

## THE ITP KATA

### *The Core of the Practice*

#### *About the ITP Kata*

The *ITP Kata* is a series of movements that embodies the definition of practice itself: it is an activity that, *for all of its benefits*, is done on a regular basis primarily *for its own sake*, because it is the path upon which you walk.

The series of mind-body-spirit exercises comprising the *Kata* are the core of ITP. The movements are intended to articulate all the muscle groups and joints in the body and to offer an opportunity for deep rhythmic breathing, relaxation, transformational imaging and meditation. The *Kata* was created by Aikido sensei and human potential pioneer, George Leonard, as a daily practice, intended to tap our latent capacities and to provide the experience of living a vital, joyful and fulfilling life.

The word *Kata* (kah-tah) is Japanese and means “form.” The ITP *Kata* was designed to be performed in 40 minutes, each element blending into the next, without a sense of haste. Its lineage can be traced back to hatha yoga, the martial arts, modern exercise physiology, Progressive Relaxation, visualization research and witness meditation.



The Kata offers the following benefits:

- Balances and centers the body and psyche
- Provides a generalized warm-up, speeding the heartbeat, increasing the flow of blood and sending an infusion of warmth to all parts of the body
- Articulates and lubricates practically every joint in the body
- Makes available a comprehensive course of stretches, increasing flexibility in all major muscle groups
- Includes three essential strength exercises
- Provides a full set of Progressive Relaxation exercises, in which muscle groups are tightened then allowed to relax deeply
- Presents numerous opportunities for deep, rhythmic breathing
- Includes a period devoted to transformational imaging during which the powers of intentionality can be applied to making positive changes in body and psyche
- Concludes with ten minutes of meditation

## *The Kata*

You don't need any special equipment to do the ITP Kata, only a carpeted floor or mat or an outdoor setting, and loose clothing.

When you do the Kata, think in terms of months or years, not days or weeks. The shift from short-term to long-term thinking and acting might well be the most important lesson this training has to offer.

### **Balance and Center – GRACE**

G – Ground  
R – Relax  
A – Aware  
C – Center  
E – Energize

### **The Water Series**

1. Drill for water, 4 left, 4 right
2. Pump Water, 6
3. Fountain, 6
4. Finger spray, 4
5. Half windmill, 4 (left - right, left - right)
6. Rowing, 10 left, 10 right, with reach and shake

### **Articulation**

7. Shoulder rotation, 4 forward, 4 back
8. Head rotation, 4 each of 3 variations
9. Arm swing, 12
10. Pelvic rotation, 4 left, 4 right
11. Knee rotation, 4 left, 4 right

### **Floor Series**

12. Hip joint rotation, 8
13. Quad tightening, 6 sets of 6
14. Foot rotation, 4 counterclockwise, 4 clockwise
15. Hamstring stretch
16. Hip stretch
17. Quad stretch
18. Back stretch
19. Spinal curl
20. Curl-up, 5 sets of 10
21. Elongation stretch, 2
22. Groin stretch

### **Mini Yoga**

23. Sun Salutation, 2
24. Spinal twist (left & right)
25. Deep relaxation

### **Transformational Imaging & Affirmations Ten-Minute Meditation**

---

\* Number of repetitions

# MEDITATION

## *Opening to Grace*



### *About Meditation*

Meditation is the disciplined observation of thoughts, feelings, impulses, and sensations as well as the spontaneous turning of heart and mind toward a presence beyond the ordinary self. By combining “self-observation” with what is sometimes called “contemplative prayer,” in meditation you can contact new depths of being, awareness, and delight.

Meditation deepens an awareness that transcends your ordinary functioning. As you continue meditating, you realize that you are more than any mental picture, more than any emotion, more than any impulse, more than any bodily process, more than any pattern of experience with which you typically identify. That “something more,” you will find, brings an unshakable security, freedom and delight.

The all-encompassing embrace of meditation helps sustain a radical renewal of your entire organism. Because it transcends your particular parts, it helps you rise above the many obstacles to growth we encounter. In the course of meditation, many people experience a gratitude for life that impels them to commune with a higher power. The sense of blessedness that deep meditation bestows turns the heart toward the source of things. Meditation naturally turns to that source, asking for nothing more than loving contact with it.

## *Practice Meditation*

**Posture.** Assume a sitting position with back straight, on a floor cushion with your legs crossed or in a chair. An erect sitting posture, either on a cushion that elevates your seat from the ground or in a straight-backed chair, will help you remain alert. During meditation, a good physical attitude facilitates a good psychological attitude. An alert but relaxed posture tends to produce an alertly poised state of mind. In this, the body and inner life mirror one another.

**Relaxed Focus.** Place your attention a few feet in front of you. Do not stare or strain to concentrate. Instead, maintain a relaxed focus, as if you were gazing into at a gentle stream. This style of attention, this soft downward look, is not as fatiguing as staring. It also helps to keep your mind from drifting. You can also meditate with eyes closed.

**Breathing.** When your posture is comfortable, let your belly expand. Make sure that your breath is not confined to your chest. Full, relaxed respiration, in which both the lower and upper abdomen are involved, is more conducive to meditation than constricted breathing, which typically causes or is caused by anxiety. Anchor your attention in the rise and fall of your breath. Focus on your lower abdomen and return to it whenever your mind wanders.

**Awake and Aware.** As your posture, gaze, and respiration join to form a state of alert relaxation, remain calmly present to your stream of consciousness, to both its familiar and unfamiliar patterns. Do not judge yourself, for in meditation of this kind there is no “good” or “bad.” You are simply deepening your self-awareness, whatever it brings to light. You are getting more intimate with yourself. You are gently exercising new control of your mind and exploring new depths of your body and soul.