

# Shamata -- #1 Overcoming laziness

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Laziness, or not wanting to exert effort into practice is the first obstacle to overcome.

Laziness has 4 antidotes:

1. Faith
2. Aspiration
3. Perseverance
4. Mental Pliancy

Mental Pliancy is the result of the first three.

The opposite of laziness is joyous perseverance.

The real antidote to laziness is the perseverance that takes joy in practicing meditation.

In order to generate perseverance you need aspiration. A strong aspiration comes from contemplating the benefits. This not blind faith **You must actually understand the benefits**

As you see the benefits you will be more attracted to the practice. As the attraction grows, the aspiration to practice will come.

When you have aspiration you will persevere to practice with commitment.

Without aspiration you will not persevere with your practice.

**In short it is important to understand why shamata is valuable, what its benefits are, what you need to do to attain it, how long it may take to develop it, what types of hardships and sacrifices may be involved, and how to address these.**

To develop shamata you must have continuous enthusiasm for the concentration that causes pliancy. To develop this enthusiasm you need a continuous intense yearning that is intent on concentration. As a cause for this yearning you need a steadfast confidence in and fascination with the good qualities of concentration.

Start by cultivating again and again a confidence that is aware of the good qualities of concentration. When you see this process in practice you will understand this most vital point with the clearest sense of certainty.

The basis of perseverance is aspiration. The cause of aspiration is the confident faith in the good qualities of concentration.

The good qualities of concentration are:

1. When you reach serenity your mind is filled with delight and your body filled with bliss, so you are happy in this lifetime. Shamata is the basis for a peaceful and enlightened mind.
2. Since you have gained mental and physical pliancy you can turn your attention to any virtuous object of meditation you choose.
3. You are not constantly involved in wrong doing and any virtuous act your perform is powerful since you have quelled uncontrolled distraction toward the wrong sort of objects.
4. Based on serenity you can achieve good qualities such as the super knowledges and super normal powers. Miraculous acts, divine eye, clairaudience, the knowledge of others thoughts, recollection of former states, and knowledge of birth and death.
5. It is on the basis of serenity that develop the knowledge of insight that knows the true nature of reality, whereby you can cut the root of cyclic existence.

If you reflect on any of these good qualities you will become aware of an meditate upon things that strengthen your inclination to cultivate concentration.

If you first build zeal for practice through contemplation of its benefits your enthusiasm will keep you committed to your practice. You will not want it to degenerate, so you will focus on its cultivation, and it will increase.

When that inclination arises you will be continually prompted from within to cultivate concentration so it will be easily attained.

You will not want to delay practice even one moment.

The things that once distracted you will hold less appeal.

Once you are inspired to practice, hardships seem small compared to the great fruits of cultivating shamata.

When you achieve the special joy that accompanies mental pliancy, encouragement to meditate will come from within.

Even after cultivating shamata you should urge yourself again and again to remember these teachings so that your motivation does not wane.

**This is how you produce and maintain faith**