



7 DAYS OF AWARENESS

A PRACTICAL REFLECTION GUIDE

Notice. Reflect. Grow.

KUNG FU BLUE MOUNTAINS

Traditional martial arts. Lifelong learning.

Welcome

Most of us move through large parts of the day on habit, reacting to people, situations and pressures before we have really noticed what is happening.

Awareness is one of the most important qualities cultivated through traditional martial arts.

Before we can improve the way we move, respond or act, we first need to become more aware of what is already happening.

That is the purpose of this seven-day practice.

You do not need any previous martial arts experience, special equipment or a large amount of time. Each day introduces one simple practice that you can carry with you as you move through your normal routine.

The aim is not to judge what you notice or immediately try to change it. For now, the practice is simply to become more aware of what is already there.

Over the next seven days, you will explore awareness from a different perspective each day. You will notice your habits, recognise your triggers, observe your body, consider your intention, become more aware of your environment, explore the choices available before you respond, and finally begin to carry that awareness with you more naturally.

At the end of each day, take a few minutes to record what you noticed. You do not need to write a lot. A few clear observations are enough.

There are no right or wrong answers. The value is in the practice.

How to Use This Guide

Each day follows the same simple structure. The sections below will guide you through what to practise, why it matters, what to notice and how to reflect on what you experienced.

Try not to rush ahead. The practice works best when each day is given its own attention rather than treating the week as something to complete as quickly as possible.

If you miss a day, simply return when you can. You do not need to start again.

Progress in traditional martial arts comes through consistent practice rather than perfect practice. The same approach applies here. Small acts of attention, repeated over time, are more valuable than a short burst of effort that is difficult to sustain.

Keep returning to the practice and see what you discover.

TODAY'S PRACTICE	What to pay attention to during the day.
WHY THIS MATTERS	A little context for the practice.
WHAT TO NOTICE	Prompts that direct attention without prescribing an experience.
REFLECTION	One main question, with optional prompts if you want to go deeper.

The Practice at a Glance

1	Notice Your Habits Become aware of the things you do automatically.
2	Notice Your Triggers Recognise the situations that prompt a reaction.
3	Notice Your Body Observe how your body responds throughout the day.
4	Notice Your Intention Pay attention to what is guiding your actions.
5	Notice Your Environment Become more aware of how your surroundings influence you.
6	Choose Your Response Notice the moment in which a choice becomes available.
7	Living with Awareness Carry the awareness you have been developing with you.

At the end of the week, you will look back over the whole experience and reflect on what you discovered simply by paying closer attention.

BEGIN WITH DAY 1

You do not need to understand where the seven days are leading. Begin with Day 1 and let the practice unfold through experience.

Notice Your Habits

TODAY'S PRACTICE

Today we begin by paying attention to our habits.

Throughout the day, notice how often you act without consciously choosing to. You may reach for your phone the moment there is a quiet pause, interrupt someone before they have finished speaking, tense your shoulders when you feel pressure, rush through a task because you are used to hurrying, or repeat the same small behaviours without really thinking about them.

Do not try to stop the habit or decide whether it is good or bad. Simply notice that it is there.

Awareness comes before change. We cannot choose a different response until we first recognise what is already happening.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Traditional martial arts begins with observation. Before we can refine a movement, improve our balance or reduce unnecessary tension, we first have to recognise what we are already doing.

The same principle applies beyond the training hall. Many of our habits operate quietly in the background because they have become familiar. We may repeat them without giving them much attention at all.

Becoming aware of those patterns gives us an opportunity to understand them more clearly.

Today is not about changing the habit. It is about seeing it.

WHAT TO NOTICE

As you move through the day, pay attention to repeated behaviours and familiar reactions. Notice the moments when you catch yourself thinking, 'I always do that.'

Some habits may be physical. Others may appear in the way you think, speak or respond to particular situations.

There is no need to search for them. Simply notice when they appear.

Notice Your Habits

REFLECTION

What habit or automatic reaction did you notice today?

If useful, consider: What was happening when you noticed it? Was this something you already knew about yourself, or did it surprise you?

One thing I want to remember from today:

Notice Your Triggers

TODAY'S PRACTICE

Yesterday, you began by noticing some of the things you do automatically. Today, shift your attention towards the situations that can prompt those automatic reactions.

Here, a 'trigger' simply means something that prompts a noticeable reaction.

Throughout the day, notice moments when something inside you changes. Perhaps someone says something that irritates you. You may be delayed, criticised, interrupted, ignored, disappointed or placed under pressure.

You might notice frustration, impatience, defensiveness, tension, withdrawal or an urge to react quickly.

You do not need to manage the reaction perfectly. Your practice today is simply to recognise what triggered it.

WHY THIS MATTERS

In traditional martial arts, pressure can reveal our automatic responses. We may tense, resist, rush or lose our balance before we have fully recognised what happened.

Those reactions give us useful information.

Everyday situations can reveal similar patterns. By becoming more aware of what prompts a reaction, we begin to see the connection between what happens around us and what happens within us.

For now, the work is still observation.

WHAT TO NOTICE

Pay attention to moments when your internal state changes. If you notice irritation, impatience, tension, distraction, defensiveness or withdrawal, consider what happened immediately beforehand.

Was it something another person did? Something about the situation? A thought or expectation of your own?

You are not trying to explain the whole reaction. Simply notice what seemed to set it in motion.

Notice Your Triggers

REFLECTION

What trigger did you notice today?

If useful, consider: How did you know you had been triggered? Did you notice it while it was happening, or only afterwards?

One thing I want to remember from today:

Notice Your Body

TODAY'S PRACTICE

Today, bring your attention to your body.

As you move through your normal routine, notice your breathing, your posture and the places where you carry tension.

You may notice your shoulders rising while you work, your jaw tightening during a difficult conversation, your breathing becoming shorter when you feel pressure, or your posture changing as your energy or mood changes.

Do not force yourself to relax or correct anything. Simply observe what your body is already doing.

WHY THIS MATTERS

In traditional martial arts, awareness of the body is fundamental. Before we can reduce unnecessary tension, improve our structure or move more efficiently, we first have to recognise what the body is doing.

The body can also give us information about our state before we have consciously put that experience into words. Breathing changes, posture shifts and muscles tighten.

Learning to notice those changes helps us become more familiar with what is happening in our body.

WHAT TO NOTICE

From time to time today, check in with your breathing, posture and areas of tension.

Notice whether anything changes during or after a conversation, task, stressful moment or period of concentration.

There is nothing you need to correct. Observe what happens.

Notice Your Body

REFLECTION

What did you notice about your body today that you hadn't been aware of before?

If useful, consider: Were there particular situations where your body changed noticeably? Did anything change when you brought your attention to your body?

One thing I want to remember from today:

Notice Your Intention

TODAY'S PRACTICE

Today, become more aware of something that quietly guides many of the things you do: your intention.

From time to time throughout the day, pause and ask yourself a simple question: What is my intention right now?

Intention does not need to be profound. It may be as simple as finishing a task, helping someone, making a point, avoiding something or getting somewhere quickly.

You might notice it before a conversation, while beginning a task, when helping someone or simply as you move from one activity to the next.

Sometimes your intention will be clear. At other times, you may realise that you are acting largely through habit or momentum.

Simply notice what seems to be guiding the action.

WHY THIS MATTERS

In martial arts training, intention gives direction to action. What we are trying to do influences the way we organise ourselves and how we respond to what happens next.

The same can be observed in everyday life. Some of our actions have a clear purpose, while others happen because they are familiar, expected or already in motion.

Becoming more aware of intention helps us recognise when we are acting deliberately and when we are simply continuing through habit.

WHAT TO NOTICE

Before beginning a task or conversation, ask yourself what you are trying to do and why.

Notice the occasions when your intention is clear, and the occasions when you realise you are simply moving from one thing to the next.

If you are not sure what your intention is, notice that too.

Notice Your Intention

REFLECTION

What did you notice about your intention today that you hadn't recognised before?

If useful, consider: When was your intention particularly clear? When did you notice yourself acting more through habit or momentum?

One thing I want to remember from today:

Notice Your Environment

TODAY'S PRACTICE

Until now, most of the practice has focused on what is happening within you. Today, we widen the field of attention.

Turn your attention outward and notice how your surroundings influence the way you think, feel and behave.

You may feel calmer in nature, more distracted in a noisy environment or more hurried when everyone around you seems to be moving quickly. You may notice that some people bring out particular responses in you, while other environments make it easier to relax or focus.

Do not try to control your surroundings. Simply notice the relationship between yourself and the environment around you.

WHY THIS MATTERS

In traditional martial arts, awareness extends beyond our own body. We learn to pay attention to space, distance, timing, movement, obstacles and the people around us because we never act in isolation from our surroundings.

The same is true in everyday life.

Our environment influences us in many quiet ways. Some places help us settle or concentrate. Others create distraction or pressure. The people around us can also affect how we behave and respond.

By becoming more aware of those influences, we begin to notice our relationship with the world around us rather than paying attention only to ourselves.

WHAT TO NOTICE

Notice where you feel most settled and where you feel most distracted.

Pay attention to the effect of noise, movement, space, people and activity. You might also notice whether your behaviour changes as you move from one environment to another.

You are not trying to improve the environment today. You are learning to recognise its influence.

Notice Your Environment

REFLECTION

What did you notice about your environment today that you hadn't recognised before?

If useful, consider: Which environment had the strongest effect on you? How did it influence the way you thought, felt or behaved?

One thing I want to remember from today:

Choose Your Response

TODAY'S PRACTICE

Over the past five days, you have been developing awareness by noticing your habits, triggers, body, intention and environment.

Today, begin exploring what that awareness makes possible.

Throughout the day, notice moments that might normally create an automatic reaction. Someone may frustrate you. Something may go wrong. You may be interrupted, disappointed or become impatient.

When you recognise one of those moments, pay attention to what happens just before you respond.

You may notice a brief opportunity to choose what happens next.

Sometimes you will notice the choice before responding. Sometimes you will recognise it afterwards. Both are part of the practice.

The aim is not to produce the perfect response. The practice is simply to recognise when a choice is available and, when you can, make that choice deliberately.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Traditional martial arts develops our ability to respond to changing circumstances rather than relying entirely on automatic reactions.

Awareness can create a little more space between what happens and what we do next.

Sometimes that space is very small. Even recognising the choice after the moment has passed can help us see more clearly how our responses take shape.

With practice, noticing the choice can become part of the response itself.

WHAT TO NOTICE

When something prompts a reaction today, notice your first impulse.

Ask yourself whether you need to follow it immediately. Is there another response available? What changes if you give yourself a moment before acting?

You are not searching for the right answer. You are practising recognising the point at which a choice may be made.

Choose Your Response

REFLECTION

What did you notice about your choices today that you hadn't recognised before?

If useful, consider: Was there a moment when you realised you had more than one possible response? What did you choose? What did becoming aware of the choice teach you?

One thing I want to remember from today:

Living with Awareness

TODAY'S PRACTICE

For the past six days, each practice has given you something particular to notice. Today, there is nothing new to add.

Instead, carry the awareness you have been developing with you as you move through your day.

As you work, speak with family or friends, drive, train, rest or go about your normal routine, notice whether any of the previous practices arise naturally.

You may recognise a habit, notice a change in your breathing, become aware of your surroundings or realise that you have a choice before responding without deliberately setting out to do so.

There is no need to search for those moments. Simply notice when they occur.

WHY THIS MATTERS

At first, awareness is something we practise deliberately. We remind ourselves to pay attention and intentionally observe our habits, reactions, body, intention and surroundings.

Through continued practice, we may begin to notice some of these things without deliberately looking for them.

This does not mean being aware of everything all the time or never reacting automatically again. It simply means that paying attention is beginning to become more familiar.

The aim of these seven days was not to practise awareness for a week and then leave it behind. It was to begin carrying that awareness into everyday life.

WHAT TO NOTICE

Today, notice when awareness appears without a deliberate reminder.

Did you recognise a habit without looking for it? Did you notice your body reacting? Did you become more aware of your surroundings or recognise a choice before responding?

Let the previous six days come together naturally.

Living with Awareness

REFLECTION

What did you notice today?

If useful, consider: Which parts of the previous six days appeared naturally? Did awareness feel different today from Day 1? What would you like to keep noticing?

One thing I want to remember from today:

Looking Back – Reflection

Over the past seven days, you have explored awareness from several different perspectives.

You began by noticing your habits. You then became more aware of the situations that trigger your reactions, the way your body responds, the intention behind your actions and the influence of your environment.

From there, you began to recognise that awareness can reveal opportunities to choose how you respond. Finally, you explored what happens when some of that awareness begins to arise more naturally in everyday life.

You did not need to learn a complicated technique or memorise a sequence of movements. You practised something more fundamental: paying attention.

Take some time now to look back over the week. There are no right or wrong answers. Simply reflect on what you actually experienced.

What surprised you most during the past seven days?

Which day's practice had the biggest impact on you, and why?

Did you notice anything about yourself that you hadn't recognised before?

Reflection, continued

Have you found yourself becoming more aware in situations outside the daily practices?

Is there one practice from this week that you would like to continue?

My Week at a Glance

Before you close the workbook, capture one thing from each day that you would like to remember. Keep it brief - a word or sentence is enough.

DAY 1 Something I noticed about my habits

DAY 2 Something I noticed about my triggers

DAY 3 Something I noticed about my body

DAY 4 Something I noticed about my intention

DAY 5 Something I noticed about my environment

DAY 6 Something I learned about my responses

DAY 7 Something I want to carry forward

Keep Practising

The seven days are complete, but the practice does not need to end here.

You do not need to repeat the entire sequence every week. You might choose one part of the practice that was particularly useful and continue working with it.

Perhaps you keep noticing your breathing while you work, recognise a familiar trigger earlier, pay closer attention during conversations, become more aware of the effect of your surroundings or pause briefly before responding when something does not go the way you expected.

What matters is continuing to return to awareness.

This is also how learning develops through traditional martial arts. We practise, observe what happens and return to the practice with a little more experience than before. Over time, things that were once difficult to notice can become easier to recognise.

REMEMBER

The seven days are complete. The practice is simply to keep noticing.

Continue Your Journey

7 Days of Awareness is part of The First Step, the free introductory learning experience from Kung Fu Blue Mountains.

The First Step explores traditional martial arts through practice, observation and reflection. Rather than asking you simply to accept ideas, it gives you opportunities to experience them and then consider what that experience may reveal.

That is exactly what you have begun to do over the past seven days.

You practised awareness in several different ways. You observed what happened and reflected on what you discovered.

The next stage of The First Step builds on what you have experienced here and begins exploring the principles behind what we practise, how practice develops those principles, and what they can teach us beyond the training hall.

If this workbook is your first experience with Kung Fu Blue Mountains, you are welcome to continue with The First Step. If you are already working through The First Step, return to the classroom and continue your journey from there.

CONTINUE

Continue your journey with The First Step.



CONTINUE WITH THE FIRST STEP

Scan the QR code to join the Kung Fu Blue Mountains community and access The First Step.

No martial arts experience is required.

