

FULLY BEING

IMMERSION LEVEL II

> SETTLING THE MIND

TEXT VERSION FOR MOBILE VIEWING



PREFACE

This document is the text version of *Fully Being* (<https://fullybeing.org>). This material is copyrighted to Pundarika Foundation U.S. and is for your individual use only. Please do not share it with others.

The text is to be used in conjunction with the online videos or downloaded audio available for each lesson.



WELCOME TO SETTLING THE MIND II

THE MEDITATION OF FULLY BEING



DESCRIPTION

Rooted in our experience of calmness and essence love, we can increasingly recognize the basic clarity of the mind. "Settling the Mind" is also called **SHAMATA** or 'calm abiding' or tranquility meditation. It develops the mind's capacity to be naturally still within the midst of experience and sustain this fundamental clarity whether with an object of meditation or not.

METHOD

The main practice is to sustain and stabilize the view of **SHAMATA** over time. The view is the continuous flow of mindful stillness amidst the movement and change of our experience.

SETTLING THE MIND II CONTENTS

Welcome to Settling the Mind II	2
Settling the Mind II Contents	3
Mindfulness	5
Mindful Alertness	7
Platform for Samadhi	9
> Two Functions of Samadhi	11
Samadhi	13
Dropping Thinking Mind	15
> Stretching the Mind	17
> Boundary Conditions	19
> Getting Looser	21
> Right Touch	23
Finding Now	25
> Awareness Always Resting	26
Knowing with No Grasping	28
> Clarity Awareness	29
Union of Calm and Clear	31
> Right Effort	33
> Working with Dullness	35

> Working with Agitation.....	37
Relaxed and Open	38
Not Hiding	40
> Practicing the View	42

MINDFULNESS

QUESTION

- What is the role of mindfulness in this practice?



KEY POINTS

- The view of settling the mind is an awareness that is thought-free, unmoving, and clear. These three qualities need to be sustained in meditation so it is a continuous flow.
- Mindful knowing helps sustain settling the mind.
- Mindful means not forgetting, not getting lost or distracted from the object of meditation.

EXERCISE

- Practice settling the mind with mindfulness until it becomes more and more effortless. Shift as needed from practice with and without support. As the effort becomes less, rest more in clarity naturally.

DAILY CONTEMPLATION

- Mindful knowing sustains the view.

MINDFUL ALERTNESS

QUESTIONS

- Does settling the mind have a specific view?
- How much of our attention should be devoted to mindfulness and alertness?



KEY POINTS

- The view of settling the mind or calm abiding is thought-free, unwavering clarity. In practice, we generally spend about 80% of our attention on the view, 10% on mindfulness, and 10% on alertness.
- Settling the mind without support is best suited for Westerners and our modern lifestyles.
- Essence love and clarity are both inner space.
- Settling the mind practice feels like carefree openness.

EXERCISES

- When practicing with or without support, notice the shifting emphasis you place on the view, mindfulness, and alertness. Try to have a disciplined but

playful relationship to how these balance in your practice.

- Practice along with this teaching and periodically pause the recording to understand and feel the actual practice. Taste the subtleties of this practice by going slowly and “sipping” it as you go along.
- When practicing, bring up the image of some beautiful monsters sitting next to you, snuggled in a warm protective blanket. Care for them like a kind mother for her children.

DAILY CONTEMPLATIONS

- Keep to the 80, 10, 10 plan
- Clarity is carefree
- The beautiful monster needs your blanket

PLATFORM FOR SAMADHI

QUESTION

- How can we develop a healthy “platform” for samadhi practices?



KEY POINTS

- Our clarity has become weak due to too much thinking, hyper-conceptuality, and being continuously caught in emotions. This activity makes it difficult to recognize the essential clarity of the mind, which is the platform for settling the mind practice.
- When we are grounded in the body and subtle body, we can then recognize clarity as to the relative nature of the mind and begin to nurture and sustain it.
- Settling the mind or calm abiding helps us know and experience the relative nature of mind. For modern people’s mindsets, it is easier to begin with no object (without support). This is because of our tendency to be tight, overthinking, and to be caught up in emotions.

- Once we can sustain settling the mind without an object, then do the practice with an object.

EXERCISES

- Practice settling the mind with no support, merely resting in basic clarity. Then practice calm abiding with objects (breath, visual objects, hearing, etc.) and notice how alternating the two affects your mind. How is calm abiding with objects different than without objects? How does it affect your mind and subtle body?
- Do the grounding, calming practices of dropping, handshake, vase breath, and essence love for some time. Feel you are very grounded, naturally present. Then practice settling the mind with no object rooted in these qualities of calmness, openness, and love.

DAILY CONTEMPLATIONS

- Luminosity shines
- Rest in basic clarity
- Know the Relative

> TWO FUNCTIONS OF SAMADHI

QUESTION

- What are the two key aspects of mindfulness or settling the mind?



KEY POINTS

- We need to balance effort and effortlessness in our practice (whether with or without support) and be aware of modern cultural tendencies to hold too tight and not to be aware of it.
- There are two primary functions of this practice: one is not to forget, to remind ourselves with some effort of the practice; the other is, based on the first, to sustain and nurture more effortless mindfulness.
- We tend to over-react to distractions and hold our mindfulness too tight, like squeezing a napkin.
- It's good to distinguish between monsters that are casual visitors as opposed to those that quite insistently demand our attention. These are the ones that we need to handshake.

EXERCISES

- Take a napkin or tissue. Practice squeezing it hard and feel into the grasping energy. Then practice letting it drop from your hand and feel the release. Notice the difference in the subtle body between grasping too tight and too loose. Go back and forth, becoming familiar with these two extremes.
- After practicing with too tight and too loose, begin to experiment with how to hold the napkin or tissue. You can do this with everything you touch in daily life as a mindfulness practice.
- When distractions arise, be aware of the initial tendency to over-react and hold too tight. In your settling the mind practice, notice visitors who are just passing through and those that genuinely need handshaking.

DAILY CONTEMPLATIONS

- Not too tight, not too loose
- Remember: don't forget the practice
- Sustain and nurture clarity
- Handshake insistent visitors

SAMADHI

QUESTION

- How do we relax into an experience of the view?



KEY POINTS

- Settling the mind develops our capacity to perceive without distraction, grasping, or reactivity.
- When handshaking, merely be there with the beautiful monsters. This is different than being "somebody" dealing with the monsters.
- With the practice of settling the mind, achieving some goal becomes less important. The achiever relaxes into the view.

EXERCISES

- At times practice calm abiding or settling the mind with an emphasis on the "readiness to perceive" aspect of mind. Sense the potential to perceive objects that is behind actual perceptions. This potential is more like a field awareness of potential energy.

- Reflect on how you feel when you are naturally just being. Contrast this with the planning, doing and accomplishing mind. Play with this opening and contracting relationship and sense the subtle differences between them.
- Practice deep relaxation with a backdrop of knowing, awareness, and clarity. Don't think of being anyone or anything and use the 'who cares, so what' mantra. Within this relaxation and calmness, enjoy finding the flow of your breath and follow this motion like a curious child. Play and rest here. Sense the view in the deepening relaxation. The goal is in opening and not an achievement.

DAILY CONTEMPLATIONS

- Ready to perceive
- Surrender to experience
- Watch someone special
- Nobody wins at a finish line

DROPPING THINKING MIND

QUESTION

- If a bird flies by, does this disturb our meditation?



KEY POINTS

- In settling the mind, we keep the knowing, awareness, and clarity and drop the thinking and judging mind.
- Just merely seeing a bird fly by without the extra distraction of thinking or an emotional reaction is how we should be with all phenomena.
- We need to establish a home within ourselves of calmness, essence love, and clarity. Connecting these three is our royal seat.

EXERCISES

- Practice mere knowing, awareness, and clarity with a calm body and open heart. Let the thinking, commenting, judging mind drop, and just rest.
- After practicing settling the mind, either with or without support, deliberately

engage the thinking mind and observe it like a naturalist watches a wild animal in the field. Allow it to comment, judge, etc., as much as it wants. Then go back to calm abiding. Get a feeling sense as to the different energies in each and how they affect clarity and calmness.

- Practice building a royal seat every time you practice: begin with a calm body and subtle body, an open heart with essence love, and then the clarity of settling the mind. Join these three together in preparation for insight practice.
- In post-meditation, find moments to drop the thinking mind and merely know, be aware, and be clear. You can do this many times for short moments. This will benefit your formal practice and create breaks for the ordinary busy mind.

DAILY CONTEMPLATIONS

- Recognize, connect and taste the clarity
- Thoughts pop up
- Mere knowing has no special insight
- Respond not react
- Clarity without thinking
- Relax in the royal seat

> STRETCHING THE MIND

QUESTION

- What is the experience of a stable mind?



KEY POINTS

- Stabilizing our practice is a fundamental part of training the mind. To do this, we need to have some discipline and make some effort. We say "no" to distraction and "yes" to maintaining the view of nowness.
- At first, this requires some mindful effort and repetition. Over time it becomes more natural, and then it becomes effortless.
- We maintain a soft-focus, a carefree sense by not following thoughts and emotions when they arise or blocking them from arising. We are saying "no" to being caught and distracted in thoughts and feelings, and also saying "no" to pushing them away.
- Saying "no" to these tendencies allows us to say "yes" to the present moment, being in nowness, not caught up in distraction.

EXERCISES

- Do a standing balance pose in yoga, using a prop if necessary. While in this pose, sense the dynamic interplay of muscles, tendons, blood flow, and your inner sense of balance to sustain the pose gently. From this experience, reflect on the nature of balance – how to dynamically sustain a posture and eventually make it effortless. Apply the insights you may have to this physical experience to the balance you need in settling the mind practice between too tight and too loose.
- Watch how you inwardly say “yes and no” to various situations in daily life. Get a feel for when we choose “yes” or “no” versus a more instinctual response. See how we may say “yes” to distraction and “no” to being present. Investigate this experience.

DAILY CONTEMPLATIONS

- Calm abiding is samadhi basecamp
- Yes on nowness, no on distraction
- No support in nowness
- Don't chase, don't block

> BOUNDARY CONDITIONS

QUESTION

- How do we use boundaries skillfully?



KEY POINTS

- When practicing settling the mind, it is helpful to set a boundary for the session. When we experience laxity or agitation, we stick it out, keep going.
- Staying in the view of settling the mind gradually reduces the grasping onto habitual patterns of distracting thoughts and emotions.
- When strong reactivity arises, we can do handshake practice.
- As we use handshake practice, it's good to make sure not to become dependent on it or place too much expectation on results. If we sense ourselves doing this, it's best to drop the practice and come back later.

EXERCISES

- Alternate handshake and settling the mind, and find a rhythm that naturally

works for both. Notice the differences in the two practices and how they inform each other.

- Reflect on the meaning of boundaries in our practice. Why do we train and discipline the mind by choosing to stay within the view of a particular practice?

DAILY CONTEMPLATIONS

- Choose clarity
- The view liberates grasping
- Listen while being, not doing
- Sticky handshakes need washing

> GETTING LOOSER

QUESTION

- How do we develop a flexible mind?



KEY POINTS

- We need to practice without aggression or violence. The mind is harmed when we push too hard, attack ourselves, etc.
- While practicing settling the mind, shift from the relaxed, calm aspect to a sharp clarity and then back again.
- A flexible mind is created in this practice. We develop a capacity of being “ready to perceive” without being caught in the continuous flow of perceptions.
- We neither close off perceptions and retreat to some inner state, nor do we engage with them. We can also develop flexibility by choosing distraction and then go back to calm abiding.

EXERCISES

- When doing our practice notice the feeling tone of the mind that is practicing. Does it have an agenda, an implicit goal to achieve something, to

have an experience of some kind? Non-violence in this practice is letting all this go, releasing the doer and doing and just being.

- Play with the relationship between three aspects of the practice: relaxation, calmness and clarity. Use your awareness to notice the differences and how they work together.
- Practice saying “no” to distraction and then saying “yes” to some distraction. Go back and forth with this experience in an unbiased, carefree way. Observe the feeling tone of saying “no”. Is it kind and gentle or strident and too forceful? Similarly, with saying “yes”, what is the feeling tone?

.DAILY CONTEMPLATIONS

- A non-violent “no” is best
- Play with being sharp and calm
- Don’t cut off mere knowing
- Flexible is stronger

> RIGHT TOUCH

QUESTION

- How do we sense the “right touch” in our practice?



KEY POINTS

- The view of settling the mind is clear, thought-free nowness.
- Once we have the view, then we sustain it.
- With this practice, we are saying “no” to many things and making choices. But we are not smashing anything or holding too tight.
- It’s essential to develop the right touch in practice. It is subtle because we have layers of conditioning to either be too tight or too loose in our body, subtle body, heart, and mind

.EXERCISE

- Practice holding a napkin, feeling your hand, wrist, upper and lower arm, neck, and then the whole body with each of these practices. First, hold a napkin too loosely, so it drops. Feel the quality of this letting go. Repeat this for the too-

tight practice, holding and squeezing the napkin. Feel this fully. And then repeat this again with "just right." Notice how we hold our mind in calm abiding practice: too tight, too loose, or just right. Apply this "just right" feeling to situations you may find difficult or challenging and notice where you may tend to get tight or too loose

DAILY CONTEMPLATION

- Not too tight, not too loose

FINDING NOW

QUESTION

- When is now?



KEY POINT

- In calm abiding on nowness, we don't get lost in the past or future nor do we grasp the present, reifying nowness or the present moment.

EXERCISE

- While practicing calm abiding on nowness, step back and inquire: "When is this nowness? Where is it? Can I find it?" Then go back to meditation on the present moment. Only do a little bit of this inquiry at this stage of the practice.

DAILY CONTEMPLATION

- Can't find time

> AWARENESS ALWAYS RESTING

QUESTION

- What does it mean for the subject to rest in itself?



KEY POINTS

- Once we let go of the various objects of meditation, then the subject can rest in its own awareness.
- Cognizance is our focus. Stay in or sustain this clarity with light effort.
- Since the mind has the habit of holding onto tangible things, we need some effort.
- Well-being and love live beneath the “grasping to stuff” mind.

EXERCISES

- Once you are comfortable with settling the mind without the support of an object, observe the mind’s impulse to “chew” on various objects that come up during your practice. Become aware of the habit energy of “needing to chew” in your life and practice. When this

chewing impulse arises, be with it like an old friend and say “hi”.

- Recognize how much effort you are using when practicing. Play with how far you can back off efforting and yet still be present. Get to know the full spectrum of tight and loose and where your true “sweet spot” is.
- Practice connecting the feeling of well-being or essence love with your clarity of mind. What is it like to settle the mind within the background of essence love?

DAILY CONTEMPLATIONS

- Let clarity rest in itself
- Squeezing water is a waste of time

KNOWING WITH NO GRASPING

QUESTION

- What is knowing without grasping?



KEY POINTS

- We need not grasp or try to control experiences as they arise in meditation. Let them naturally come and go.
- Knowing phenomena without grasping is a fundamental point in dharma practice. It allows us to see the truth of experience without bias, without filters.

EXERCISE

- With a spacious, kind, and simple awareness, observe the layered and textured movement of phenomena (thoughts, feelings, sensations). This mere knowing is called 'mere' since it does not grasp.

DAILY CONTEMPLATION

- Know without grasping

> CLARITY AWARENESS

QUESTION

- What is the experience of clarity?



KEY POINTS

- Clarity is always there, although it can be temporarily covered over. When it is covered over, it cannot be aware of itself, like a mirror covered with dirt and dust.
- First, establish calm, letting go entirely into the body and then the subtle body. Rest here. Then, while maintaining this peaceful base, shift awareness to clarity.
- The subtle body changes throughout the day with different feelings, moods, emotions. When we grasp onto them or push them away, we create obscurations to our essential clarity.
- It's important to take care of the subtle body by bringing down the excess lung and doing handshake practice. Over time, this will help remove some of the subtle body disturbances to basic clarity.

EXERCISES

- After connecting to calmness and essence love, shift awareness to clarity, and rest there. As needed, use handshake, bringing down the lung and dropping practice, but the main focus is resting in clarity.
- Over time note how your subtle body has its rhythms and way of being. How is it, for example, when you are speedy, racing to an appointment, or conversely, very tired and dull, trying to get through a long, boring meeting? We are not analyzing the why or how of this feeling or mood. It is more akin to being aware of the weather throughout the day, getting to witness the seasonal patterns.

DAILY CONTEMPLATIONS

- Calm then clear
- Clarity is self-aware
- Heal the subtle body for clarity's sake

UNION OF CALM AND CLEAR

QUESTION

- What is it like when calm and clear come together?



KEY POINTS

- Practice calm and clear at the same time while allowing mere knowing to take place.
- When we are deeply calm, essence love is there. The watcher or observer has a soft quality and is gently present, allowing. Experience becomes less divided.

EXERCISE

- Feel how essence love's warmth lives in the center of settling the mind practice. Feel how it connects the warmth of essence love to how you perceive yourself and external phenomena.

DAILY CONTEMPLATIONS

- Calm and clear, ready to perceive

- Essence love is the heart of calmness

> RIGHT EFFORT

QUESTION

- What is right effort?



KEY POINTS

- Hold the view of settling the mind with the right amount of effort, neither too tight nor too loose. In this sense, we are tuning our practice like a musical instrument.
- Don't make dharma practice into something heavy, serious, and uptight. This is grasping the concept of dharma.
- We may generate an extra watcher to our practice, like a cat watching a mouse. This extra watching is not necessary and comes from an over-emphasis on the alertness aspect of settling the mind.

EXERCISES

- Notice the degree of effort you use to meditate on the view. Is it too tight or too loose? Play with this efforting process, so it is just right.
- Notice if you have created a sharp and vigilant watcher mind that feels like a

detached spectator. Picture an entomologist with a microscope dissecting an insect. Experiment with dimming down the alertness quality and balance it with calmness and a more gentle clarity.

- Watch how you may make dharma "special" or "sacred," and how this can become something heavy, serious, and tight.

DAILY CONTEMPLATIONS

- Hold, but just so.
- No extra watchers

> WORKING WITH DULLNESS

QUESTION

- How do we work with dullness?



KEY POINTS

- The two main causes of dullness are sinking or shutting down and a lack of windhorse energy in our constitution. These two causes result in a lack of clarity in our practice.
- To clear dullness, we need to work on balancing the nadi, bindu, and prana. Dullness is caused by a shutting down or deficiency of the *lung*, which can feel like happy, dull tiredness or a feeling of just no juice, no energy.
- The third kind of lung deficiency is caused by stress, pushing too hard when we are already exhausted.
- Good posture, breathing techniques, and movement can help with dullness. We can make sure the room we are in is well lighted, we've had our measure of coffee or tea and are using a soft effort to focus the mind. If we are exhausted, let it all go and take a short nap.

- Sometimes, there is a feeling of agitation under the apparent dullness. This dullness and agitation work together. It's helpful to sense if there is a deeper core of agitation under the dullness and, if there is, to relax deeply into it and do the handshake practice with whatever comes up.

EXERCISES

- When you are feeling dull, check to see if there is also an agitated, speedy quality living under the dullness. If so, do the gentle vase breath after connecting with this speedy quality, dissolving it in the chakra below the navel.
- Watch for signs of pushing too hard in our practice, which creates a habit of stress linked to meditation. We may still have habitual unconscious tendencies to push ourselves, to see meditation as a form of subtle striving and self-improvement. If you notice this tendency, do some handshake practice with it, make friends and relax.
- If you are practicing and sense that your body is fatigued and exhausted, take a rest break and refresh yourself. Be kind when kindness is needed.
- Use your yoga, qi-gong, or other body-centered practice to enliven and wake up the body between sessions of formal practice.

DAILY CONTEMPLATIONS

- Two lovers: still and clear
- Sometimes clarity, sometimes stillness

> WORKING WITH AGITATION

QUESTION

- How do we work with agitation?



KEY POINTS

- Agitation is caused by desire and attachment. When we search for fulfillment outside ourselves, our lung speeds up and we get more distracted.
- If we haven't established calmness and essence love deeply in our being, then the need for external fulfillment is strong.

EXERCISE

- Watch how we may, at both coarse and subtle levels, be looking for fulfillment. Feel into this need and explore it with handshake when it arises in our experience

DAILY CONTEMPLATION

- Agitation is always homeless

RELAXED AND OPEN

QUESTION

- How does a relaxed body and open heart affect awareness of the present?



KEY POINTS

- Enjoy a relaxed body and a subtle body with an open heart. Then be aware of clarity.
- Within this balanced state, maintain a light focus on nowness.

EXERCISES

- With the eyes closed, practice calming the body and subtle body, opening to the feeling of essence love and rest here for a while. Then quickly open the eyes to find a sudden awareness of visual clarity.
- Practice this guided meditation many times to sustain moments of vivid clarity

DAILY CONTEMPLATIONS

- Be a kind host

- Clarity without thinking
- Look inside clarity and calmness

NOT HIDING

QUESTION

- How do we experience our lives without hiding?



KEY POINTS

- Be relaxed, awake, ordinary, and open while feeling totally in synch.
- Settling the mind is a readiness to perceive. The five sense doors are totally open and not following after experience. Information can come and go while you remain aware of it but not engaged.
- There is no need to go somewhere like hiding under a blanket and not being able to breathe.
- With the eyes closed, be aware of the body, feelings, essence love, monsters, or body sensations.
- Then quickly open your eyes and be aware of clarity.

EXERCISES

- Notice when you practice settling the mind if you tend to go somewhere else and not be present, right here.

- Establish your practice on nowness, not dwelling in the past or future but the present moment. Keep your eyes closed and then suddenly open them. Rest in this awareness of the mind's clarity

DAILY CONTEMPLATIONS

- Experience life without hiding
- Keep the five sense doors open
- Eyes see clarity

> PRACTICING THE VIEW

QUESTIONS

- Can we say 'yes' and 'no' in our meditation?
- How do we skillfully relate to beautiful monsters?



KEY POINTS

- We say "yes" to clarity, non-distraction, and unwavering mindfulness, and "no" to being distracted, inattentive and forgetful.
- If a beautiful monster arises it is OK to shift from settling the mind practice to handshake.
- With clarity and love, we can share the mantra "real but not true" with the beautiful monster from time to time.
- Real transformation happens through the feeling world. When we join our most genuine feelings with the right understanding, then we can change.
- While resting in essence love, we can find clarity and mingle the two.

EXERCISES

- As you practice settling the mind on the breath and intense thoughts and emotions come up, alternate your practice with handshake. You can shift in and out of handshake as necessary.
- Do this guided practice repeatedly, integrating and harmonizing the body, the subtle body, and clarity. After listening to the guided instructions as a whole, you can pause the teaching and practice it more slowly.

DAILY CONTEMPLATIONS

- Time to say yes and no
- Real but not true
- Emotionally honest; fully aware
- Serious is not uptight