

# Inner Silence Meditation

by Myra Walden

The purpose of this practice is to reduce desperation, urgency, reactivity, and impulsivity and promote self-regulation, self-control, equanimity and calmness when our needs are not met. In a calm state, we can gain clarity about ways to meet our needs, or come to peace when a need of ours cannot be met in a satisfying way.

## THE NEED

Identify a need of yours that is not met at this time. Pare it down to one word, e.g., safety, tenderness, understanding, respect, appreciation, freedom, care. Now, remember or imagine a time when this need was fully met. What physical sensations and emotions do you experience in this moment? Sit in this energy and connect with it. If you can't think of a need, use the word *peace*.

You will repeat the need in the abstract form, independent of any person taking any action, and you will repeat the need without attachment or longing. This is not an affirmation or a law of attraction exercise. It's an awareness practice. You are paying attention to the need as it exists within you in its energetic form, i.e., the felt sense in your body that lets you know that you have this need.

## RELAXATION (3 MINUTES)

1. Set a timer for 10–15 minutes, or longer if you want; choose a gentle tone so that you are not startled when it rings.
2. Sit in a comfortable chair with your back fully supported. The back, neck, and head form a straight line. When your head tilts during the meditation period, bring it back to neutral. The feet are flat on the floor; the knees below the feet; the elbows below the shoulders; the arms resting on your lap; and the chin is parallel to the floor.
3. Take three deep breaths. Follow the air as it enters and leaves the nostrils.
4. Ring a Tibetan bowl if you have one (or find a video online), and follow the sound until it ends.
5. Bring your attention to each part of your body: the feet, the legs, the buttocks, the pelvic area, the lower back, the middle back, the upper back, the abdomen, the stomach, the

chest, the shoulders, the arms, the hands, the fingers, the neck, the face, the forehead, the eyebrows, the space between the eyebrows, the eyelids, the eyes, the cheeks, the mouth, the tongue, the chin, the jaw. Press the index finger and thumb on one hand, then on the other. Do this a few times and notice the tension on your face dissipate.

6. Survey the body to discover areas of tension. Simply notice them.

## **MEDITATION (7–12 MINUTES)**

7. Place a hand in the middle of your chest next to the heart, and notice the silence within. With practice, it becomes easy to locate this space.
8. Bring your attention to your inhalation; as you exhale, repeat the need in your mind. Do this about ten times. Initially, repeating the need will likely evoke thoughts and engender emotions. When you notice a thought, observe it, and let it go. Disengage from thoughts by repeating the need silently. How do you feel about the unmet need? Notice the physical sensations in your head, neck, shoulders, chest, stomach, hands, feet, and the whole body. Now, notice your emotions, and allow yourself to experience them fully. Are you sad, angry, afraid, frustrated, hurting, or something else? Connect with your emotions, and experience them fully. Cry if you feel like it. Ironically, the more you allow yourself to experience unpleasant emotions, the better you will feel. This will help you calm down, and it will make it easier to meditate.
9. Focus on the silence inside your chest. Every time you notice a thought, feeling, image, or hear a sound, repeat the need silently, let go of the stimulus, and go back to the silence within.
10. Rest in the inner silence for ten minutes, or longer if you wish, coming back to it over and over again throughout the meditation period.

When the timer rings, notice the air on your skin, and come back to the room slowly.

## **CALMING PRACTICE**

When you feel upset during the day, place a hand in the middle of your chest, close your eyes, and repeat the word *peace* slowly 8-10 times as you exhale. Then, rest in the inner silence for three minutes to restore calm. Repeat the word *peace* to disengage from thoughts.

When you feel tired, do the same procedure using the word *rest*.

Inspired by the work of Marshall Rosenberg and Robert Gonzalez.