



Exercise Three: The One-Minute Exercise

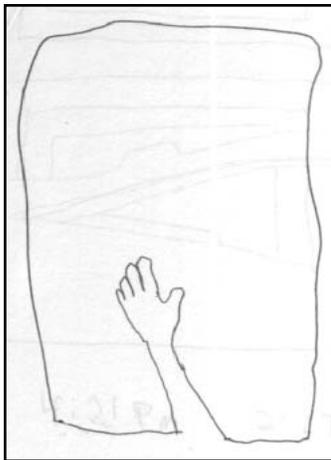
Time involved: 1-10 minutes

Materials: A piece of paper and a pencil or pen

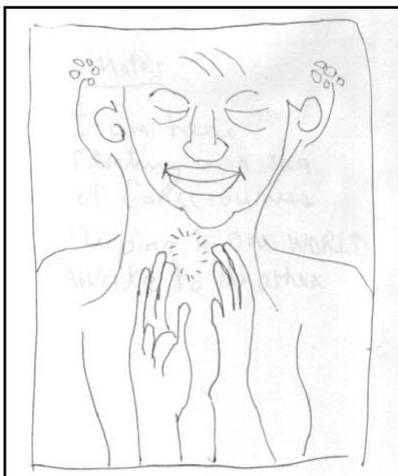
The ability to focus our attention is vitally important. It can save you in a dangerous situation. Focused attention can dis-arm doubts and distractions. Success of all kinds (financial, relationship, career, health-related) follows a focused intention.

Conscious, *unfocused* attention has a role to play too. I recommend that you make a special place and time for practicing *unfocused* attention. And keep a sketch pad handy. Tender and sometimes amazing insights come from places deep inside you when the normal focus is temporarily turned off. I'm not talking about taking a nap. I'm talking about stepping out of your normal focus for only one minute. It's actually surprisingly refreshing. You'll notice that sounds appear clearer and colors brighter. Important things that you had taken for granted (like the chair supporting you) claim a space in your awareness.

You will be sitting completely still. For one minute, you will not move any muscle in your body, except, of course, you may breathe and blink your eyes and swallow. No twitching, looking this way and that, shifting position, scratching an itch. Your eyeballs are not to move. As strange as this sounds, it is okay to do this in public. I thought other people would be shocked by my one minute of complete stillness, but no one seemed to notice. I've done this in malls, offices, bus stations, classrooms. If I am interrupted in the middle of this exercise, I just smile and come back to the exercise later.



*I waited to see what others would say.
Now it is time to act. I wait no more.*



*Even the tiniest respect for the interior space
of humanity opens up the door to a life of
wonder and awe and gratitude.*

The One-Minute Exercise

1. Find a safe, comfortable place to sit completely still. You will NOT MOVE ONE MUSCLE IN YOUR BODY for one minute.
2. Your eyes will soften and gaze at one spot for one minute. Pick a spot that won't get up and walk away. A good place to focus is an intersection of two stationary objects. Look for one now.
3. Now that you have found a place to sit and a spot to focus upon, all you have to do is just BE for one minute. Physically you are relaxed. Visually you are focused. Mentally you are unfocused and open.
4. After one minute, pick up your pen with your non-dominant hand. Allow a line to draw itself out onto your paper. Then another line. No judgement, emotion or control. Be open to whatever develops on the paper. Make it okay to not know what will happen on the paper.
5. Thank yourself for taking one minute to BE.
6. When finished, write a few words.

See pages 180-182 of my book, "Drawing as a Sacred Activity" for more about this exercise.