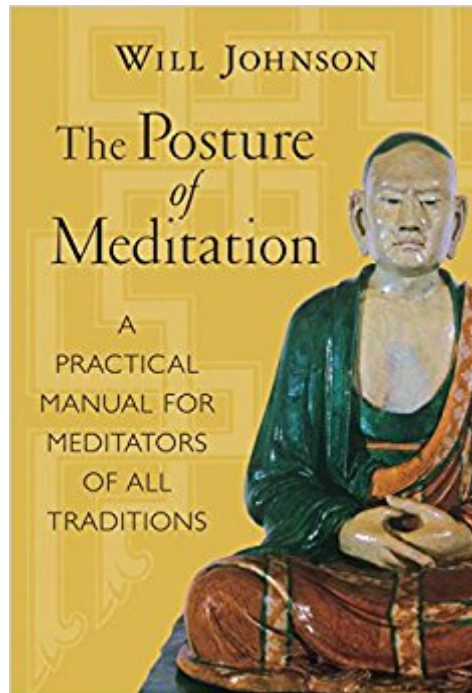




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The Posture Of Meditation



Synopsis

When it comes to meditation practices, the body is as important as the mind—a fact that may come as a surprise to the many people who regard meditation as a strictly mental activity. But, as Will Johnson shows, the physical aspect of the practice is far too often underemphasized. The alert-yet-relaxed sitting posture that is the common denominator of so many meditative techniques is a wonderful aid for clearing the mind and opening the heart, but it also works to activate the natural healing energies of both body and mind. The author offers guidance and exercises for working with the posture of meditation and advice on how to carry its benefits on into all the rest of life.

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Customer Reviews

"Ordinarily," Johnson opens his superbly calm little manual, "we think of meditation as an activity involving our minds, but in truth meditation is initiated by assuming a specific gesture with our bodies." That gesture or posture is the cross-legged sitting familiarly associated with Buddhist meditation and consists of three elements: alignment, relaxation, and resilience. The objects of these physical practices are to offer gravity the least resistance while in an alert yet resting state and to experience the subtle movements of existence. Johnson explains the functions of each element, offers instruction and advice on achieving each of them, and discusses how they may be carried into everyday life in a prose so limpidly intelligent that this book may become a standard text for beginning meditators. Ray Olson

When it comes to meditation practices, the body is as important as the mind - a fact that may come as a surprise to the many people who regard meditation as a strictly mental activity. But, as Will Johnson shows, the physical aspect of the practice is far too often underemphasized. The alert-yet-relaxed sitting posture that is the common denominator of so many meditative techniques is a wonderful aid for clearing the mind and opening the heart, but it also works to activate the natural healing energies of both body and mind. The author offers guidance and exercises for working with the posture of meditation and advice on how to carry its benefits on into all the rest of life.

I teach meditation and have meditated for 25 years, but I still found some new perspectives and exercises in here that I think are very valuable. It's a short book, focusing on three components of any meditation posture - relaxation, alignment, and resilience. It connects each of these to states of mind, for example, exploring the parts of our body that tense when our mind is busy, and the ways correct alignment aids a natural relaxation. The premise is really that by working with these three aspects, one will discover a natural state where all 3 are balanced, and in this state, the mind is also balanced. He also discusses phases of meditation, and how as new things surface during our meditations we will see a reaction in our body. He offers several exercises for working with these themes. The book does not give detailed guidance on specific meditation postures from different traditions, i.e. lotus vs. zazen, etc., or guidance on meditation techniques. Instead, it is really focused on ways to discover these three components of relaxation, alignment and resilience in any meditation posture, and on how to use this in tandem with working with the mind. The book also does not put forth a particular spiritual perspective, although I would say it is more Buddhist in its perspective than any other tradition. So for beginning meditators, this is really a book to be used along with formal meditation instruction or another book on the subject. But it is a book that I think anyone meditating within any tradition will find something to appreciate and use.

It is hard to find this book. If one can ignore the philosophy of only Embodiment Training, this book can speak to the physical difficulties of settling into a meditative practice. Even chair sitting may be difficult for some. Nowhere else have I found as valuable a discussion about the posture of floor sitting. This book eloquently shows why you should never put pillows under your knees if they do not touch the floor; instead, raise your seat higher until the knees touch the floor.

A very good book even for experienced meditators. It is the first book i read explaining the unity of body and mind. Many books concentrate on how to settle the mind without explaining the gradual changes to the body as a result of meditation. This book explains the importance of a right posture before any healing process resulting in a stable mind. If you believe that the body is part of the mind, it is a very important part. The book is the next best thing to a live teacher which is not always available near you.

This book is a gem! It helped me immensely to persevere in beginning sitting practice by describing lucidly and in detail how to work with the physical sensations that a beginner may face and that are ignored in most discussions focusing only on quieting the mind. It gave me a framework and an understanding of how one's body adapts to sitting over time and what changes may occur as the body adjusts. I highly recommend this small volume; it's well worth its low price.

This book is a great addition to a meditation practice, defining the subtle aspects of the relationship between body and mind. Highly recommended.

Well written and extremely helpful. The instructions for aligning, relaxing, and responding resiliently were crystal clear.

Great teachings!!!

Buy this one. Very practical. Very detailed and extremely focused. I found it corrected some errors I had accumulated, in technique and in my belief system.

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