

Observing My State of Mind

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



We humans spend a lot of our time in our heads. We plan, rationalize, contemplate, strategize, and perform many other tasks with the miraculous mind of ours. Indeed, the mind is miraculous, but what happens when we spend too much time there?

When we are caught up in the stories and strategies of the mind, it is difficult to remain *mindful* of these stories and strategies.

To be mindful of what is happening inside the mind is to take a step back – to observe what is going on in the mind as if we were an outside observer.

Mindfulness practice helps us to strengthen our ability to observe in this way. It helps us to witness the stream of thoughts, emotions, and ideas that move through us rather than mindlessly flowing with their every move.

This exercise is a simple practice to help us become more aware of the state of mind we are currently experiencing.

It includes a mindfulness meditation practice and a series of follow-up questions to enhance self-awareness. Explore this exercise with curiosity and compassion.

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PRACTICE:

1. Begin by finding a quiet and comfortable place to meditate. Set a timer for ten minutes. Close your eyes and settle in through mindful breathing.

For the duration of these ten minutes, use the breath as your anchor. Hold it loosely in your awareness, simply feeling the rise and fall of the chest or belly as you breathe.

At the same time, keep your awareness open to any thoughts or feelings that are moving through you. Without becoming attached to them, make note of them as an outside observer. You can do this by acknowledging them with a single word to describe the energy of this thought or feeling.

For instance, you might note your experience with words such as:

- *Planning*
- *Organizing*
- *Judging*
- *Controlling*
- *Excitement*
- *Tingling*
- *Heaviness*
- *Warmth*
- *Numbness*

The key here is two-fold:

I. Avoid attaching a sense of self to the word you acknowledge the experience with. For instance, rather than saying, 'I am judging', simply say, 'judging'.

II. Let the word come and go without holding onto it. After acknowledging your present thought or feeling with an appropriate word, sink back into the breath or to the silence beneath the thinking mind.

4. Continue this practice until the alarm rings. When it does, take your time to slowly come back to the space around you.

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REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. What qualities or energies did you observe during this practice? Put an asterisk beside any that were predominant or recurring.

2. How easy or difficult was this practice? How easy or difficult do you think it would be at a different time of day (or on a different day all together)?

3. When the mind is agitated, what can you do to help enhance mindfulness, peace, and ease?

4. What will you take away from this practice? What do you think the benefits are of witnessing your state of mind in this way?