



SIT Mindfulness Course

Teaching Points

Mindfulness of Breath

Instructions

- Point to direct experience
- Point to principles of mindfulness

Factors to Consider/include:

1. Set Up Practice

- Put away materials/phone etc.
- State time length of practice

A. Reminders re mindfulness

- Clear awareness in present moment
- Kind/connected/curious attention meeting/welcoming experience as it is
- For the purpose of developing understanding and insight

B. Meditation as training

- Importance of returning/beginning again and again

C. Focus and thinking

- Normalize the thinking mind Meditation is not about not thinking

D. Breath

- Explain why we use breath as object:
Neutral/available/changes/present moment
Breath is a reference point for how present we are

E. Beginners mind re breath

F. Embodied language

- Emphasize – feeling/sensing/embodied orientation

2. Posture

- Bring awareness to your posture, body
- Notice/meet the state of the body – tired, stressed, calm, etc.
- Emphasize balance of relaxed in body, alert with attention

3. Eyes

- Closed/open/soft gaze



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Mindfulness of Breath (continued)

4. Breath

- Let breath breathe naturally:
Not pranayama/not yogic breath
- Practice is learning to be with experience just as it is – e.g. breath:
Not how you want breath to be Feel the whole cycle of breath Receive breath
- Allow breath to permeate awareness and vice versa

4. Breath (Optional)

- Feel for some moments the breath at the nose, chest, belly
- Observe where you feel breath most clearly:
Focus on that place for the whole breath
- Observe space between breaths:
Pause/silence/peace/stillness
- Sometimes breath is controlled – if possible let go,
If not be aware of a controlled breath
or shift attention to sounds to release control

5. Curiosity

- Cultivate a curious attention to breath Imagine its the first or last breath you'll take:
Fall in love with the breath
- Appreciate this breath of life:
Notice how breath breathes itself

6. Refining the attention

- Notice beginning middle and end of each in/out breath:
Sustain attention
- If mind is busy:
Labelling as an option
Counting as an option – only 5% attention on the label:
Primary emphasis on the direct experience

7. Noticing other experience

- Will notice many other phenomena:
simply acknowledge and return attention to breath



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Mindfulness of Breath (continued)

8. Distractions

- Notice when you're distracted
- Soon as you recognize you are thinking/lost in thought – that itself is a moment of mindfulness
- Emphasize practice is beginning again and again
- No matter how far you drift- takes only a moment to return

9. Reminders/Reflections – can be asked as questions

- Where is the attention now
- What are you aware of in this moment
- Where do you go when not attending in the present
- Are you more aware of in or out breath?
- Do you drift on in or out breath?
- Notice how the breath breather itself
- Observe how the breath reveals itself naturally in awareness
- Where does one breath end and the next breath begin
- Sense the sacred pause between breath

10. Ending

- In the last minute begin again as if for the first time
- Bring people out slowly of the practice
- Bring people's attention into their body/the room
- Open eyes slowly
- Notice any difference in breath, body , feeling, mood, thoughts, energy
- Notice where you were distracted etc.
- How do you feel now
- Ask the room for questions/observations/insights

11. Post-meditation contextualizing of practice

- Practice is simple not easy
- The naturalness of thinking
- Encourage lightness with our humanness
- Practice is both a training and a discipline as well as an art form
- Other teaching considerations
- Understand who your audience is and their level of experience:
Are they/ beginners/cynics/engineers/artists/kids?