

Meditation 2 week 5

Start with 3 minute breathing space

- Bringing yourself into present moment by deliberately adopting an erect and dignified posture. Ask what is my experience right now ... in thoughts ... in feelings ... in bodily sensations. Acknowledge and accept it even if unwanted.
- Settling your attention on the sensations of breathing.
- Expanding your awareness so that it includes a sense of your body as a whole, including your posture.

Review of last week. Remind them of the analysis of mental factors we found. How we practised acceptance, curiosity about their existence and their counterparts in our bodily sensations.

Can identify the negative aspects as Greedy, Grumpy, Sleepy, Anxious and/or Dubious.

Review of homework and week.

Mindfulness of breathing exploring the sorts of mental states there are in our experience. Will focus on 3rd stage of mindfulness of breathing:

- Overall sense of how you are being right now
- Particularly noticing how confident you feel about how to do the meditation and your own ability to do it. ... As best you can, simply acknowledging these thoughts.
- Now reminding yourself of why you are meditating and the values which are important to you. ...
- Noticing again how confident you feel.
- Now attending to how you're **feeling** at this moment
- In particular noticing the energy level of your emotions – is the energy level high or low? Spending a minute or two exploring this. ...
- Becoming more aware now of the **sensations in your body**.

- And now, for a couple of minutes, bringing your awareness through the whole body part by part, beginning with your toes and feet, and concluding by resting here with an awareness of the whole body...
- Now, having a sense of your whole body sitting here in a relaxed, dignified posture...
- And allowing your awareness to settle more fully on the sensations of your breathing.
- Keeping your main attention on the sensations of breathing, noticing once again your energy level.
- If you have a high energy level, try thinking about something that encourages the opposite feeling, for example, imagining sitting by a peaceful lake watching a full moon. If your energy level is low, you may like to try taking a deep breath and letting it out slowly.
- If you are noticing that your mind is being drawn away from the sensations of breathing, noticing first whether there is any irritation or ill will in your experience, or anything that your mind is being drawn to.
- Now bringing awareness to the physical sensations. If your emotions feel strong, how do you know that you are feeling the way you? Where in your body are these emotions?
- If your emotions are not very strong, simply noticing any subtle feelings as best you can and where they are in the body. Maybe it may help to imagine your emotions to be like water and noticing whether the water is choppy or calm.
- Remembering to keep a main focus on the sensations of breathing while having a broader sense of the body.

Feedback on what happened in this meditation. Go through the way that the meditation was led if it went well for them.

Now going to look at choices we can make in meditation.

Using the four types of meditation.

concentrative – focus on object and suppress other things

generative – cultivate positive factors or aspects

Elements which can be present:

- initial thought – identify something

- sustained thought – dwell on something
- rapture – physical response like a tremor
- happiness or bliss
- one-pointedness, better translated as one-mindedness.

This tells you that thought is part of meditation.

receptive – sky-like attitude, letting go/be – what we did last week

reflective – think of the consequences – most useful for doubt and outside meditation

How can we apply these ideas in actual meditations?

How do they give us more choices?

calming vs. energising

paying attention to positive aspects

asking ourselves questions

Stages of levels of concentration:

- integration
- inspiration
- permeation
- radiation

These are all metaphors. Can have a model of mind and integration is where the mind is in harmony. Sometimes have experiences of inspiration which is like a lake with a stream bubbling into it. With permeation, like a flower immersed in the water. It is deeper than inspiration. When elephant gets into a pool there is a huge splash – like inspiration, but when the pool is bigger, there is hardly any splash and is permeation. Even deeper is radiation.

Suspect that everyone has glimpses of these. Sometimes inspiration can come in terms of visions.

This is the way meditators have translated levels of meditation. But there is a danger of thinking that ought to be experiencing them. But worth looking for them in your experience.

Mindfulness of breathing

- Overall sense of how you are being right now
- Becoming more aware now of the **sensations in your body**.

- Bringing attention to whatever you can appreciate in your experience of your body.
- And allowing your awareness to settle more fully on the sensations of your breathing.
- bringing attention to any seeds of contentment
- bringing to mind an image, such as light, or a calm scene or imagining your mind like water and letting any sediment settle at the bottom so that the water is crystal clear. Noticing that there may be waves on the surface of the water but deep down it is calm.
- focusing on how you are already contented, already enjoying the meditation
- asking questions such as, how could I become more concentrated?

Diaries

Handout

What to do when this course has finished.