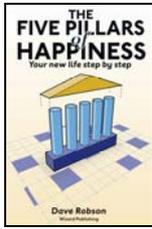
The following notes describe my very simple meditation technique, which is specifically designed to be easy to do. Meditation, in my opinion, is so important I've included these notes as a download that you can print to keep them handy, even though this exercise requires no writing.

You can meditate for as long as you like – even five minutes twice a week is better than nothing, though about an hour every day seems to be ideal. Most people choose to meditate first thing in the morning, but that's optional.

*Please note: whatever your religious persuasion, if any, there should be no conflict between your religion and this meditation because meditation is non-religious.*

Sit up either in a straight-backed chair, on the floor or on cushions, with your back straight but not tense. Avoid slouching, reclining or lying down unless you have to. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths and you will find your breathing easily supports your upper body without creating tension. You are going to sit in silence for the length of time you have allocated, so turn off your mobile, switch on your answer machine and put out your 'do not disturb' sign.

During your meditation, almost certainly many thoughts and feelings will come into your mind.



Exercise 10 cont. /

*The trick is **not** to try to stop those thoughts and feelings, nor to judge them, suppress them, hang on to them, control them or get involved with them. Instead simply observe them objectively as if they were someone else's. Take a step back, detach yourself, become an impartial witness, and allow your thoughts and feelings to come and go at will. **Wait to see what comes clear to you in the fullness of time without trying to control the outcome or work anything out.***

Don't analyse. There's a knack to witnessing in complete objectivity and it may take you a while to get the hang of it. Don't give up – persevere.

During the meditation you may notice you have lost your witnessing quality and gone off on a tangent with some thought or another. When you become aware of that, simply stop, bring yourself back and start again. Don't worry about it or judge yourself harshly. In the early days you may have to do that 100 times in fifteen minutes. No matter, just start again.

Many people mistakenly assume that when doing this meditation they are required to still the mind, but I doubt if any of us can do that. It is impossible because we have been educated to develop our minds to the maximum, and we're trained to stimulate our minds and to solve our problems by intellectual analysis.



Exercise 10 cont. /

Another common misapprehension is that meditation will be relaxing. This is not necessarily true, especially in the beginning. It's impossible to know what will happen because you are setting up a condition in which your unconscious mind can reveal its secrets, and some of them might be painful. Nevertheless, you need to know what's going on in your unconscious – that's the whole purpose. Only that awareness will give you the power to make better choices.

*So don't even bother to try to still your mind, because you'll be wasting your time and missing the point. Just witness – even if you are witnessing chaos and turmoil. Eventually, if you keep doing this every day or whenever you can, moments of stillness will spontaneously occur. At first it may be only for a millisecond, but that glimpse could be just enough, if you are alert and aware, to begin a transformation.*

So please begin, and remember, *allow whatever thoughts and feelings arise and be a witness. Don't interfere. Don't judge.* No work is involved, it is an experience of no-effort. If you find yourself making an effort, you've missed the point. Try again. Remember, this particular meditation is about non-doing so give yourself permission to do absolutely nothing for whatever time you have allotted.

The art of witnessing is an experiment in letting go of control. Many people find this prospect potentially frightening because of course no-one knows what might happen, but unless you are willing to experience whatever your unconscious mind reveals, you will never be able to clear the way for your heart to reveal itself. So be of good courage and almost certainly you'll find in retrospect that the let-go experience wasn't so scary after all – on the contrary, it was fascinating and insightful.



Exercise 10 cont. /

**VERY IMPORTANT:** You will notice there is no mantra, no candles, no incense, no music, no watching the breath and no other devices for your mind to focus on. This is where this particular meditation differs radically from most others. *The whole point is to let your mind be unfocused* so you can find out what's really hidden in your unconscious mind that wants to arise and reveal itself, warts and all.