

A Time to Cultivate Resilience / The Alexander Lying-Down Procedure

By Diana Devitt-Dawson



In this uncertain time we are all currently experiencing due to the COVID-19 virus, tension and fear can overwhelm and bring us down physically, mentally and emotionally.

I would like to offer some advice and guidance (hands free) on a gentle, non-exercise that anyone can do, whenever and wherever, to enhance health, well-being and the ability to bring about gentle, upright meditation postures. It is a simple lying-down procedure that cultivates mind/body co-ordination, balance and resilience. It helps heighten sensory awareness to the body, our breath and to the environment while we are seemingly doing nothing! In this peaceful, non-doing, lying-down position our backs lengthen, the torso softens and widens which in turn allows natural breathing. Muscles and joints become free of unnecessary tension. We have the ability to bring about this energised state by staying fully alert to each moment, eyes open, listening and experiencing our bodies and the movements of the breath as - we let all our senses awaken.

- Lie on a firm surface on a soft mat or on a carpeted floor. Preferably not a bed.
- Place several paperback books under your head to ensure it does not fall back and down into your neck. Check that your chin is not pointing up to the ceiling or tucked down into your neck.
- Draw both knees up, feet apart on the mat (floor) about hip width or further.
- Allow your hands to rest gently on the abdomen so the thumbs are resting on the last ribs, fingers resting near the diaphragm.
- Allow your wrist to be free, to let the hands move with each inhalation and exhalation - experience each breath.
- Ensure that your elbows and upper arms are spread out sideways (comfortably) away from your sides.
- Keep your eyes open, stay alert and enjoy the experience of your back as it lengthens and softens into the floor. Think UP along your spine.
- Lie quietly, cultivate awareness to your whole body from head to toe. Let all joints be free, your face, your neck and shoulders to hips and low back.
- From time to time take a deeper breath than normal - note the expansion and relaxation of your chest. Do not try to 'abdominal breathe' as that will cause tension.

- Breathing is a back and whole body movement.
- Lie quietly for 10-15 minutes only, then slowly roll over and get up mindfully.
- Stand still for a minute or two, take a couple of deep breaths and then walk away, being upright - with each step.

Note: To cultivate resilience in sitting meditation, be mindful of the above instructions as you experience it in the lying-down procedure.

Do this Lying-Down for 10-15min daily or twice a day as the awareness is cumulative and can shine into all daily life activities.

For further information contact Diana.

www.alexandertechniqueinstitute.com.au