

## The Contemplative Practice of Equanimity

Equanimity is defined as: mental calmness, composure, and evenness of temper, especially in a difficult situation. It can also be interpreted as a state of even-minded openness that allows for a balanced clear reading of the situation and a clear response to the situation. Equanimity is key to maintaining healthy social connections by not being emotionally reactive.

Two types of Equanimity: 1. the inner relationship we have with ourselves and 2. the outer relationships we have that are social, family, friends, co-workers etc.

My Japanese teacher always told me that “The relationship I have with myself is how I relate to others”. Equanimity starts as a behavior within, it’s that heart to heart conversation with our self on how we want to show up in the world, how we want to be. It starts with an intention on how we want to act. This doesn’t mean we will always act that way but we have set the bar for ourselves on what that behavior looks like in our daily life.

Maintaining Equanimity connects us to that wisdom source of the ancient knowledge that exists within our inner world. Our inner Equanimity need not be contingent on what is happening externally, only our state of consciousness matters.

### Exercise

RECREATE, in your mind, an event in your life which really upset you. MAKE IT REAL in your mind. Feel the emotion of anger start to become intense. Then follow the steps below.

Steps:

STOP

BREATHE

LET GO

Visualize a Stop Sign. We all know what this looks like. Key is to REMEMBER to Stop! Stop yourself from reacting and stepping over the line into Fight or Flight Mode. Remove yourself from the situation, physically or mentally in order for you to regroup.

How you regroup: Immediately Start to Breathe. With your Breath you can control the emotional reaction taking hold of your body. Picture this as the parachute behind the dragster racing down the track. Your Breath is the parachute. Your body is the speeding dragster.

Close your eyes, place both hands on your lower belly and with a strong intention breathe into the palms of your hands. Do this for 3 minutes while visualizing that dragster racing down the track starting to slow down.

Once you have slowed down: LET GO It's that simple. ***You don't have to allow yourself to become upset.*** Just take a deep breath, let it out, and let go of the negative feelings and energy inside of you. Let it out with the sound of HAAA Relax.