

Wise Concentration Weekly Practice Guides

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Week 1 – Preparing for Concentration Practice

- 1) Before getting into position to meditate, check how well your energy is balanced.
 - a) It might be good to exercise before settling down in order to counter either restlessness or sloth and torpor. Walking vigorously can arouse energy. Walking slowly and mindfully can also help balance energy.
 - b) If you're very tired, rest a while until you feel refreshed.
- 2) During meditation, be aware of how much effort you're using to stay in the moment.
- 3) If a Hindrance arises during meditation, use any suitable antidotes listed on the back of this page.

Week 2 – Establishing Concentration

- 1) Continue to use the exercises from last week when they're called for.
- 2) When you're about to meditate, note whether anything is bothering you and if so, set the intention to "put it aside" while you're practicing.
- 3) Use any mental pleasure that arises to encourage and fuel your efforts to concentrate. Also use any moments of calm, clarity and joy by noticing and appreciating them.
- 4) Imagine simply dropping anything that distracts the attention from resting on the breath.
- 5) If necessary, use more energy to stay focused on the breath, or shift to a more difficult place to feel the breathing such as the back of the ribs or the nostrils.

Week 3 – Prolonging Concentration

- 1) Continue the exercises from the past couple weeks.
- 2) Think of yourself as easily letting go of anything other than the breath, becoming lighter as you continue to do so.
- 3) Encourage acceptance whenever distractions arise, and lightly let go of them, simply returning to the breath. Enjoy the pleasant sense of patience.
- 4) Appreciate the wonder of each breath as it keeps the body alive. Feel it energize and calm the entire body.

Week 4 – Benefits of Concentration

After having been concentrated, contemplate any of the following:

- 1) The 3 characteristics of all experience: impermanence, dukkha and anatta (no constant, separate self)
- 2) Whether having concentrated helps you:
 - a) make better choices
 - b) notice and let go of harmful mental habits
 - c) choose freedom and happiness
- 3) How concentration helps your practice with the rest of the Eightfold Path.

Finally, be the peace you seek in the world.

HINDRANCES & ANTIDOTES

For all Hindrances, stop feeding them with supporting thoughts; *turn the mind away*. Don't investigate, just get through "surf zone" – use Antidotes below

Desire –

Think of things you're grateful for & ways to be generous

Consider drawbacks of desire's object (consequences, impermanence)

Ill will –

Practice metta

Remember everyone owns their own karma

Sloth & torpor –

Sit up straight, stand up, raise an arm, or walk vigorously

Let light into your vision to stimulate the brain

Restlessness –

Metta practice

Imagine enough space to hold the restlessness

Doubt –

Remember your intent in sitting

Contemplate your virtues and the dharma's

Tools for achieving Samadhi

1. Directing attention ***vittaka***
2. Holding it there ***vicara***
3. Rapture (somatic, pleasure) ***piti***
4. Happiness (mental/emotional sense of wellbeing) ***sukha***
3-4 are results of 1-2, use them to go deeper, until:
5. Attention is stable ***ekvagata***