

Dr. Leonard McGill / Energysexuality.com

The Quiet Mind Technique

(Start by practicing this exercise 5 minutes/day for 1 week. Continue for 10 minutes/day the second week, and 15/day the third week. Practice for 20 minutes/day for the fourth week, and then continue to practice the Quiet Mind technique daily for 20 minutes:



Thoughts can stream across your mind like clouds blown by a summer wind. They can also grip you with a heavy hand, demanding your attention. Behind your thoughts lies their physical life inside your body. It's in your brain,

over the vast fields of cells surging with electrical energy, that thoughts take a physical life in the form of tiny energy

storms. Every thought is literally a flash of inspiration, a unique pattern of electrical energy in your brain.

But a thought's physical life doesn't stop there. The brain is connected to every cell in your body through nerves. When mental stress upsets our peace of mind, physical stress results. Our thoughts have the power to physically round our shoulders and speed up our hearts. Because our minds and bodies are literally one and inseparable, we can use our minds to achieve calm bodies.



MENTAL ABUSE

It's rarely the situations we encounter in life that cause our stress reactions. Most times it's our perception of the situations we find ourselves in that causes our brains to go into overload. A small annoyance can trigger an emotional reaction completely out of proportion to the situation.

For instance, you're running late to a movie. So, you throw on your clothes, stuff your keys in your pocket, and hit the road.

Then you hit a traffic jam. Whammo! The pressure you were already feeling has sensitized your nervous system. All it took was seeing all those brake lights in front of you for your muscles to tighten.

Dr. Wayne Dyer, the popular self-help author, liked to point out that if you squeeze an orange, what comes out is orange juice. If you squeeze a person by putting them in a stressful situation, and they respond by becoming angry or nervous, that anger or nervousness is inside of them, not in the situation.

What causes your particular nervous system to tighten your muscles is very different from what leads mine down that same path. But both of us can decrease the chance of our bodies betraying us if we change how our minds work. By

using some simple mental techniques we can change the way we perceive stressful situations.

Instead of coming up with new ways to deal with every stress in our lives, we can train our nervous systems to



handle all stress in a better way. In the pages ahead you'll learn how to calm your mind and affect the unconscious

patterns ingrained in your nervous system. With practice you'll be able to calm your body.

YOU BE THE JUDGE

The part of your mind most responsible for creating tight muscles is the one that is forever judging the world. This part of the mind takes the sights, sounds, smells, etc. it receives from the world, or thinks about past or future experiences, and as a result changes your body after evaluating your experience.

The situation where you're late for a movie and get caught in traffic is a good example. Your mind takes in all those brake lights. It feels you slow to a stop. It notes that you're going to be late. It then makes judgments about the situation that can cause your muscles to tighten.

It's difficult to stop your mind from these activities. That's what your mind does. The problem doesn't lie in thinking these thoughts. It's in being connected to them so closely. Most people are so connected to their thoughts that it's impossible for them to separate themselves from them. It may surprise you that your thoughts are not you! It's possible to step back from your thoughts and let them pass by you as if you were watching them from a distance. If you constantly feel connected to tense thoughts your nervous

system becomes like a rope being twisted tighter and tighter. If you consistently step back and observe your thoughts, you untie those knots.

“Our actions are all too frequently driven rather than undertaken in awareness, driven by those perfectly ordinary thoughts and impulses that run through the mind like a coursing river, if not a waterfall...Meditation means learning how to get out of this current, sit by its bank and listen to it, learn from it, and then use its energies to guide us rather than to tyrannize us.” ...From

“Wherever You Go There You Are” by Jon Kabat-Zinn.

THE QUIET MIND TECHNIQUE

Note: The Quiet Mind technique described below is a simplified version of meditation, the practice of which has been shown in hundreds of studies to reduce blood pressure, heart rate and muscle tension, as well as decrease anxiety and depression. It's the closest thing to a mental tonic you'll ever find.

In practicing this technique you'll sit peacefully in a quiet place with your eyes closed for 20 minutes. Your mission: Notice how your breath moves in and out of your body, counting “one” to yourself every time you breathe out. As we've seen, breathing is a powerful link between your mind and body. By focusing your attention on it, you give your mind a break.

Find a spot in your home or office where you can go at the same time each day to be alone for 20 minutes. The best time is first thing in the morning, right after your wake-up routine and a few simple stretching exercises. Your energy will be fresh and your muscles limber. However, other times of day will do, such as at lunch or right before going to bed. In fact, if you have trouble sleeping practicing meditation is a good way to calm down.

While not essential, it's best to practice the Quiet Mind technique at the same time and place each day. You'll be conditioning your nervous system to quiet down just by sitting in familiar circumstances. Sometimes your bedroom is best because you can close the door on the rest of the world.

You should be able to sit comfortably. If you don't have a suitable chair or couch, try sitting cross-legged on your bed with some pillows propped behind you. It may be too hectic at home. In this case you can walk or drive to a quiet spot like a park before or after work or during lunch to practice the technique. Once you've found a spot, sit comfortably, with your



wrists resting on your knees, palms facing up.

Close your eyes. Take a minute to scan your body for tension. Start with a deep breath in and then give a long sigh as you breathe out. As the breath goes out of your body feel your shoulders drop.

Now focus your attention on your head, face and neck. Are there any tight muscles that could be released?

If so, take a deep breath in, and as you exhale see your breath flowing out of the tight spot, feeling the muscles in and around the area relax.



Continue scanning your body from the neck down. Focus on your shoulders, your arms, your chest, your upper back, lower back and belly. Then go down to your legs and feet.

As you move through your body, find the tense spots, breathe through them and let go of any tension. This body scan should only take a minute.

- Now focus on your breath. Notice how it flows into your

body, hesitates a bit, and then flows back out. Your natural inclination may be to control your breath in some way. For example, you may try to breathe deeper. Don't. Just watch the breath. Let it do whatever it wants.

- If you start to feel anxious, try to let that feeling go. If your anxiety builds you can take a few deep breaths in and out, stretch your arms up in the air, relax, and then go back to observing your breath. If you start to feel really anxious then get up, do some stretching exercises, and try the Quiet Mind technique another time.

- Assuming you don't develop anxiety, as the breath flows out of your body silently count "one" to yourself. Repeat this process, watching your breath and counting "one" with each exhalation, for the next 20 minutes.

- As you continue to breathe you may notice that your breath gets slower and shallower. Don't be concerned. As your mind quiets your body quiets, too, and it requires less oxygen.

- It gets easier with practice. Within two to three weeks you should start to notice that you are feeling more peaceful.



THE WANDER OF IT ALL

The Quiet Mind is a simple technique, but it may not be as easy to practice as it sounds. For one thing, when most people first try it they are able to focus on their breath for only a breath or two. Other thoughts---the same ones constantly going through your mind when you're not concentrating on your breath---will crowd into your head.

You'll be sitting there watching your breath, counting "one" every time you breath out, and all of a sudden you'll realize that you're thinking about what you're going to have for lunch, or how your back feels tight, or how you need to call your mother... any one of a thousand thoughts will have crept into your mind, and you'll notice yourself running after them, chasing after them as if you had a net and were chasing butterflies.

You'll realize that you promised yourself that for 20 minutes you were just going to watch your breath go in and out of your body, counting "one" every time you let a breath out. You'll go back to watching and counting.

Within 2 or 3 breaths you'll catch yourself thinking about filling up the car with gas or wondering if the bathroom needs to be cleaned... And so it will go for 20 minutes, you concentrating on the breath, losing that concentration to a thought passing in your mind, remembering that you should be counting breaths, and going back to counting your breaths until the next thought crosses your mind.

Other things may happen during your Quiet Mind sessions. For example, you may get sleepy. This is because your body has been trained to go to sleep when you close your eyes and relax. That's why it's best to sit up when you practice. You may also find yourself thinking "worry thoughts".

When you quiet your mind, all your worries get a chance to jump onto the stage of your attention. When this happens, and it will, you need to remind yourself that this is a time for



letting go instead of holding on. It's one of the few times you can sit back and observe your worries from a distance, choosing to watch them rather than figuring out how to solve them.

You can also get frustrated thinking about how lame you are at quieting your mind. “I’ll never be good at this,” an inner voice might chime. “All I can concentrate on is how good some french fries would taste right now!”

It’s natural for ideas to flow across your mind. This is the way your mind works. Don’t fight it. Sometimes you’ll be able to go for ten seconds before a thought takes you away. Other times it may be a full minute. The length of time between thoughts isn’t important: Any Quiet Mind session is a good session.

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