

# Improve your awareness



## – a simple instruction for looking inwards

This is a simple guide on how to begin awareness training. As your skills grow, you can add more delicate observation tasks, but let's start simple. This instruction comes from my own experience in learning and teaching meditation. The source is Vipassana meditation, as described in Buddhist literature for over 2,500 years. However, the way I teach it here is not religious at all. It is pure mindfulness training—a workout for your brain. A practice to become more aware of what is happening in and around you.

### How to Start Awareness Meditation?

- **Set aside a specific time.** Start with a dedicated stretch of time—5 minutes every day is a good start. Use a timer so you don't have to watch the clock.
- **Prepare a proper space.** Make sure you won't be disturbed. Switch your mobile to flight mode.
- **Sit comfortably.** You can sit on the edge of a chair or on a cushion on the floor. It doesn't matter as long as you are relaxed yet alert. Place your hands comfortably on your legs—maybe like the astronaut in the picture.
- **Close your eyes if that feels comfortable.** I recommend it, as I find it easier. If you prefer to keep them open, let them rest softly on a spot a few meters in front of you without focusing.
- **Observe your breath.** Your breath is your anchor to stay alert and curious. Pick a specific part of your respiratory system—nostrils, lungs, or diaphragm—to focus on. Initially, you can take a few deep breaths, then let your body breathe naturally.
- **Notice the breath.** When you inhale, simply know you are inhaling. When you exhale, simply know you are exhaling. You can silently repeat the words “in” and “out” to support your observation.
- **Keep it relaxed.** Do not focus too tensely on your breath. This is not a concentration exercise; it is awareness training. The goal is to keep your mind awake but not overly engaged.
- **Observe your mind.** Soon, your mind will wander—thinking, feeling, or noticing sensations. This is normal, like a child that cannot sit still. Your task is simply to notice when your mind drifts. Whatever it does, just be aware of it.
- **Use simple words if helpful.** Mark what you notice with short words like: hearing, thinking, pain, knee, worrying, anger, boredom...
- **Avoid analysis.** Don't investigate deeper, blame yourself, or overthink. Simply noticing what is happening is already perfect. Give yourself a smile.
- **Return to your breath.** Gently bring your awareness back to your breath, in and out, until your mind wanders again.
- **End the session mindfully.** When the timer or bell stops, be proud of what you accomplished. Some days it's easy to focus; other days your mind may be restless. Some days your sitting will be calm, some days chaotic. It doesn't matter—you did your training. That is what counts.

**Great job. Congratulations!**