
SEIZA & THE SEIKA TANDEN

Seiza

Seiza is the term for the traditional Japanese posture of kneeling or sitting on your heels for meditation and energetic development practices.

This won't be applicable to those less-supple students who find this position uncomfortable and therefore a distraction to whatever they are doing. Most practices which this position would be used for can be done in other more comfortable and familiar positions.

To properly adopt the Seiza posture, you must first remove your footwear (even if you are not using the Seiza position, it is a good idea to remove shoes as you will feel more connected to the Earth).

Once seated on your heels, place the big toe of one foot over the big toe of the other (underneath you) and spread your knees apart by approximately two hand-widths.

Place your hands, palms down, on your thighs and tuck your chin in slightly.

For certain practices you may need to close your eyes (however, often it is better to only half-close your eyes as - especially in the early stages of using this technique— this will help prevent you from drifting mentally).

Finally, focus loosely in your Seika Tanden (see below), co-ordinating body and mind.

The Seika Tanden

Commonly referred to as simply The Tanden, the Seika Tanden is an energy centre (a focal point or area about the size of a grapefruit) located deep within the body, in a specific area of the Hara.

Hara literally means 'belly' and is commonly used to refer to the lower part of the abdomen (the area between the naval and the top of the pubic bone), though it should be used to refer to the entire area from the top of the pubic bone up to the base of the sternum.

Physically speaking, it is the body's centre of gravity.

The term Seika is simply translated as 'below the naval' and the word Tanden is the Japanese equivalent of the Chinese 'Tan Tien' (also Dan Tien) or 'field of the elixir'. It is also known as 'Kikai (Ocean of Ki) Tanden and as Seika no Itten (the 'One Point' below the naval.

SEIZA & THE SEIKA TANDEN

In the more traditional Japanese spiritual, therapeutic, martial and creative arts, it is understood that ones very life essence (perhaps even ones spirit itself) is seen to reside in the Seiki Tanden.

It is said that Ki is moved by the mind... “Where the attention goes, Ki follows”... To effortlessly focus (NOT concentrate) the awareness in Seika Tanden is to place one’s energy there. By placing effortless emphasis and energy at this area in the lower abdomen, integration of body and mind is deepened and strengthened, and the Spirit is dynamically grounded in the Present Moment.