

Material covered this week

This week we got into the nuts and bolts of how we are going to sit and breathe when we enter into silent prayer. We are probably going to sit – though some may choose to stand. If we sit we are going to get the chair right so our weight is evenly distributed. We are going to sit up with good posture, in balance, alert but not anxious, using core strength. We are going to breathe into the bottom of the lungs, fully aware of the breath.

Questions for reflection

- Think of what you did last week – was there anything you didn't intend to do, but which you were tricked or lured into doing by a business or other organization?
- Do you sense that your body is part of the whole of who you are, or do you make a distinction between 'me' and 'my body'?
- Is there a difference in how it feels to sit when you have arranged your furniture so you can plant your feet flat on the floor and your thighs flat on the chair?
- How does it feel different to sit up in full awareness of the working of the muscles in your core?
- When did you last think about breathing?
- Does it feel strange or familiar, to breathe into the bottom of your lungs? Could you do it all the time?

Further prompts for discussion

- What did we think of the suggestions about how to sit and breathe?
- Have we been able to follow them?
- Any experiences to share?
- Are we getting the hang of the breathing? It might be worth sharing our experiences of breathing in this way, just to be sure we're all learning the same thing...
- Likewise sitting – can we help each other get it right?

Before silence: "pre-flight checks"

As we enter into silence this evening let's be really conscious of breathing and sitting well:

- Sit alert but not tense, balanced, grounded
- Make sure there are no pressure points, feet flat on ground
- Forearms on thighs, hands loosely together
- Breathe in: fill the lungs from the bottom, the belly a dome, chest out, then ribs out
- Breathe out from the bottom of the lungs, like rolling up an air bed

Time	Activity / Notes
7.45	Arrivals
8.00	Opening prayer
8.05	Check in
8.15	Reading
8.45	Reflecting on silence
9.00	Anything else?
9.10	Silence and concluding prayer