

Tonglen Meditation

Mindfulness Worksheet

Date / Time:

What have you brought mindful awareness to today? Check all that apply.

☐

Heart

☐

Mind

☐

Body

☐

Breath

☐

Environment

To begin this Meditation, please bring kind awareness to

- why you chose this topic
- how your belly, chest, and head each feel when you reflect on this topic
- the emotions that you can associate with these visceral feelings
- the positive or negative impact of any stories you believe in regarding this topic
- the fact that many others are feeling similarly about this topic as you
- how you might feel with increased awareness around this topic
- when you can apply increased mindfulness to this topic in your day-to-day life



PURPOSE / EFFECTS:

Fundamentally, tonglen is a practice for dissolving the armor around the heart. It opens a person up to love, allowing the natural love within us to flow.

By wishing that good things happen, and bad things don't happen, for ourselves and for others, we can slowly contact our compassion and forgiveness.

If you are feeling stuck, cold, alienated, loveless, or alone, tonglen can be a very powerful practice for reawakening yourself to love and connection with others.

METHOD:

Summary

On each in-breath, visualize negativity disappearing into a white light in your heart. On each out-breath visualize the white light radiating love and compassion outward.

Tonglen Meditation

Mindfulness Worksheet

Long Version

1. Settle into a comfortable meditation posture
2. Breathe deeply and come to a centered, grounded awareness.
3. Visualize a sphere of brilliant, pure, clean white light in the center of your chest. This is the light of perfection, joy, healing, love, and compassion.
4. Now bring to mind all the troubles in your life. Any illness, discomfort, problem, difficulty, worry, negative emotional state, and so forth. Picture these as a dark cloud.
5. With each in-breath, imagine you are breathing this dark cloud into the white light, where the dark cloud is completely and totally extinguish without a trace.
6. With each out-breath, imagine all darkness being dispelled, and the joy and relief you feel. Imagine the infinite light of your heart flooding every cell of your body, filling you completely with happiness, love, and fulfillment.
7. Continue this process for as long as you wish.
8. If you want to go further with the practice of tonglen, you can repeat these steps for other people, animals, the earth, etc. Imagine taking all the negativity into the light in your heart, where it is dissolved. Then imagine your heart radiating love and happiness to that person/animal/etc.
9. When you are ready to finish the practice, expand your awareness to include the entire world. Again, on the in-breath, draw all the negativity into your heart, where it is extinguished forever. On each out-breath, radiate love and compassion to all beings.
10. Finally, release all images and desires, and simply rest in awareness for a few moments.

Tonglen Meditation

Mindfulness Worksheet

HISTORY:

Tonglen is a practice of Tibetan Buddhism. The term tonglen means “giving and receiving” in the Tibetan language.

NOTES:

Some people worry that taking the negativity into themselves could be somehow harmful. This is not the case. The power of the practice is to remove depression, anxiety, and alienation. There is no danger of, say, contracting an illness.

