

Reducing Complexity

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



You may have heard a quote by Confucius that goes like this:

“Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated.”

In our modern way of living, things can indeed be complex. However, how much of the complexity is due to our direct experience and how much is due to our mental activity? Drawing mindfulness to the complexity in our lives can help us to ease the added complications that the mind creates.

Simple exercises that bring us into the present moment can help to reduce complexity. When the mind is weaving a heavy web in response to something we experienced, we might find it helpful to take a moment's pause and to come back to the simplicity of being.

You can reduce complexity and come back to simplicity by:

- Following the rhythm of your breath
- Noticing how feelings or emotions present themselves in the physical body
- Grounding into the earth beneath you
- Exploring mindful movement (i.e. nature walk, yoga)
- Focusing on a single object, such as a plant or a hot mug of tea
- Practicing gratitude for the small things
- Tuning into the heart (i.e. compassion, patience, generosity)
- Focusing on the single next step or task at hand

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The above are simply examples of ways to tune back into the simplicity of being. This is not an extensive list and each moment requires something different.

In fact, some moments and situations require direct action, planning, or preparation. However, when the mind is racing and appears to be complicating things, we might ask ourselves:

Is it possible for me to simplify?

The following exercise and reflection questions invite us to mindfully inquire into areas of our life where we might be able to simplify things. Explore this with curiosity and patience.

EXERCISE:

1. Take a moment to sit quietly with your eyes closed. Ground yourself by taking a few mindful breaths. When you feel settled, mindfully inquire:

Is there a situation in my life that could benefit from simplification?

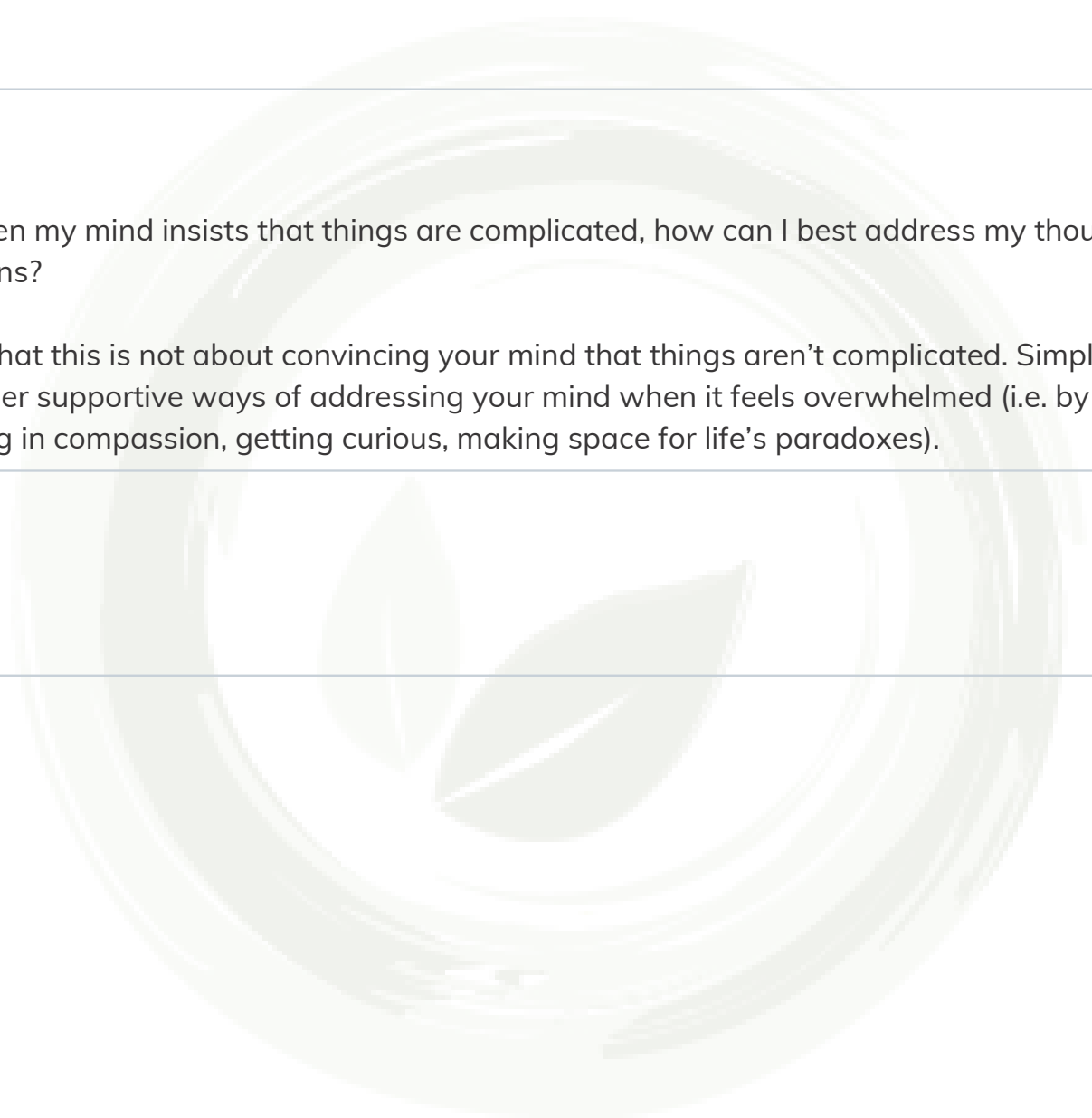
2. Once you have identified a single area of your life that could benefit from reducing complexity, take a few more breaths and then open your eyes. Continue with the following questions:

a. What situation or area of my life could benefit from simplification?

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b. What mindfulness practices or thoughtful steps can I take to simplify things?



c. When my mind insists that things are complicated, how can I best address my thought patterns?

Note that this is not about convincing your mind that things aren't complicated. Simply consider supportive ways of addressing your mind when it feels overwhelmed (i.e. by inviting in compassion, getting curious, making space for life's paradoxes).