

The Heart Exercise

Read this with the intention to do it as you read.

Breathe into the heart center, not just the heart organ, but the whole chest area. Breathe as if the breath is coming through the front of the chest into the heart and soften in the heart to receive the breath. Allow the heart to open, like a flower opening its petals, to receive the warm, soft breath.

If you can't keep your attention in the heart, take many strong, deep breaths (10 to 15) into the chest area. The deep breaths quiet mental activity and then you can focus attention on the heart.

The breath carries life energy. Soften in the heart as you receive the breath. Notice the flow of breath moving into the heart center.

Put your attention on the heart center, which is the whole chest area, not just the heart organ. Notice if there is any tightness or discomfort there. If there is, breathe into it, allowing the breath to move through it, opening it up, and moving the flow of breath through the discomfort. Continue this process until the discomfort is dissolved.

If there is no discomfort, breathe into whatever you notice there, whether it is physical, emotional, visual, or vibrational. When the tightness is dissolved, or when your experience changes, notice what next presents in the heart. Whatever you notice, breathe into it.

If you do not notice anything, breathe into the "nothing" and notice the movement of breath going into the "nothing".

Layers of the heart will unfold as you continue the exercise, revealing deeper blocks or deeper clarity depending on whether your heart is blocked or open at that level. Keep noticing what presents. Even if it is a comfortable or pleasant sensation, breathe into that. Everything that presents to you is asking you to breathe into it. You are healing and awakening your heart by opening it to the flow of life energy carried on the breath. This flow releases and dissolves whatever has hindered the movement of life energy through your heart.

The process is:

1. Breathe into the heart center
2. What do you notice?
3. Breathe into whatever you notice until it changes
4. When it changes, notice what is presenting to you next, and breathe into that.
5. Continue breathing into whatever the heart presents. There will be layers of the heart unfolding as you breathe into it.
6. This can continue for as long as you like, but please do it at least until there is a sense of peace and resolution of any discordance.

This is the Heart Exercise. Practice it as often as you can, for as long as you like, eyes closed in quiet times or eyes open in activity. Some people use the heart exercise as a meditation; others use it as a relaxation technique. Doing it for a few minutes or even seconds can center you and give you peace.

About Using the Heart Exercise

Why is it important to practice the Heart Exercise?

The heart has been compromised and the energies of compromise are constricting the heart. When the heart is compromised, you are compromised. You cannot express yourself fully when your heart is constricted and blocked. The constrictions are released by using the breath. The breath carries life force. When life force is allowed to flow through the heart, it moves through the blocks, dissolving them. It releases the tightness, tension, anxiety, fear and pain that constricts the heart and separates you from the experience of your Divine Self.

Breathing into the heart is not only for dissolving discord but it is for uniting with the Divine. At first, we heal the discord because that is what is covering the deeper layers of the heart. Once the heart is clear and open, continue to breathe into whatever you are noticing there, and you will discover your infinite self. The Heart Exercise is a practice for opening the heart, releasing its pain and experiencing yourself as infinite and whole, one with God.

When do I use it?

Use it every time you become worried, frustrated, nervous or distressed. It will calm you in any situation, whether you are alone or in a group. Use it when others around you are upset so that you can stay calm. You can do it wherever you are, in a car, in a business meeting, in a family confrontation, at night when you can't sleep, or to settle yourself into prayer or meditation. You will center yourself in the place of Wisdom and Truth so that you can easily manage every situation in your life.

What are the benefits of using this exercise?

The heart has access to the Infinite Mind of God. When you are centered in the heart, you are using Divine Intelligence. You are calm and peaceful, yet dynamic in your life. You influence others by creating harmony around you. You experience God residing in your heart.

Experiences of Using the Heart Exercise:

Our company has very strong personalities that often were in disagreement. I found when I breathed into my heart during our meetings, not only did I stay calm, but everyone in the meeting calmed down. I was amazed. I now use the Heart Exercise at every business meeting.

A friend called me one night, very agitated and threatening suicide. I immediately guided him into the Heart Exercise. After about 20 minutes, he calmed down significantly, and we were able to discuss options for his challenges. He thanked me profusely before he hung up.

I was walking with my husband when he started bitterly complaining about some situations at work. I didn't say anything, but I started breathing into my heart, and after about 30 seconds, he said, "This isn't that important. Let's enjoy our walk."

I remember getting a big bill in the mail, and I didn't know how I would pay it. I felt a wrenching in my heart and solar plexus. I started breathing into the heart area. After clearing the tightness in my heart with the Heart Exercise, I was able to relax and realize there were ways for me to pay this bill, and I felt much better.

I was teaching a class where a group of children were screaming and yelling at each other. It was very chaotic. As I worked with the group I kept breathing into my heart. Gradually I became more and more centered in my heart, I knew what to do to settle the group.

The best thing about the Heart Exercise is that you don't have to talk, you just breathe into the heart, and everything gets settled without expending the energy of speaking or discussing.

Recently, while visiting my parents, I had been using the Heart Exercise quite frequently and I felt a lot of peace. My mother commented, "There is something magic in the house when you are around."

When I meditate, I breathe into the heart, and the Heart Exercise becomes my meditation.