

Simple Meditation

A wonderfully simple method of meditating was laid out by a friend of mine from graduate school, Raymond Reed Hardy in his book *Zen Master*. What he suggests is not new – it is just the simplest possible beginning. Here are the instructions.

Sit down, back straight, eyes slightly open, cast your eyes downward at a 45 degree angle and maintain a soft focus (don't sharpen your visual attention to any particular point).

If you are uncomfortable sitting cross legged, sit in a chair with your feet flat on the floor. Allow your mind to come to rest on your breath. Each time you find your mind has drifted away, release it from that train of thought and then allow it to settle again on the breath.

That's it. Do it for a few minutes a day.

How can such a simple practice work? It builds your "attentional muscles." Each time you notice that your mind has wandered you are strengthening your ability to notice and to regain focus.