



*Shamatha (shinay)*, calm abiding, is inclusive, nonreactive, evenly resting in sensations, feelings, and thoughts as they arise and subside. Shamatha is stable, flexible, vividly clear, and open. Shamatha is the basis of clear seeing (*vipashyana, lhatong*) and other practices.

**A traditional session of shamatha** (page numbers from the booklet *Calm Abiding and Clear Seeing*):

1. As you sit down to meditate, look for a few moments to see what expectations you are holding. What are your motives for meditation? What is it you want to experience? To know? To be able to do? Just notice whatever arises in response... Then reflect on one or more of the **four thoughts that turn the mind to the Dharma** (pages 2-3), and then recite the **refuge and immeasurables** verses (page 4).
2. Settle into the sitting, **breathing body** for a few minutes (page 5).
3. **Choose an object of attention** (pages 6-7).  
Whatever object you choose, stick with that one for the whole session.
4. End every session with the **dedication** verses (page 12).

## REFLECTIONS

**When a "hindrance" arises** in your meditation, before reacting, gently open to the sensations and feelings: breathe and feel the energy: its qualities, its weight, its momentum.

**What in you decides an antidote needs to be applied?** Pause and feel. If you do apply an antidotes, does that SUPPORT stable clear attention, or DEGRADE attention? Just notice.

**Make a balanced effort:** not too much, not too little.

*Distracted mind?* Gently bring attention back to your chosen object.

*Busy mind?* Relax. See if opening to physical sensations calms busy thinking.

*Dull mind?* Recall your motivation for practicing, and rouse clarity by attending closely to sensations, feelings, and thoughts.

**The physical body and its five senses** are the first foundation of mindfulness. Open to physical sensations, which are always arising and subsiding. When you become distracted, what effort(s) help you return and rest again in physical sensations? What doesn't help? Feel: what is it that keeps you from resting open, stable and clear in experience? Just notice.

**If you get tangled up in instructions, try the back door:** *Body like a mountain, breath like the wind, mind like the sky.* Or: Feel your way into relaxed undistracted shamatha by eliciting one or more of the **four immeasurables**: kindness, compassion, joy, or equanimity.