Round 2 · Lesson 10 · Stillness

Listening Inward

By the end of this lesson, you have a simple daily stillness practice you can do anywhere, in any faith or none.

About 20 minutes All ages Round 2

Part 1 · Read (5–8 min)

The big idea

> "The lips of wisdom are closed, except to the ears of Understanding."
>
> The Kybalion (1908)

You can't hear the answer if the noise never stops.

Look at a muddy glass of water. Shake it and you can't see through it. Set it down and wait, and the mud settles on its own. The water clears. **Your mind works the same way.** You don't have to scrub it clean. You just have to stop shaking it for a while.

Every tradition has a version of this. Prayer, meditation, quiet time, a walk alone, sitting by the ocean, a long drive with the radio off. The names differ. The idea is the same: **get still enough to hear what's under the noise.**

Stillness is where the other lessons come together:

- It's where you step onto the **balcony** (Lesson 1).
- It's where you notice which **thoughts** are running the loop (Lesson 2).
- It's how you find the **middle of the pendulum** (Lesson 7).
- It's the **receptive energy** most of us forget to use (Lesson 9).

Here's the simplest practice there is, called **box breathing**. Breathe in for 4 counts. Hold for 4. Breathe out for 4. Hold for 4. Repeat four times. It takes about one minute, and you can do it anywhere: at a red light, in line, before a call.

If you pray, stillness can be the listening half of prayer. If you don't, it's just quiet. Either way, start with one minute. You don't need a cushion or a mountain. **You need one minute and a decision.**

Part 2 · Practice (10 min)

Try it now

Do four rounds of box breathing: in 4, hold 4, out 4, hold 4. Then sit for two more minutes in silence. Don't try to stop thoughts; let them settle like mud in water.

Before	After
How busy did my mind feel (1–10)?	How busy now (1–10)?
One thing I heard or noticed in the quiet:	

> Bonus: The University lawn
>
> Go to the campus lawn and just watch the city move for one minute. No buttons.

Part 3 · Check yourself

3 quick questions

1. The muddy-water picture teaches that:

- You have to scrub your mind clean
- If you stop shaking it, the mind clears on its own
- Thoughts are dirty

If you stop shaking it, the mind clears on its own. Stillness lets things settle.

2. Box breathing is:

- In 4, hold 4, out 4, hold 4
- Breathing as fast as you can
- Holding your breath for a minute

In 4, hold 4, out 4, hold 4. Four even sides, like a box.

3. Stillness works with:

- Only one religion
- Any faith, or none
- No one over 30

Any faith, or none. Prayer, meditation, quiet time: same idea.

Part 4 · Try it this week

Your real-life task

Do one minute of stillness every day this week at the same time (when you wake up, before you drive, before bed). Mark each day you do it. Seven out of seven is the goal.

Next: Living It

Putting all seven principles to work in your money, relationships, work and purpose.

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