

# Introducing Vipassanā Insight Meditation

Bhante Bodhidhamma · Guided Meditations · 39:46

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Make sure you're sitting comfortably and upright. Lift up through the top of the head. Natural curvature in the spine. Shoulders relaxed. Jaw relaxed. Lips together, teeth apart. Eyes gently closed. And hands on the lap, palms facing upward. Probably the most comfortable.

Now placing the attention on the abdomen. Just feeling the rising and falling sensations caused by the breath. Get in touch with those sensations. What do they feel like? And use the noting word rising, falling to keep the thinking mind from wandering. And just notice whether it's a long breath or a short breath, tight, relaxed and so on.

If the mind is wandering, recognise and acknowledge what it's doing. Thinking, thinking, worrying, worrying, dreaming, dreaming and so on. And then bring the attention back to the breath.

As we settle down, we may find there's a gap at the end of the out-breath before the in-breath begins again. Using the noting word touching, find a sensation you can feel, such as the touch of your hands. So now relax and attend to the sensations caused by the breath. Rising, falling, touching.

If the mind is wandering, recognise and acknowledge what it's doing. Thinking, thinking, worrying, worrying, dreaming, dreaming, and so on, and bring that attention back to the abdomen.

You may also begin to feel sleepy or lethargic, in which case sit upright, lift the body up through the top of the head. And if that's not enough, open the eyes a little to let the light in. But don't look around. And if that's not enough to keep us awake, you can stand up. We can practice *vipassanā* standing up just as well.

Now begin to feel the sensations caused by the breath as neutral and pleasant. Pleasant, neutral sensations, relaxing the body, calming the heart, silencing the mind. Rising, falling, touching.

We can gently focus in and notice the very start of the in-breath and the very end. The very beginning of the out-breath and the very end. Rising, falling, touching.

When we feel somewhat settled on the breath, we can allow whatever draws our attention to be felt and observed in the same way. Should a sound draw us, we are interested in the process of hearing. Noting hearing, hearing. Should a feeling arise in the body, pleasant or unpleasant, note it. Pain, pain. Aching, aching. Tickling, tickling. Anxiety, anxiety. Excitement, excitement. And just as with the breath, observe it, feel it, experience it fully.

And don't forget, if we find the mind wandering, just note what it's doing and start again with the breath.

The breath is our reference point and anchor. It's where we always start again. Rising, falling, touching.

Noting, feeling, observing anything that draws our attention. Can you see how everything we are experiencing is arising and passing away?

Can you note your reaction to what you're experiencing? If it is unpleasant, aversion, aversion, fear, fear. If it's pleasant, desiring, desiring, wanting, wanting.

Noting, feeling, observing anything that draws our attention, can we see that everything is arising of its own accord, not under our control? Sensations, feelings, emotions and moods arise and pass away whether we want them to or not. Thoughts and imagining draw us away whether we want to go away or not.

Noting, feeling, observing anything that draws our attention, can we sense the distance, a separation, between the observer, the feeler, the knower, the experiencer, and what it is that's being experienced?

So, putting aside all instructions, all thoughts, let's just note, observe, feel, experience anything that draws our attention within the field of awareness. Begin with the breath. Rising, falling, touching.

When we come to the end of a sitting, we can reflect on three things. How diligent was I in bringing myself back into the presenting moment? How did I deal with the various bodily and mental states that arose? Was I skillful or unskillful? Was I confused? Was I aware of one or all of the three characteristics at any time? Impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self.

Can we now make a resolution for the next sitting?

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