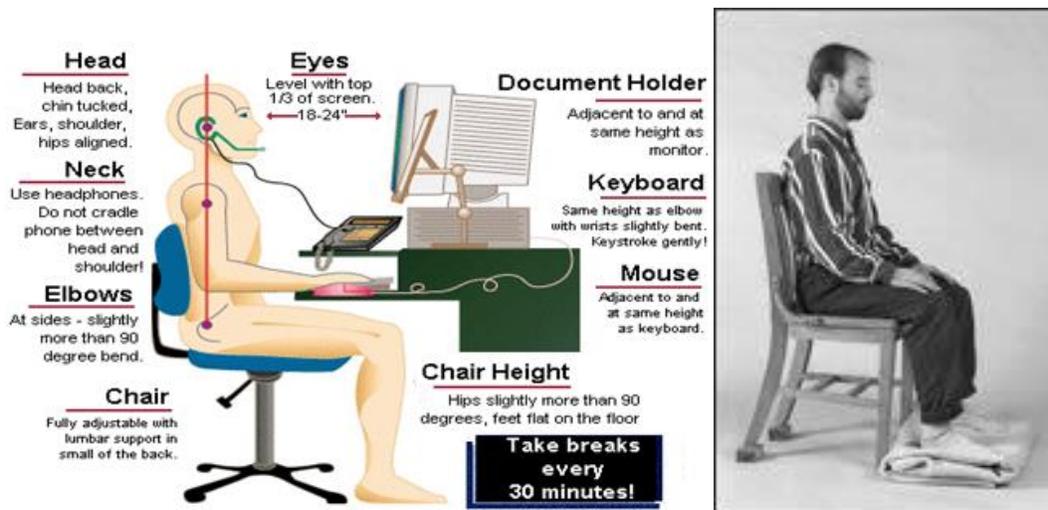


MEDITATION AND BREATHING TECHNIQUE FOR PAIN & STRESS RELIEF and CORRECT SITTING POSTURE – How to reach the state of stillness and nothingness - by CHR Health Centre – Justine Vo



The state of stillness of the body and mind provides us the most relaxing, peaceful and repairing moment. When I performed cranial work and had reached the still point (i.e., when the waving movement in the skull temporarily stopped, then resumed regularly and calmly), my patients, including hyperactive children and adults with severe stress or migraines, entered the most tranquil state by sighing and falling asleep in a peaceful and regular breathing rhythm. Anyone can partially reach this state of stillness through proper meditation and breathing technique, even if we only have a minute or two to do it.

Here is what you need to know and do:

1. Sit in a tranquil, aerated, and comfortable room – Make sure the room has enough oxygen and air circulation, or keep the door/window open. Insufficient oxygen and air in the room may cause dizziness, nausea and fatigue. The room temperature needs to be comfortable, not too hot and not too cold. Coldness causes the body to stiffen up and heat causes dehydration. When you have grasped this relaxing breathing technique, you can meditate anywhere, even at your desk, in a car or everywhere else.

2. Keep the body ‘straight’ and ‘flowing’, and all muscles/soft tissues rested while meditating – Actually, you should maintain the proper posture anywhere you sit particularly at work and while watching TV, to prevent health problems, pain and stiffness. Sit straight in a hard chair (not sunken), with the feet rested flat on the floor (remove high heel shoes) and use a feet booster if necessary. Keep the back and neck straight (not leaned obliquely forward or backward), supported by a cushion or meshed back support if needed. Keep the following joints at a 90-degree angle (curvature): feet, ankle and leg; knee and leg; leg, hip and back; arm and elbow. Keep the arm alongside the body, with the palm of the hands rested comfortably flat on the lap, the arm rest or the desk. This means that all parts of your body are either vertical or horizontal, straight and symmetrical. Any position which deviated from the straight and resting line will cause the muscles, soft tissues and joints to contract and activate unnecessarily. Continuous contraction of muscles and joints during sitting will cause the muscles and joints to shorten, adhere and stiffen when you stand up. For example, if you put the legs forward (away from the chair) or backward (below the chair), or if you cross your legs or feet, you can feel all the feet, ankles, legs, knees and hips muscles contract. Or if you turn the palm upward to hold the fingers pointed up as taught in Yoga and meditation classes, you can feel the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, neck and head muscles engaged and contracted. This will aggravate the stiffness and pain which already exist in the affected areas. If you prefer to sit in a lotus position (sitting on the floor with legs bent inward and crossed), make sure that you put one leg in front of and next to the other (not on top of the other), and change the legs position frequently, to allow the blood to circulate. The position of the back, neck, arms and hands is the same as described above. Remember that the lotus position, too often, will cause your legs and feet to bend inward, resulting in potential pain in the feet, ankle, knee and leg caused by walking on the outside edge of the feet.

3. Close your eyes slightly and start to breathe in and out gently, deeply, slowly, and regularly – Breathe in through your nose slowly, deeply and gently through your chest (spontaneous breathing, not abdominal/diaphragmatic breathing) while feeling your chest cavity slowly expand and your diaphragm and belly descend. Pause for one second, do not rush. Then gently breathe out through your nose (not through your mouth which will cause hyperventilation and exhaustion) while feeling your chest slowly deflate. Pause gently at the end of your exhalation, then resume the breathing cycle. You will reach a state of near stillness at the end of each exhalation and during its apnea (temporary stop of breathing). This effortless breathing technique allows you to regulate your respiratory system, gently release the tension of and mobilize your body muscles/soft tissues/joints, and calm your mind, your stress and your pain throughout the body.

4. Think of ‘nothing’ and just follow your breath – True relaxation and calming of the physical and mental stress involves the ability to reach the state of nothingness and stillness. So for a moment, let go of every thought and just focus on your calm breathing. Positive imaginary thinking to the mind is a temporary quick

fix that involves effort and concentration. Effortless breathing while allowing the body and mind to enter the state of stillness and nothingness is the most natural and effective self-cure to reduce both the physical and the mental stress. The body wants and needs those moments of calmness and stillness to repair, restore, recharge and rebuild. With this breathing technique blended in your Tai Chi and Qi Gong practice, you will achieve an amazing state of relief, flowing, and calmness. When the body is fully relaxed, the stiffness and adherence of muscles and soft tissues are released, you will experience a better flow of the body fluids, blood, and energy, and less pain. Enjoy!

Try this technique yourself and feel the beneficial results of spontaneous, natural, gentle and calming breathing and relaxation technique. With this technique, you only need one minute, or two minutes, up to five minutes to relax and recharge your body and mind. Repeat the brief meditation session as needed throughout the day. Once the technique is mastered, you can instantly enter this state to relax and recharge your body and mind at any moment, anywhere you stand, sit or lie down.

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