

Week 1 Practice

Doing is the enemy of becoming.

Often, we stay busy so we don't have to stay present to ourselves. There are countless forms of distracting activities, from work to eating, from shopping to watching television, from solving problems in the world to solving problems in our head, from socializing to social media. Thus, recognizing who we already are begins simply with a cessation of our doing. This can be very difficult to do, so it can help to have something to focus on while we do it.

Let's begin with your breath.

This week, spend the first ten minutes and the last ten minutes of every day doing nothing but focusing on your breath. Find a quiet and comfortable place to do so. When you are ready, turn your attention to your breath. Select one place in your body where the breathing sensations are most vivid—your nostrils, stomach, or chest, for instance. As you breathe, attend to the many sensations there. When your mind wanders—as it certainly will—simply notice whatever mental activity it wandered to, and then return your attention to the breath. By doing so, you will be practicing doing nothing. At times, this will feel tedious and boring and useless.

Over time, however, it can change everything.