

# Meditation practice

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It is important to keep the practice simple, so you will be able to return to it easily wherever you are.

What matters is not so much the length of the practice but the quality of awareness. You can however choose to set up an alarm for 15 mins or 20 mins to create a specific frame where you will have time to let go.

The experience often manifests in stages as follow:

1. **Seek stillness of body** – sit comfortably anywhere that is quiet, and where you can hold a comfortable posture with your back straight. If necessary place a cushion to support your lower back.
2. **Install concentration (pratyahara)** – choose to count 5 long breaths, counting when you exhale. For example mentally repeat inhale – exhale 5, inhale – exhale 4, inhale – exhale 3 .... etc until you reach 0. If on a specific day you feel your mind is very active, do 10 breaths, counting from 10 to 0.
3. **Choose a simple technique (dharana)** – one that is very useful is to pay attention to all the various sounds around you. Start by the obvious sounds that you hear in the room where you are, than extend your awareness and focus by catching sounds outside the room (for example hearing a plane in the sky, or some far away sounds coming from the street). You may hear different sounds at once, from a grosser level to a more subtle one. Be present, observe as it is, do not react to what you hear. Become an observer.
4. **Merge your awareness with space and silence (dhyana)** - after a few minutes of the above practice, you will naturally notice an expansion of awareness taking place, a sense of lightness, stillness, and a feeling of yourself becoming more spacious within, as well as more centered. This is when meditation becomes an uplifting experience. Retain this state as long as possible.
5. **Finish by rubbing your hands** together quickly to warm them up, and bring the palms over your closed eyes, enjoying a few uplifting breath while absorbing the darkness and warmth in front of your closed eyes.
6. You should feel calmer and refreshed.

Marianne Simonin (B.W.Y) is a qualified yoga and meditation teacher for 30 years.

You can listen to the live version on YouTube (click to open link, or type my name in) [Marianne Simonin](#)

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