



Maximising your potential through Relaxation

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Ancient wisdom suggests that to be relaxed is the best thing we can do for the world (and ourselves).

How can this be so, and be consistent with high achievement?

One possibility is that when the body, mind and emotions are in a relaxed state, then energy flows more freely. We can then be more receptive to new experiences and information, linking this to previous knowledge and experience - to the analysis of it, how it fits with other ideas - allowing a discerning turning over and reflection, a sense of integration if you like, and the later retrieval or outflow, as in writing reports, essays, exams, or achieving physical or sporting goals.

When the body-mind-emotions are tense, blocked, lethargic, or speeding with anxiety, new information is not taken in so clearly and linked to more deeply processed information.

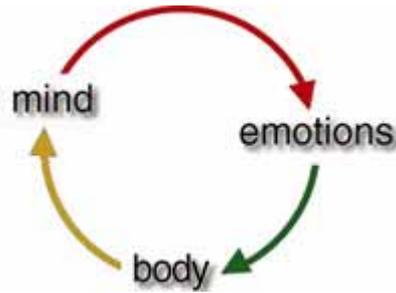
The same applies to the outflow of information, ideas and physical achievement. When body-mind-emotions are tense, then outflow of what we know is more difficult, less cohesive, and the possibility of the creative linking of ideas, or peak physical performance, is restricted.

One monitor of the mental-physical-emotional state is the breath. When the breath is flowing freely, so too, are the other states. By "taking stock" of the breath, turning the awareness to the breath, we can enter the "witness position". Is the breathing shallow, or restricted at the throat area? Is it short or fast, or a deeper, rhythmic flow? We can also take stock of the physical body. Is there any tightness, tenderness, blockage in the throat, shoulders, neck, or back? How do the toes feel inside the shoes? Are they "happy" and relaxed, or screwed up tight? Is there a secure sense of contact of the feet with the floor?

What about the face and scalp? Does this reflect tension, or relaxation? The tiny little muscles around the mouth and eyes, are they soft and relaxed? Is the jaw tight or relaxed?

The feedback loop of body-mind-emotions can be entered at any point, and each influences the other.

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By attending to the breath, deepening the breath, watching the natural rhythm of the breath, directing the awareness to the inflow of energy and aliveness on the in-breath, and letting go of tension on the out-breath, the body-mind-emotions "system" can begin to be settled, to allow for clarity, and a more relaxed, grounded, receptive state. This is like tuning the instrument of our bodies for good performance, for the free-flow of information, ideas and physical action, in a harmonious and enjoyable way.

Anchoring Positive Physical-Mental-Emotional States

Recall a time and place when you were feeling strong, clear, relaxed, articulate, with ideas and energy flowing. Such a memory can then be anchored by creating a symbol or image as a personal reminder of this state. This can be used as a touchstone to recall that facilitative state.

For example the image of the tiger, strong, sleek, powerful; or the eagle, with clear vision, overview, and the ability to focus; or the dolphin, playful, intelligent, communicative.

You may prefer the image of a garden, or yourself as the gardener, digging over the good earth, planting and nurturing new ideas and growth. Or the lighthouse that lights the way and protects from danger.

Locate or create your own symbol; one that evokes and anchors for you a facilitative state, one in which you can be relaxed, and at the same time know your own intelligence and strength, your sense of fun and freedom, and let this flow.

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