

ZEN

宗的优势 禅

ASCENDANCY

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO ZEN LIVING



Checklist

A Zen lifestyle is an attempt to lead a simpler life. To do so effectively you will need to take on a set of habits that minimize, simplify and sort out the chaos of your everyday life.

By incorporating Zen habits into your everyday routine, you can learn to focus on what's meaningful in life and give all your attention to that. At the same time, you will also hone in your skills to remove the unwanted and unimportant stuff from life.

The goal is to lead a simpler yet more purposeful and productive life. This checklist will run you through the simple tips and techniques to get started with Zen fundamentals and how to implement these habits into your life.

Chapter 1: The Meaning of Zen

You may not have practiced it, but you must surely have heard of Zen. It is a common word doing the rounds in different circles, primarily where people are looking for a way to simplify their lives.

The Origins of Zen

Historically, Zen has been practiced for centuries in Oriental monasteries by monks and goes by various names. For instance, the Chinese refer to it as *Ch'an*, the Vietnamese as *Thien* and the Koreans as *Seon*. But it is the Japanese rendering of this aspect of Buddhism that is known as Zen.

What to Do?

At its very basic, Zen teaches you to be fully aware and live in each moment. This means you should work with a single-pointed awareness.

What Not to Do?

Just as it's important to know what steps to follow to when adopting a Zen lifestyle, it's equally important to know what not to do as well.

You need to find peace with yourself first before you can proceed onto anything else. And to do that you need to be happy with who you are. In other words, you can say that you need to get to like yourself better first.

Chapter 2: Don't Forget to Breathe

You can call this a physical and mental aspect of Zen habits. While the practice itself may be physical in nature, it does have truly amazing mental benefits.

Breathing for Relaxation

Have you ever tried taking a really deep breath? Try it and you will feel more relaxed and less anxious right away.

You have no idea how powerful your breath is. Making breathing exercises part of your life can bring about significant improvement not only in your quality of breath, but also the quality of life. You will feel increased vibrancy and clarity that you may have been missing out on for years.

The Benefits

Breathing for relaxation holds massive benefits. There are many on a physical level such as detoxification. In fact, when you breathe, your body potentially releases about 70% of toxins.

In another area, breathing acts as a masseuse for your organs. Proper oxygen supply also helps reduce the burden on the heart. When you breathe properly you make your lungs efficient.

On its benefits for the mind, proper breathing helps reduce tension, relaxes the mind and can even elevate your mood. Likewise, breathing properly has even been connected to reducing the formation of clots.

Some Techniques

The Complete Yogi Breath
Bellows Breath
Breath Counting

Chapter 3: Switch your Perspective

Oftentimes, people feel that their focus is not under their control. You may have had the same suspicions about yourself.

But the truth is that what you focus on is what you experience. If you spend too much time focusing on things you don't need, your mind gets caught in a web. You try to multitask, switch from one thing to the next, or simply end up putting things off.

Here are some steps you can take to do so.

Stay with One Thing at a Time
Focus on the Process
Don't Rationalize

Chapter 4: Simplify your Life

The world you live in today exposes you to many complications. At times you end up complicating life because of overthinking. Otherwise, you end up overspending, overworking or even overcommitting.

All in all, it's an effort to get too many things done in too short a time. Overdoing anything also complicates things while Zen tries to teach you how to keep life simple.

Prioritize
Declutter
Build a Positive Skillset

Chapter 5: Be Mindful of the Present

Mindfulness is an ability that helps you recognize the happiness already present in your life. You don't have to wait years to find happiness. It is already there; you just have to see it.

Here's how you can learn to be a bit more mindful:

Slow Down
Enjoy the Moment
Have Fewer Expectations

Chapter 6: Meditate a Little Everyday

Meditation is an integral component of Zen habits. It is a long established practice that helps you calm your mind, relax your body and focuses on relaxation and stress relief. At its deepest level, meditation serves a spiritual purpose.

Although there are many types of meditation, the focus here is on the main 3 types which are Yoga, Qigong, and Guided Visualization.

Let's have a look at each of these in detail:

Yoga

Yoga is a popular meditation technique that is practiced widely and is also considered a popular form of gentle exercises. Besides helping gain flexibility, strength, balance and even losing weight, yoga provides peace to the mind.

Some of the physical benefits of Yoga include:

- Improved stamina
- Improved flexibility
- Improved balance
- Increased strength

The mental benefits that yoga provides includes:

- Improved sleep
- Reduced stress
- Body awareness
- Benefits of Yoga

Qigong

The second type of meditation technique is Qigong. This method helps improve posture and allows you to relax with ease. It is one of the oldest forms of meditation practiced by the Chinese.

Qigong consists of internal and external movements. This technique primarily involves the use of breath to circulate energy around the body.

Guided Visualization

Guided visualization is a type of relaxation technique that involves creating an image of a peaceful setting in the mind. This method is usually practiced in isolation as it requires a fair bit of focus and concentration.

You are encouraged to create a detailed mental image of a serene and attractive setting. The peaceful visual image is used to associate with the sensation of relaxation to calm the mind and body.

Meditation is the ultimate Zen habit to incorporate in your day. It might seem complicated but once practiced can turn your life around.

Chapter 7: Establish a Daily Routine

Having a daily routine is discipline. And discipline is what Zen habits are all about. When you have a set routine to follow, you can get more things done and in less of a time span. Routine adds structure to your day and gives it a more ordered and calm feeling.

It's not only planning your daily and weekly chores that need attention, but also how you take care of yourself during this time. You also need to establish healthy habits as part of your routine so you can take care of your body and mind in order to keep up with your planned schedules.

How do you do that? You pay attention to these aspects of your daily life.

Eating Well
Exercise
Lower Stress

Chapter 8: Respect and Appreciate Life

People who are able to find happiness in small things are those who live a happy life.

For others, it's easy to forget what they have since they're so busy looking for what they don't have. It's funny how the mind works- thinking that what you could have will be more valuable than what you do have. But just how do you measure this happiness?

If you want to lead a happier life, try including these Zen habits to appreciate life better.

Learn To Let Go
Turn More to Nature
Happiness Is Closer Than You Think