

Mindfulness in Daily Life

Welcome to Your Guide
on How to Look Within

Online Edition



How to Practice Mindfulness Meditation In Your Daily Life

By Stephen Procter

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My Students World Wide:

For your generosity in supporting the publishing of this guide.

Welcome to Your Meditation Journey

Mindfulness Meditation in Daily Life (*MIDL*) is designed to be brought into your everyday activities. When practicing this style of Mindfulness Meditation, you train so that there is no difference between sitting in formal seated meditation and your everyday life. What is important is awareness of your relationship to whatever you are experiencing; “now.”

This is an internal path; a way of looking within yourself. It comes with the understanding that any lasting happiness cannot be found in our life situation but in our relationship to it. If you want to experience true happiness it has to come from a change of relationship within, from deep contentment within your own heart.

This practice lends itself to anyone with a questioning mind. If you like to look into things, question them, pull them apart; not taking anything on face value; then you will find this meditation practice endlessly interesting.

Look within; become intimate with your hearts centre, with your deepest desires and fears. Learn how to hold them gently, to feel your own pain and allow it to heal through this ancient path. Join me on this journey towards real happiness, you won't regret it.

Your life will change; it will feel smoother, less ups and downs. You will experience more happiness and your relationships will improve. As your meditation practice develops it will give rise to understanding of the functioning of life itself and lead to deep contentment and peace within your heart.

Take care, Stephen Procter
Sydney Australia

Introduction on How to Practice

This is a gentle path; it contains no added pain or suffering. There is enough pain in life without adding to it. While practicing Mindfulness Meditation in Daily Life it is important to develop an openness and honesty towards what you are experiencing.

It is only through becoming intimate with your deepest negative habitual tendencies that you can develop understanding of how to be free of them. Meditating in a gentle and open way allows you to be with these tendencies without reacting. This intimate non-reaction is the path to deconditioning negative habitual patterns.

My original idea of meditation was one of fighting a battle against my thoughts, emotions and pain; I used to tie myself up in knots. My answer to this was always: “More effort, more striving.” One of my meditation teachers, John Hale, noticed this and gave me some advice that changed my meditation practice. He said:

“Embrace all experience like you would a suffering child.”

“Embrace all experience.” Not just some, not just the parts that you like, embrace all experience with the gentleness, kindness and empathy that you would show a child when it is in pain. Embrace your own pain, hold it, caress it, and be gentle with it.

John showed this gentleness in the way he meditated and the way he lived his life. He was the first person in whom I could really see that this Mindfulness practice did not end when you stood up from your meditation cushion, it was meant to be lived.

When following the Mindfulness Meditation in Daily Life system (*MIDL*) within this guide do so with kindness and gentleness towards yourself and what you are experiencing.

Mindfulness Meditation in Daily Life

Mindfulness in Daily Life can be separated into two practices:

- * Seated Mindfulness Meditation.
- * Mindfulness in Everyday Activities.

When practicing Mindfulness Meditation in Your Daily Life:

- * Seated Mindfulness Meditation is training for Mindfulness in Everyday Activities.

In essence the practice is the same whether you are sitting still or engaged in your everyday activities. The main difference is that when you intentionally sit down to meditate you are, to a certain degree, creating a more controllable environment in which to cultivate the Three Main Mental Factors of Investigation, Mindfulness and Concentration (*page 3*).

Formal Seated Meditation allows you to focus on cultivating these Three Mental Factors in a specialised way. When you sit down to meditate you should do so with the attitude of exercising them, free from the distractions of your daily life. This focus will allow Investigation, Mindfulness & Concentration to become strong and constant so that you can transfer them into your everyday activities. This is your main goal.

Understanding What Meditation Is

* Meditation (*Bhavana*): literally means ‘*Cultivating*’ or ‘*Development*’. It is not just sitting still doing nothing. Meditation is an intelligent activity in which you intentionally cultivate the conditions to allow certain mental factors to grow and develop. These factors are Investigation, Mindfulness and Concentration and they are developed by Systematically Training your Attention.

Cultivating the Three Mental Factors

If you want to grow a fruit tree, you first plant a seed and provide the right soil type, food, water, temperature and light. Protected from insects and animals, the plant will grow, and when ready produce fruit. In this way you Cultivate the Three Mental Factors.

Investigation, Mindfulness & Concentration

* Investigation (*Dhamma Vicaya*): literally means "*investigating the Dhammas*." It is the desire to look into, to silently question whatever you are experiencing through the Six Sense Doors (*eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind*) (page 20).

Investigation is one of the main Mental Factors that I find is weak in most meditators. Without the spirit of Investigation, it is not possible to penetrate Delusion (*Moha*) and experience reality. Questioning your current reality is necessary for the development of Mindfulness Meditation practice. Without it you may experience some stillness but not wisdom, therefore it will not have an impact on any Negative Habitual Tendencies controlling your life.

* Mindfulness (*Sati*): literally means 'memory' or 'to remember'. It is continuous remembering of the Awareness of the present experience (*reality; Dhamma*), at any of the Six Sense Doors (*eye: sight, ear: sound, nose: smell, tongue: taste, body: touch and mind: thoughts / memories page 20*). It is a particular type of remembering, not remembering the past but remembering the present. During your meditation practice you will continuously forget the present; forget your meditation object. Noticing this is one of the functions of Mindfulness. Mindfulness is the key to this meditation practice; without Mindfulness it is not possible to meditate. If Mindfulness is not present the mind defaults back to Habitual Patterns of behaviour, when present it Experiences Reality (*continued page 5*).

* Concentration (*Samadhi*): literally means: *"to unify, to bring together."* This is the result of continuous Mindfulness, unification of Awareness, increased steadiness and clarity of consciousness. Concentration during meditation is not something that you do; it is result of being continuously Mindful of your present experience.

When the Three Mental Factors of Investigation, Mindfulness and Concentration have not been developed your attention during meditation will jump around, your Awareness will be dispersed. It will move between Awareness of the present experience (*reality; Dhamma*), at any of the Six Sense Doors (*eye: sight, ear: sound, nose: smell, tongue: taste, body: touch and mind: thoughts / memories page 20*).

One of your tasks during Mindfulness Meditation Training is to unify Awareness by remembering where your attention is sitting. As Awareness concentrates and focuses in on one thing, it starts to become steady, still and clear. When Awareness is concentrated it also has the effect of suppressing the Five Hindrances to Meditation: *Sensual Desire, Mental Aversion, Mental Restlessness, Mental Sluggishness and Doubt (page 10)*.

Awareness: Your Lens to the World

* Awareness (*Vinnana*): literally means 'consciousness, awareness of an object / experience'. Whenever you experience anything through any of the Six Sense Doors, the knowing of the experience that is present is Awareness. During meditation practice your task is to continuously remember Awareness of your meditation object.

Awareness in its essence is pure, clear, still, but it can literally be Coloured by Emotional Responses (*Kilesa*) when they are triggered by your relationship to any experience that arises at the Six Sense Doors. This Colouring from Emotional Response, when it is present, alters the lens through which you perceive the world.

"Literally the perception of the world you live in changes."

Understanding What Mindfulness Is

Have you ever considered why human beings have the ability to be Mindful?

Mindfulness is a gift; it allows self reflection and the ability to change Negative Habitual Patterns. When Mindfulness isn't present you can become trapped within emotional responses, and like an animal, have no choice but to react when they arise. This is how most people live, with no Mindfulness, trapped within an illusionary world of thinking and Emotional Response.

The Pali word for Mindfulness is '*Sati*', which literally means '*memory*' or '*to remember*'. It is a particular type of remembering, not remembering the past but remembering the present. During your meditation practice you will continuously forget the present; forget your meditation object. Noticing this is the function of Mindfulness.

If you break down the word '*Mindfulness*' you can start to get a picture of what is meant in terms of the meditation practice. First let's look at the meaning of '*Mind*' in Mindfulness. '*Mind*' in this context means '*to look after*', '*care for*', '*to protect*'; it can also be used as '*to keep in mind*' – '*to remember*'. When you add '*ful*' to the end of '*Mind*', you could use it in a sentence as "*Be Mindful of*" If you were crossing a road, I might say to you: "*Be 'Mindful' of the traffic, keep the traffic in 'Mind' when you cross the road.*"

If you forget your present experience you are in danger of reacting in a way that will lead to suffering. In this way Mindfulness protects you. Mindfulness protects you from creating future pain. When '*ness*' is added to the end of a word it means to be '*in a state of*', '*to dwell within*', it makes it active, continuous. For example, if you were continuously happy, you would then be experiencing happiness, you would live within it. So '*ness*' in Mindfulness means '*a continuous state of being Mindful, your dwelling place, where you live*'.

Creating Your Mindfulness Framework

“Maturing in Mindfulness Meditation is refining your Morality.”

For Mindfulness Meditation in Daily Life practice to develop it is beneficial to create a Framework from which you can observe the way that you live your life; everything you think, say and do. This Framework is the Mindfulness Training of Refining Morality (*Sila*). This creates a reference point from which to observe and develop understanding about any Negative Habitual Patterns.

Mindfulness Training of Refining Morality

* I undertake the Mindfulness training of harmlessness and to practice kindness and compassion to all beings.

* I undertake the Mindfulness training of not taking that which isn't offered and to practice generosity towards all beings.

* I undertake the Mindfulness training of refraining from using sexuality to harm myself or others and to live in contentment.

* I undertake the Mindfulness training of truthfulness in thought, speech and action, and to live experiencing reality.

* I undertake the Mindfulness training of avoiding anything in my life that lowers my awareness and to live with Mindfulness.

Being Mindful of the way you are living your life places a spotlight on Negative Habitual Patterns. As these patterns of behaviour become clearer, you will develop understanding of what feeds them and also how to remove their fuel. This then gives you the ability to Decondition Patterns that create pain within your life, ones that separate you from yourself, others and the world around you.

Four Mindfulness Meditation Efforts

Effort to Abandon & Guard

1) To Develop and act upon the intention to Abandon any Negative Mental Qualities that have Already Arisen.

2) To Develop and act upon the intention to Guard Against the arising of any Negative Mental Qualities that have Not Yet Arisen.

* Negative Mental Qualities are those that if '*reacted to*' have the result of driving people, animals and the world away, making you feel separate, unloved and alone. This leads to mental suffering.

* Negative Mental Qualities can be Aversion Based: Aversion, irritation, anger, hatred, ill will, anxiety, depression, sadness, guilt etc. or Desire Based such as: Greed, lust, obsession, attachment, addiction, narcissism, selfishness, ungratefulness, indifference etc.

Three Ways to Abandon / Guard

1) By Deconditioning them using the Softening Skill: Negative Mental Qualities require resistance to reality to exist and feed on this resistance. By breaking the '*Emotional Signature*' into its '*Elemental Quality*' (*page 41*) and using the Skill of Softening to lower the resistance so the Habitual Pattern Deconditions.

2) By intentionally Replacing the thought in your daily life: You can intentionally replace any Negative Thought Process with a positive one, encouraging the Positive Emotion to arise.

3) By intentionally Abandoning the desire in your daily life: When you notice the desire to act on a Negative Mental Quality such as irritation, anger, selfishness, obsession etc, you Soften Into the desire and go against your Negative Habitual Tendencies by acting on its positive opposite. Eg: for selfishness use generosity.

Effort to Cultivate & Establish

3) To Develop and act upon the intention to Cultivate the arising of any Positive Mental Qualities that have Not Yet Arisen.

4) To Develop and act upon the intention to Establish any Positive Mental Qualities that have Already Arisen.

* Positive Mental Qualities are those that if 'reacted to' have the result of bringing people, animals and the world closer together. They make you feel included, loved, part of something bigger than yourself. This leads to mental happiness and peace.

* Positive Mental Qualities are experienced as unconditional love, kindness, compassion, empathy, gratitude, generosity, and joy for others success. Mental factors that you use to meditate are also positive mental qualities such as investigation, mindfulness, concentration, equanimity, patience, persistence, etc.

Three Ways to Cultivate / Establish

1) By intentionally Cultivating them in seated meditation:
Using a concentration meditation technique, you can intentionally cultivate and strengthen Positive Mental Qualities by encouraging the arising and establishing of positive emotions. Try the exercise for cultivating Loving Kindness (*Metta*) on (page 29).

2) By intentionally Cultivating them in your daily life:
You can intentionally replace any negative thought process with a positive one, encouraging the positive emotion to arise.

3) By intentionally Acting on them in your daily life:
When you notice an opportunity to act on a positive mental quality such as kindness, generosity, compassion, empathy, gratitude etc, you embrace it and go against your Negative Habitual Tendencies by acting on this positive opportunity.

Seated Mindfulness Meditation Section

Beginning Your Meditation Training

Mindfulness Meditation is a training of the mind not the body; you can practice Mindfulness Meditation while walking, standing, sitting or lying down, and everything in between. Website Article:

* When Sitting on the Floor placing a cushion under your buttocks and sitting on the front edge lowers the need for hip flexibility. Once seated fold one leg into your body so that the sole of the foot is facing the inside thigh of the other leg, then fold the other leg in front of it so that they lay flat next to each other.

* When Lying on a Floor for meditation, make sure your body is flat, if you have back troubles you can slightly bend your knees and place a bolster under them to help with your backs arch. To keep alertness so that you don't fall asleep have your arms loose by your sides and always have the palms facing upwards as this will help with the energy flow.

* When Sitting on a Chair be careful of your posture. On a straight-backed chair, do not lean against the back rest, instead sit towards the front of the chair, keep your back straight and slightly rotate your hips forward. Sitting in an arm chair, you can sit fully back, back straight, supported by the chair. In both cases your forearms and hands can sit gently on your legs, make sure your head is not slumped but evenly balanced.

The Five Hindrances to Meditation

When you start Mindfulness Meditation it is normal to experience restlessness, sleepiness and an endless stream of thoughts / memories. You may even experience doubt in your ability to meditate, in your teacher or the meditation technique. These are just symptoms of the Five Hindrances and learning the skills to deal with them is part of Mindfulness Meditation training.

* The Five Hindrances to Meditation (*Nivarana*) are:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) Sensual Desire. | 4) Mental Sluggishness. |
| 2) Mental Aversion. | 5) Doubt. |
| 3) Mental Restlessness. | |

The above Five Hindrances stop the development of meditation by creating mental agitation and energy imbalances within your practice. When beginning meditation, it is necessary to suppress them, by holding your attention on one object of meditation to develop some Fixed Concentration. Once some Concentration has been developed and your mind is temporarily free from the Five Hindrances, it is time to begin Mindfulness of Mind (*Cittanupassana*). This is done by, '*loosening your grip*' on your meditation object and allowing the Five Hindrances to arise again. Because Mindfulness and Concentration are now strong, the Five Hindrances will no longer control your mind but instead can be observed and understood.

Try Your ATTENTION TRAINING EXERCISE 1 (*10 minutes*)

- *Sit comfortably on a chair or the floor, eyes closed.
- *Gently hold one hand in the other on your lap.
- *Mentally feel the touch of your hands – remember it.
- *Observe how you feel mentally: Restless, sleepy, still etc.
- *Can you feel the restlessness, sleepiness, etc in your body?
- *Observe your attention move to thoughts and sounds.

Developing the Skill of Grounding

DURING STAGE ONE of seated Mindfulness Meditation your focus should be on training the skill of '*Grounding your Attention*' to help initially suppress the Five Hindrances. To train your attention you need something that you can use as a reference point that can only be experienced '*Now*'. This reference point is the different sensations within your body. These Sensations are experienced as these Four Elemental Qualities:

The Four Elemental Qualities (Maha Bhuta)

Earth Element is experienced as a range of these Sensations:

* *Soft – Hard.* * *Light – Heavy.* * *Smooth – Rough.*

Fire Element is experienced as a range of these Sensations:

* *Cool – Hot.*

Water Element is experienced as a range of these Sensations:

* *Wet – Dry.* * *Stickiness – Cohesion.* * *Clammy.*

Air Element is experienced as a range of these Sensations:

* *Contraction – Expansion.* * *Vibration – Movement.*

Since these Four Elemental Qualities can only be experienced '*Now*' and Habitual Thinking is always focussed towards the past or the future, '*Grounding your Attention*' within sensation creates an Anchor Point from which you can observe your attention move. Like an anchor for a ship in a storm, the Elemental Quality of your body creates an anchor for training your mind.

Try Your ATTENTION TRAINING EXERCISE 2 (*15 minutes*)

- *Sit comfortably on a chair or the floor, eyes closed.
- *Move your attention from your feet up to your head.
- *Take your time and mentally feeling each body part.
- *See how many of the above sensations you can 'feel'.

Creating the Anchor Point for Meditation

To train your attention, it is necessary to create an Anchor Point on which you can develop Mindfulness and Concentration. The sensations of Heaviness and Touch in your body are ideal for this.

*Heaviness is your first meditation object. The Elemental Quality of *'heaviness'* that can be experienced within your body is the first *'Anchor Point'* to *'Ground Your Attention'* on. Keep the experience of *'heaviness'* in mind continuously and notice whenever your Attention moves away from it to help settle Habitual Thinking patterns.

Try Your ATTENTION TRAINING EXERCISE 3 (10 minutes)

- *Sit comfortably on a chair or the floor, eyes closed.
- *Be aware of the feeling of *'heaviness'* within your body.
- *Try to remember it continuously for 10 minutes.
- *Notice anytime your Attention wanders to thinking.
- *Acknowledge it by silently saying "*thinking, thinking.*"

*Touch is your second meditation object. The place where your body *'touches'* the chair or floor, is a good starting point. You may experience your body *'touching'* as the sensations of *'pressing'*, *'hardness'* or *'softness'*. Hold your Attention on these sensations continuously noticing whenever your attention moves from them.

Try Your ATTENTION TRAINING EXERCISE 4 (10 minutes)

- *Be aware of your body touching the chair or floor.
- *Mentally *'feel'* the different sensations of touch.
- *Be aware of the *'hardness'*, *'softness'* or *'pressing'*, etc.
- *Try to remember them continuously for 10 minutes.
- *Notice anytime your Attention wanders to thinking.
- *Acknowledge it by silently saying "*thinking, thinking.*"

Developing the Skill of Softening Into

DURING STAGE TWO of seated Mindfulness Meditation, you start to train the skill of '*Softening Into*' any physical tension or mental resistance that is present. This is done by using slow, deep, gentle breaths through your nose into your belly. Make sure that when you're doing this that the breathing is kept '*slow*', '*deep*' and importantly '*gentle*'; there should be no sound when you breathe. You can increase '*Softening*' by using a '*slow, soft, silent sigh*', each time you breathe out, allowing yourself to mentally and physically relax. When you '*sigh*' there is a natural release of mental resistance and physical tension, repeating this continuously in a gentle way has a deep, calming effect on both your mind and body.

Try Your SEATED SOFTENING TRAINING 1 (*15 minutes*)

- *Sit comfortably on a chair or the floor, eyes closed.
- *Be aware of tension in your body and upper chest.
- *Take a '*slow, deep, gentle*' breath in.
- *With a '*slow, gentle*' breath out; '*Soften Into*' any tension.
- *Soften / relax every cell in your body with every out breath.
- *Allow your body to become heavier, moment by moment.
- *Gently '*sigh*' on each out-breath to deepen relaxation.

Try Your SEATED SOFTENING TRAINING 2 (*15 minutes*)

- *Sit comfortably on a chair or the floor, eyes closed.
- *Place your attention on the point between your eyes.
- *Be aware of tension in the middle of your forehead.
- *Also be aware of tension in the sides of your temples.
- *Take a '*slow, deep, gentle*' breath in.
- *With a '*slow, gentle*' breath out; '*Soften Into*' any tension.
- *Sighing '*Soften Into*', your temples and between your eyes.

How to Slow Down Your Breathing

Slowing down your breathing is an important skill that can be cultivated by training the movement of your diaphragm. When your diaphragm moves it creates a vacuum that sucks air in through your nose and into your lungs. The vacuum only lasts as long as the diaphragm is moving, if the diaphragm stops then the air stops being drawn in.

If you take a fast, sharp breath in, the movement of the diaphragm will be very quick, and because the holes in your nose are small, the vacuum created is greater than the amount of air that can be drawn through this small passage. This will leave you with little air in your lungs causing you to feel stressed or anxious. Learning to move the diaphragm slowly creates a gentle, steady vacuum over a longer period of time. This means that more air gets drawn into your lungs and the slow, deep, gentle breaths will alter your state of mind making it calm and clear.

Try Your SEATED BREATHING TRAINING 1 (*10 minutes*)

Stage 1:

- *Sit comfortably on a chair or the floor for 10 minutes.
- *Eyes closed, place your palms below your belly button.
- *Train to move your diaphragm slowly, gently and precisely.
- *Breathe in slowly through your nose, down to your palms.
- *Breathe out slowly from your palms, to your nose.

Stage 2:

- *Sit comfortably on a chair or the floor for 10 minutes.
- *Eyes closed, place your palms below your belly button.
- *Breathe in slowly through your nose, down to your palms.
- *Breathe out slowly from your palms, to your nose.
- *Relax every cell in your body as your breath goes out.
- *Gently, soundlessly sigh along the length of the out-breath.

Developing Mindfulness of Breathing

Mindfulness of Breathing is a method of training your attention through observing the subtle sensations that arise, as the movement of the breath *'touches'* you. The sensations that you experience when you breathe, provide a constant object of meditation that is always available, one that reflects and develops with the changing state of your mind.

Your 10 Mindfulness of Breathing Training Exercises

Your training consists of 10 Mindfulness of Breathing exercises. Develop each exercise before moving on to the next.

1. Allow your breathing to happen naturally.
2. Be aware of the full in-breath from your nose > chest > belly.
3. Be aware of the full out-breath from your belly > chest > nose.
4. In-breath: nose (*coolness*) > chest (*rising*) > belly (*expanding*).
5. Out-breath: belly (*contracting*) > chest (*falling*) > nose (*warmth*).
6. Notice *'expanding / contracting'* in your shoulders / upper back.
7. Notice *'expanding / contracting'* throughout your whole body.
8. Following *'contraction'* of the out-breath to the very end.
9. Notice end of out-breath & sit / relax in gap between breaths.
10. Noticing end of out-breath > gap > beginning of in-breath.

DURING STAGE THREE of seated Mindfulness Meditation your training is to observe the sensations of breathing as it comes in from the tip of the nose, moves through your chest, into your belly and all the way back out again. In this first stage of Mindfulness of Breathing it is enough to just be aware of the breath as it comes in and out. A simple mental label can be used to help point your attention and develop concentration. As the breath comes in silently say *"in, in"*, as the breath goes out silently say *"out, out"*.

Do not control the breath in any way, your task is just to observe and remember your experience of the natural breathing. During the exercise if your attention wanders it is enough to acknowledge the distraction and come back to awareness of your breathing.

Try your SEATED MINDFULNESS TRAINING 1 (15 minutes)

- *Sit comfortably on a chair or the floor, eyes closed.
- *Follow the steps in Attention Training Exercise 3 & 4 (page 12).
- *Allow your breathing to happen naturally.
- *Be aware of the full in-breath: 'Nose > chest > belly'.
- *Be aware of the full out-breath: 'Belly > chest > nose'.
- *Use silent labels such as "In" and "Out" with each breath.
- *Notice anytime your Attention wanders to thinking.

Observing Control of Your Breath

During seated Mindfulness Meditation you may start to notice that your breathing doesn't flow naturally. If your breathing feels tight and it is an effort to breathe during your meditation there is a good chance that you are mentally controlling your breathing; even if you do not realise it. If so, training in this exercise can help.

Try Your SEATED BREATHING TRAINING 2 (10 minutes)

- *Sit comfortably on a chair or the floor, eyes closed.
- *Breathe in gently then breathe out slowly.
- *Do not breathe in again but relax and wait; (*don't hold it*).
- *Wait and relax and the breath will come in naturally.
- *Gently '*mentally feel*' the breathing as if from a distance.
- *Breathing will now be light, smooth and beautiful.
- *Notice any tightening that appears within the breathing - (*This is you trying to control it - relax the control*).
- *If breathing tightens repeat the process; develop the skill.

Switching to Pure Mindfulness Training

DURING STAGE FOUR of seated Mindfulness Meditation training, it is time to switch to pure Mindfulness practice. To do this it is necessary to develop Momentary Concentration (*Khanika Samadhi*), rather than Fixed Access Concentration (*Upacara Samadhi*) which was being developed in the earlier three stages.

For wisdom to arise during Mindfulness Meditation practice, it is necessary to be able to Perceive the Characteristic of Impermanence (*Anicca*) at the Six Sense Doors (*page 20*). If you become too one-pointed in Concentration the Six Sense Doors will start to shut down, and your Perception of the Characteristic of Impermanence (*Anicca*) will cease, removing your ability to develop understanding and wisdom. By changing the type of concentration, you are developing from Fixed to Momentary, you switch from suppressing the Five Hindrances at these doors to making their changing nature the object of your meditation.

To develop Momentary Concentration, it is necessary to observe the Sensate Quality arising at any of the Six Sense Doors (*page 20*). Since Momentary Concentration develops on the Perception of Impermanence, it doesn't shut down the Six Sense Doors; instead, it increases the Awareness of them allowing wisdom to arise.

Awareness of the Six Stages of Breathing

This is done by not only being aware of each breath as it comes in and out, but by observing the changing sensations that you are experiencing within the movement of the breath itself. These sensations arise as the air '*touches you*', as it is drawn in and out of your body as you breathe. As your breath comes in you may experience the in-breath at the tip of your nose as '*coolness*', then the sensations of '*rising*' within your chest, then an '*expanding*' movement within your belly.

As your breath goes out you may experience the out-breath as a 'contracting' movement within your belly, sensations of a 'falling' movement within your chest and 'warmth' at the tip of your nose.

☆ Try your SEATED MINDFULNESS TRAINING 2 (15 minutes)

- *Sit comfortably on a chair or the floor, eyes closed.
- *Follow the steps in Mindfulness Training 1.
- *Be aware of the sensations within your in-breath from: 'Nose (coolness) > chest (rising) > belly (expanding)'.
- *Be aware of the sensations within your out-breath from: 'Belly (contracting) > chest (falling) > nose (warmth)'.

Awareness of Expansion & Contraction

DURING STAGE FIVE of seated Mindfulness Meditation, you start to train your sensitivity to the experience of 'expansion' and 'contraction' of breathing throughout your body. When observed your breathing does not actually come in and out, rather as the breath comes in, your body expands out, as it goes out, your body contracts in. Develop this perception throughout your body.

Try your SEATED MINDFULNESS TRAINING 3 (20 minutes)

- *Be aware of the Six Stages of Breathing continuously.
- *Widen your attention to your whole body.
- *Notice the 'Expanding / Contracting' breathing.
- *Notice it in your 'shoulders / upper back'.
- *Notice your whole body appear to breathe.
- *Develop the perception of Expanding and Contracting.
- *Notice your whole body Expand and Contract.
- *Notice anytime your Attention wanders to thinking.
- *Acknowledge it by silently say "thinking, thinking."

DURING STAGE SIX of seated Mindfulness Meditation turn your attention towards the breath as it goes out, following the 'contraction' to the end. This will draw your attention 'inside', because when following the 'expansion' and 'contraction' of your body, the out-breath moves inward. Pay attention to the very moment the out-breath ends and allow your attention to sit in that 'gap' that appears between breaths; sink into the stillness you find there. Do not try to make anything happen but instead wait for the next in-breath to begin. As you do this the end of the out-breath will become clearer, the gap between the breaths will lengthen and the beginning of the in-breath will also clarify.

DURING STAGE SEVEN of seated Mindfulness Meditation, you start your training to increase the accuracy of your attention and in becoming more intimate with the Characteristic of Impermanence (*Anicca*). You do this by noticing the very moment each breath begins and the moment it ends, then the gap in-between the breaths. Pay particular attention to the moment anything ends so that the Perception of Impermanence clarifies.

Try your SEATED MINDFULNESS TRAINING 4 (20 minutes)

- *Sit comfortably on a chair or the floor, eyes closed.
- *Follow the steps in Mindfulness Training 1 - 3.
- *Follow 'Contraction of the Out-breath to the end'.
- *'Soften Into' it relaxing into your 'hearts centre.'
- *'Sit in / relax in' 'the 'gap' at the end of the 'contraction' between the in-breath and out-breath.
- *Clarify gap between the in-breath and out-breath.
- *Notice the 'end of the out-breath > gap > beginning of in-breath'.
- *Allow the gap between the breaths to clarify.

The Six Sense Doors to the World

While you are training Mindfulness of Breathing you will start to notice that there is more than just the experience of breathing attracting your attention. You may experience visual images, sounds, smells, itches, aches within your body and thoughts / memories. These are just experiences, that arise from the world 'touching' you through one of the Six Sense Doors.

* Six Sense Doors: *(all contain the characteristic of impermanence)*

- 1) Eye: Sensitive to Light. 4) Tongue: Sensitive to Taste.
- 2) Ear: Sensitive to Sound. 5) Body: Sensitive to Touch.
- 3) Nose: Sensitive to Smell. 6) Mind: Mental Processes.

The first Five Doors respond to the world 'touching' you. The Mind Door interprets these through Memories and Perceptions.

Investigating your Attention Moving

While practicing Stages Four to Seven of seated Mindfulness Meditation, you can start your training in the skill of observing any movement of your attention away from the experience of your breathing. You do this by loosening your grip on your meditation object and allowing your attention to wander.

By using your breathing as a reference point and noticing when your attention moves away from it you cultivate Mindfulness and understanding about the Five Hindrances to Meditation (*page 10*).

When practicing Mindfulness Meditation correctly there is no such thing as a distraction, just movements of attention that need to be observed and understood. By making the movement of your attention the meditation object, distraction no longer exists. To understand how you train your attention by allowing your mind to wander during meditation instead of keeping your attention on one

meditation object, can be understood with this analogy of training a horse. One way to train a horse is to put it in a corral and tie it to a strong post, allowing it to buck and kick until tires and sits still. "This is training Concentration for Tranquillity."

Another way is to untie the horse, open the corral, hop on the horses back and allow it to go wherever it wants so that you can develop understanding about the horse and its ways.

"This is training Mindfulness for Wisdom."

Labelling to Clarify Where Attention Sits

Learning how to use *'labels'* to help point your attention, literally: "Here is My Attention", is invaluable for keeping track of where your Awareness sits. Labelling is used as a way of increasing Accuracy of Attention and to separate experience.

Using a *'label'* correctly breaks up experience into its separate components, when broken into its elements then identification with that experience also breaks down.

During your meditation practice you can use a simple label to point your attention towards the experience of breathing. This is done by repeating gently a mental label describing each movement such as "*in, in*" as the breath comes in and "*out, out*" as the breath goes out. While gently labelling the breath as "*in*" and "*out*" make sure that the labels are concurrent with the experience of breathing, this alignment increases the accuracy of your attention.

Experiences other than the sensations within your breathing may appear and draw your attention to them, such as sounds, thoughts, bodily sensations etc. As soon as you notice that they have drawn your attention away from the breathing, label them appropriately as you experience them such as "*thinking*", "*hearing*", "*itching*", etc. At first it is not easy to label such a variety of experiences, but with increased Mindfulness and practice you will be able to do it.

Keep Your Labels Simple

When using ‘labels’ keep them simple, don’t over think the ‘label’. Remember the ‘label’ is a tool to help point your attention towards your meditation object; simply describe your experience.

* Labels for the Experience of Sitting

“sitting, sitting”, “heavy, heavy”.

* Labels for the Experience of Touching the Floor / Chair

“touching, touching”, “pressing, pressing”, “hard, hard”, “soft, soft”.

* Labels for the Experience of Softening Into

“softening, softening”, “relaxing, relaxing”, “calm, calm”.

* Labels for the Experience of Breathing

“in, out”, “cool, warm”, “rising, falling”, “expanding, contracting”.

* Labels for the Experience of Distractions

“hearing, hearing”, “itching, itching”, “aching, aching”, etc.

* Labels for the Experience of Thinking

“planning, planning”, “fearing, fearing”, “fantasising, fantasising” etc.

Labels are a tool to help clarify and separate an experience; you do not need to use labels all the time. If the labeling becomes clumsy or the experience is clear, it is enough to be silently aware.

Try your SEATED LABELING TRAINING 1 (10 minutes)

*Sit comfortably on a chair or the floor, eyes closed.

*Be Mindful of your breathing – Label it “in” and “out.”

*Notice the transition of your Attention moving away to a thought, sound or sensations of pain / pleasure.

*Label it as “thinking”, “hearing”, “itching”, “aching” etc.

*Observe your relationship to the experience (*like / dislike*).

*‘Soften into’ your relationship to it,

*Return to Mindfulness of Breathing.

Observing Thinking During Meditation

When you first start meditating, thinking is one of the main places that your attention will move towards without you noticing. If you don't address the thinking in a skilful way, you may end up in an all-out battle with it that you are doomed to lose.

Instead of fighting your thinking when it comes up during your meditation practice, you can make the thinking process itself the object of meditation, so you can develop understanding about it.

Three Experienced Levels of Thinking

Thinking will be a common visitor to your meditation practice, so it is helpful to be able to identify the type of thinking that is present, so that you know how to work with it.

Thinking is just habit talking to you, it reflects past experience. It will arise during your meditation as three different levels:

- * Level 1) Energetic Thinking: *Energy based.*
- * Level 2) Obsessive Thinking: *Emotionally based.*
- * Level 3) The Commentator: *View Based.*

Level 1: Energetic Thinking

The majority of thinking that you will experience during meditation and everyday life is just the brain trying to burn off excess energy that has been built up throughout your day.

Energetic Thinking manifests as excess energy and restlessness. It can be recognised because it has no steady target, instead it moves from one subject to another. The thoughts are often only related to one little detail within the previous thought, which is usually irrelevant to the original subject.

How to Settle Energetic Thinking

Never try to stop Energetic Thinking during Mindfulness Meditation. The effort of trying to stop it creates more energy and this in turn feeds the thinking, so the cycle continues. Treat this sort of thinking like you would an overactive child or puppy.

If you give them your attention, or try to push them away, they will just become more active, want more attention and return again and again. If you hold '*bare awareness*' of the child or puppy being there, without interacting with them, they will eventually tire and settle by themselves. In this way, be aware of the Energetic Thinking, without being drawn into it. Through non participation the energy will start to lower, the thinking will slow down and eventually stop.

Level 2: Obsessive Thinking

Obsessive thinking will appear during meditation as a thought pattern that hangs onto one subject and won't let go. Obsessive thinking is always driven by an Emotional Charge; this charge is attached to the subject of the thought process.

When this type of thinking arises the identification with the content of the thought is often strong and it can be difficult not to become emotionally involved with it. During meditation it is necessary to be able to distinguish between what you are thinking about and the emotional charge that is driving it.

How to Settle Obsessive Thinking

Never try to deal with Obsessive Thinking at the level of the story; what you are thinking about. This will just make the thought process continue to cycle. Instead, as soon as you notice that you have been caught within the story, acknowledge it and then turn your attention towards the experience of thinking itself.

In particular pay attention to the Emotional Charge driving the thought process and notice where it manifests within your body. It will appear as various sensations such as *'tightness'* & *'tension'*. Once you have identified the sensations notice if they have a *'pleasant'* or *'unpleasant'* feeling tone or flavour permeating them (*Vedana*).

Mentally separate the *'pleasant'* or *'unpleasant feeling tone'* and use slow, gentle breaths to soften into it. This feeling tone is the basis for the whole process. Acceptance and non-reaction to the feeling tone causes the Obsessive Thinking Cycle to collapse.

Try your SEATED LABELING TRAINING 2 (10 minutes)

- *Sit comfortably on a chair or the floor, eyes closed.
- *Gently hold one hand in the other on your lap.
- *Mentally feel the touch of your hands.
- *Make the intension to not think – observe what happens.
- *Notice when thinking arises, identify the emotion charge.
- *Label it as *"planning"*, *"remembering"*, *"fearing"*, etc.
- *Observe your relationship to the experience (*like / dislike*).
- *Notice any emotional response in your body - tightness.
- *Using gentle breathing *'Soften into'* your relationship to it.
- *Return to the touch of your hands.

Level 3: The Commentator

The Commentator is the judge, jury and executioner of the world. It sits in the background of your mind and comments on, judges everything as: good or bad, right or wrong, *"I like, I don't like."* The Commentator lives in a world of separation and enjoys reinforcing the sense of separateness between you and everything else, causing conflict to make itself feel more real.

The Commentator is subtle and looks out at the world through its views and opinions. It is the last layer of thinking, has a strong sense of conceit and is the level we most identify with. The only way to be free from the commentator is through Mindful observation. Observing the Commentator's antics gives rise to Disenchantment (*Nibbida*), causing the identification with it to cease. You will no longer believe the stories that are being told, viewing them as just verbalisation of old habitual patterns.

The Commentator dissolves when you fully penetrate reality.

How Mindfulness of Thinking Develops

When you first start Mindfulness Meditation training you will continuously find yourself lost within thinking. As you observe the process of thinking with Mindfulness, your relationship to it will start to change, attraction to it will weaken and you will be able to experience the peace of freedom from Habitual Thinking Patterns.

How Mindfulness of Thinking Develops

- 1) When your Mindfulness is weak you will only notice that you have been lost within thinking after you are distracted from it.
- 2) As your Mindfulness strengthens you will start to notice when you are lost in thinking, becoming aware of it by yourself.
- 3) As Mindfulness develops the time in which you are lost within thinking will shorten and thinking dissolves under your attention.
- 4) When Mindfulness is strong you will start to notice the very moment, a thought arises and a sucking feeling towards it.
- 5) When Mindfulness & Concentration is fully developed thoughts appear as bubbles that burst when Awareness rests on them.

Skill of Calming all Mental Activity

DURING STAGE EIGHT of seated Mindfulness Meditation, you start training the skill of observing the arising of any Mental Activity and bringing that activity into stillness through Mindful non-participation. This skill of non-participation is developed first as a seated meditation training and then within all daily activities.

Try your SEATED CALMING TRAINING (*20 minutes*)

- 1) Take your meditation posture and place one hand within the other resting them in your lap. Hold gentle Awareness of the experience of your hands *'touching'* until your Attention anchors. Keeping the touch of your hands in mind widen your Awareness and mentally *'feel'* the whole of your body. Be aware of the *'expanding'* and *'contracting'* as your whole body breathes. Allow each out-breath to draw your Awareness into your *'hearts centre'*.
- 2) When fully *'present'* allow the breathing and body foundation to fade into the background. Place your Awareness on the point between your eyes; also, be aware of the sides of your temples. Notice any tension held in the frontal lobes of your brain and using slow, gentle breaths *'soften into'*, relax into the side of your temples and the point between your eyes. Feel the frontal lobes release.
- 3) Notice that every time Mental Activity arises, such as thinking, movement to sound etc, the tension in the frontal lobes of the brain increases. Notice how thinking creates mental tension.
- 4) Every time you notice any tension in the frontal lobes of your brain, using slow, gentle breaths *'soften into'* your temples and the point between your eyes. Be aware of every time thinking arises and how *'softening into'* the tension present, dissolves the process.

Cultivating Positive Mental Qualities

As your practice deepens and the cycles of your Negative Habitual Tendencies weaken through Deconditioning, it is time to start focusing on Cultivating and Establishing positive mental qualities.

Positive mental qualities, such as: Unconditional Love, Compassion, Gratitude, Generosity, Empathy and Joy for Others Success, will not miraculously arise when negative mental qualities based on Anger and Greed are weakened or uprooted.

If your effort throughout your life has been towards reacting through Negative Mental Qualities such as: Anger, Aversion, Greed, etc. Then through lack of practice, the Positive Mental Qualities within you may be weak. If so, focus on Cultivating and Establishing Positive Mental Qualities within your life.

Three Ways to Cultivate / Establish

1) By intentionally cultivating them in seated meditation:
Using a concentration meditation technique, you can intentionally cultivate and strengthen Positive Mental Qualities by encouraging the arising and establishing of positive emotions. Try the exercise on the next page for cultivating Loving Kindness (*Metta*).

2) By intentionally cultivating them in your daily life:
You can intentionally replace any negative thought process with a positive one, encouraging the positive emotion to arise.

3) By intentionally acting on them in your daily life:
When you notice an opportunity to act on a positive mental quality such as kindness, generosity, compassion, empathy, gratitude etc, you embrace it and go against your Negative Habitual Tendencies by acting on this positive opportunity.

Cultivating Loving Kindness (Metta)

Loving Kindness (*Metta*) arises as the feeling of caring and support; it can be directed towards yourself and others removing any feeling of negativity and separateness. Remember to develop an open-heart means to open it to everyone and eventually have no enemies, only loved ones.

Try your SEATED CULTIVATION TRAINING 1 (*15 minutes*)

During this meditation you send kind thoughts in this order:

- 1) To yourself.
- 2) Someone you respect.
- 3) Someone close to you.
- 4) Person you feel neutral to.
- 5) A difficult person.

a) Take your meditation posture, make a half smile on your face, and relax. Now slowly and gently repeat silently to yourself:

"May I be well....., May I be happy....., May I be peaceful....."

b) Gently repeat these phrases to yourself and really mean the emotion behind them. The key is to encourage the positive feeling of love and kindness that comes with repeating these phrases.

c) Once the feeling of Loving Kindness has been developed, move on to the next person on the above list. Do not rush through each person; start with no. 1 & 2. Only move to the next person no.3 when the feeling of Loving Kindness is strong for no. 1 & 2.

d) Change the phrase from I to You and repeat silently to yourself:

"May you be well....., May you be happy....., May you....etc."

Remember you are Cultivating the loving feeling; it may not arise easily at first. Be patient and you will train it to come up easily.

Cultivating a Grateful Heart

Gratitude is not called the king of emotions but often it feels like it to me. Gratitude has the ability to make any Negative Emotional Response that is stuck, move. Negative Emotions get stuck when you are focussing on, through your Habitual Thinking Patterns, what you don't have instead of appreciating and being thankful for what you do. What you are Grateful for does not need to be big, simple things like food, shelter, clothing or a bed are enough.

Try your SEATED CULTIVATION TRAINING 2 (*10 minutes*)

a) Take your meditation posture, make a half smile on your face, and relax. Now slowly and gently repeat silently to yourself:

"Thank you for my (insert name)" "I am so blessed."

"Thank you for my (insert name)" "I am so fortunate."

b) Keep gently repeating these phrases to yourself softly, in no hurry and really mean it, smile when you say it. The key here is to develop the feeling of being Grateful that comes with saying these phrases.

c) Now picture someone you feel Gratitude towards in a happy state of mind and gently repeat silently to yourself:

"Thank you (insert name) for all you have done for me."

"I am blessed to have you in my life."

d) Keep focussing on them in your mind and allow the feelings of Gratitude to grow. Next send your thoughts of Gratitude out into your neighbourhood, suburb, city, state, country and beyond.

"Thank you for all that I have, I am truly blessed."

Forgiveness: Healing the Heart

Forgiveness does not condone or deny what has happened to us, instead it recognises it and says, “What happened was wrong, but it can’t be changed and I will not suffer over it anymore.”

Try your SEATED CULTIVATION TRAINING 3 (*10 minutes*)

Take your meditation posture, make a half smile on your face, and relax.

a) Forgive Yourself

Now slowly and gently repeat silently to yourself:

“(your name here), if I have hurt you in any way, knowingly or unknowingly, please forgive me.”

Say this slowly and gently with meaning three times and each time picture yourself gently saying back: “I forgive you.”

b) Ask for Forgiveness

Now think of someone that you have hurt in some way. Picture them in a happy state of mind and gently, silently say to them:

“(their name here), if I have hurt you in any way, knowingly or unknowingly, please forgive me.”

Say this slowly and gently with meaning three times and each time picture them gently saying back: “I forgive you.”

c) Forgive Another

Now think of someone that has hurt you in some way. Picture them in a happy state of mind and gently, silently say to them:

“(their name here), for any hurt that you have caused me, in any way, knowingly or unknowingly, I forgive you.”

Say this slowly and gently with meaning three times and each time picture them gently saying back “thank you.”

Mindfulness Meditation

in Daily Life Section

Mindfulness Meditation should not be limited to sitting still and meditating. At this stage of practice, you take all the momentum and understanding that you have developed during Seated Meditation and transfer it into your Everyday Activities.

To start doing this, see if you can remain fully aware of any transitions between postures during seated meditation. When you sit down to meditate, do so with full awareness of the movement.

When you finish seated Mindfulness Meditation, pay attention to the desire to stand up and then move from your seated posture with full awareness of any sensations within the movement. These transitions between postures train you in the skill of being able to carry Mindfulness into all activities within your daily life.

Then you can bring your meditation practice into your workplace, home life and relationships – “Your life becomes your teacher.”

You are Always Touching Something

Throughout the day your body is always touching something; your body touching the bed, feet touching the floor, buttocks touching the seat. This sense of touch is your foundation object for Mindfulness in Your Daily Life.

The sense of touch is your reference point to reality. Whenever you forget that your body is touching something that is a sign that you're is no longer present. When you notice you have forgotten that your body is touching something; then re-establish your Awareness within the experience of touch.

Your Daily Life Meditation Postures

* Posture one: An Organised Activity

You can put aside a designated time to do a simple, repetitive activity, in a very Mindful way. If you don't have time for seated meditation, that is ok. You can meditate while swimming, walking, practicing yoga, tai chi or even drinking a cup of tea. Any activity in which you can set aside a period of time to cultivate Investigation, Mindfulness and Concentration, is viable (*page 3*).

Try your DAILY LIFE MEDITATION TRAINING 1

Mindfully put down this guide, stand up and go make yourself a cup of tea / coffee. Place the prepared beverage in front of you; notice the desire to drink it. Mindfully reach for it, bring it to your lips, taste it on your tongue and swallow. See if you can be present; just be with the experience, its simplicity and beauty.

* Posture two: In All Activities

You can hold a general Mindfulness of your body whether you are lying down, sitting, standing, walking or running. Throughout your day keep the sensations of *'touch / movement'* in mind. Be aware of your body touching the bed, buttocks pressing the chair or feet on the ground as you stand or walk. These are your foundation objects; they are the anchor for your attention; they are your grounding object for Mindfulness Meditation in Daily Life. You will often forget your postures and that your body is touching something, that is ok, just acknowledge that you have forgotten, and bring your attention back.

Try your DAILY LIFE MEDITATION TRAINING 2

Mindfully put down this guide, stand up and go for a walk down your street. Be aware of the touch of your feet on the ground, the warmth or coolness of air on your skin. The sounds and sights around you. Notice your thinking mind commenting as you walk.

Establishing Mindfulness in Daily Life

Establishing Mindfulness in Your Daily Life is a skill that needs to be cultivated. Treat this Mindfulness practice in the same way that you would with seated meditation; as mental training.

How to Establish Mindfulness in Daily Life

Before starting, develop your Seated Meditation training up to STAGE 4 so that the Three Mental Factors (*page 3*) are established. Then start by training Skill 1, until it is established in your life, then move on to Skill 2 etc. Do not rush moving through each Skill.

Skill 1. Mentally *'feel'* the touch of your feet on the ground, use it as an anchor for your attention. You will often forget this *'feeling'* of touch. That's ok, when you do just bring your attention back.

Skill 2. Mentally *'feel'* the different sensations within your body throughout the day. Use your whole body as an anchor for your attention. Also hold the *'feeling'* of touch within all postures whether *'lying down, sitting, standing or walking'* gently in mind.

Skill 3. Hold the *'remembering'* of what it is you're doing *'now'* in mind; *'remember'* the activity that you are participating in. It can be as simple as remembering *"I am just sitting in this room reading."*

Skill 4. Observe your *'likes'* and *'dislikes'* without reacting. Using breathing *'Soften Into'* any desire to act on, think or verbalize them.

Skill 5. Watch your mind construct stories about your life. Watch the soap opera of your life being created and the greatest script writer in the world in action. Notice your desire to believe it.

Skill 6. Observe, without reacting to your attachments, any desires and resistances in life. *'Soften Into'* the Emotional Response.

Observing Likes, Dislikes & Resistances

By using the foundation for your attention created in Skills 1 - 3, you will start to notice whenever you resist anything throughout the day. You do this by observing the processes of the mind in Skills 4 – 6 and how they manifest within your body as different sensations. Your views, likes / dislikes, thoughts and resistances will all have a corresponding physical manifestation within your body as the changing sensations of '*Emotional Signatures*'.

Emotional Signatures

An '*Emotional Signature*' is the unique pattern of sensations associated with each Emotional Response as it arises within your body. Every Emotional Response you experience has a specific '*Signature*' in how it appears within your body. These '*Emotional Signatures*' are universal, everyone in the world regardless of race, colour, sex, rich or poor, attractive or unattractive experience these '*Signatures*' the same way.

By becoming familiar with the patterns of sensations that make up each '*Emotional Signature*' as they arise within your body, you will be able to notice any Negative Mental Qualities present, even before you react to them. This is why developing Mindfulness of the Sensate Quality within your body is so important.

Identifying Negative Mental Qualities

*Negative Mental Qualities are those that if '*reacted to*' have the result of driving people, animals and the world away, making you feel separate, unloved and alone. This leads to mental suffering.

*Negative Mental Qualities can be Aversion Based: Aversion, irritation, anger, hatred, ill will, anxiety, depression, sadness, guilt etc. or Desire Based such as: Greed, lust, obsession, attachment, addiction, narcissism, selfishness, ungratefulness, indifference etc.

Your Body is a Mirror of Your Mind

If you are going to look for the truth on how you are relating to an experience emotionally, you will not find it in the mind but in the Elemental Quality of the sensations within your body. Your mind views the world through perceptions which are influenced by past experience. Its interpretation of the experienced 'Now' may not be based on reality, but on your past relationships to experiences.

Your body will always tell you the truth. It does not look at the world and perceive it through past experiences; instead, its function is to reflect it 'Now'. It reflects both the 'touch' of the external world and the 'touch' of your mind, through manifesting patterns of bodily sensations as a reflection of what is going on. Through observing any mental 'reflections' and learning their 'Emotional Signatures', you can receive enough information to know whenever you are resisting anything within your life.

Understanding the Process of Perception

One of the main functions of your mind is to make sense of the world around you. As the world 'touches' you it triggers off the sensitivities of these Five Sense Doors: *Eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body*. This sense of 'touch' arises as an experience which needs to be interpreted in a way that allows you to function within the world.

This interpretation of the Five Senses is made via the process of Trained Perception (*Sanna*). The Mind is the Sixth Sense Door. Its task is to interpret the Sensate Quality of Contact (*Phassa*) at the Five Sense Doors and join them together to create one world. It does this by diving into memory and looking for a past, similar experience, to identify how to interpret what is being experienced 'Now'. If it cannot identify the experience, such as when you try a strange food, it will often err on the side of caution and label the unknown experience as "dangerous".

As a young child your Perception was not yet developed, it was being trained by experiencing things. This learning process was also aided by family, friends, school and society around you. Observe how a young child watches adults if they are unsure what the proper response to an experience is. In this way Perceptions and Habitual Patterns of behaviour are passed down through generations of family and cultures.

Sorting and Storing Memories: Dangerous & Safe

Every memory of your life when brought to mind has either a '*pleasant or unpleasant feeling tone*' attached to it. This '*feeling tone*' is '*Vedana*'; it arises as a '*pleasant or unpleasant flavour / taste*' that permeates all perceived experience. It is the way that your mind sorts and stores all memories. At a base level, for survival purposes, your mind's task is to sort all sense experience as '*dangerous & safe*'.

If an experience is perceived as '*safe*', a '*pleasant feeling tone*' is attached to the memory of it. If an experience is perceived as '*dangerous*', then an '*unpleasant feeling tone*' is attached to the memory of it. These memories are then stored and used as reference points for future perception. Since your mind cannot perceive through anything other than what it thinks it already knows, it interprets '*now*' through its past experience.

When an experience contacts one of the Five Sense Doors, the mind dives into the memory banks and triggers the arising of a suitable Perception based on past experience. If this memory has an '*unpleasant feeling tone*' attached to it, then '*unpleasantness*' will colour the current perception. If it has a '*pleasant feeling tone*' attached to it, then '*pleasantness*' will colour the current perception.

Now when something is experienced as '*pleasant*' what is your normal response? "More." Now when something is experienced as '*unpleasant*' what is your normal response? "Go Away."

Every time you react to a *'pleasant feeling tone'* that arises by wanting "More" or to an *'unpleasant feeling tone'* by wanting it to "Go away". The mind goes "ahh safe" and increases the *'pleasantness'* or "ahh dangerous" and increases the *'unpleasantness'* associated with the Perception Overlay. This then gives rise to the birth of addiction and aversion within your mind.

Also, any response to *'pleasant'* or *'unpleasant feeling'* can cause the feeling tones to swap between Perceptions. Example: Suppose you enjoy flying. Taking flights around the world is exciting; it gives you a *'pleasant feeling'* to fly. You make many trips and all in all it is a *'pleasant'* experience. Now suppose during one flight the plane hits some turbulence. The plane is shaking and you feel anxious. The experience of the turbulence brings up old fears and is *'unpleasant'* to you. The flight now seems to take forever. You arrive safely; have a wonderful holiday, but when it comes time to fly home you start to feel anxious. Why? Because the thought of flying now feels *'unpleasant'* to you. You continue to react to this *'unpleasant feeling'* through anxiousness and develop a fear flying.

Realigning Your Perception with Reality

If the Five Senses are being interpreted through a distorted Perception of your past relationship to any *'pleasant or unpleasant'* feeling tone present, then it is sitting on a basis of misinformation.

This then causes you perceive a world not based on reality. Mindfulness Meditation gives you the ability to experience the Six Sense Doors before Perception Overlay. Observing in this way realigns the stored perceptions with reality through literally;

"Seeing things as they actually are."

Experiencing reality before Perception Overlay, completely changes the way that you interpret the world and therefore the world in which you live. This is the end of the arising of any Negative Mental Qualities and Negative Habitual Patterns.

Anxious Response: A Practiced Cycle

When an experience within your life triggers a judgement of 'dangerous', your mind tells you it is dangerous by overlaying an '*unpleasant feeling tone*'. The '*unpleasant feeling tones*' purpose is to make you fight or run. The desire to fight or run is not triggered by the situation by through your relationship to '*unpleasantness*'.

This gives rise to the Anxious Response Cycle

- 1) The Anxious Response can be triggered by a Perception Judgement of '*contact*' at any of the Six Sense Doors. A sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and the mind door - memory, thought.
- 2) When one or more of these Sense Doors is stimulated then a Habitual Mental Judgement is laid over the sense experience. In this case the '*danger*' judgement overlays an '*unpleasant feeling tone*'.
- 3) If your relationship to the '*unpleasant feeling tone*' is "I don't like", then thoughts about how to get away from it arise. Your body then mirrors your mind and the Anxious Response arises in your body.
- 4) Once triggered, the Anxious Response will appear as sensations of '*tightness*', '*tension*', generally in the upper chest and forehead; it will have an '*unpleasant feeling tone*' overlaying it.
- 5) Every time you react to the '*unpleasantness*' of these sensations, when they arise, you re-enforce the pattern of perceiving them to be a '*dangerous*' experience. This then triggers your Habitual Emotional Response of Attraction or Aversion based emotions that focus on "*seeking pleasantness*" or "*pushing unpleasantness away*".
- 6) The practiced cycle of either "*seeking pleasantness*" or "*pushing unpleasantness away*" to escape from the Anxious Response then reinforces the Emotional Pattern of Reaction. The Perception judgement of '*pleasantness*' or '*unpleasantness*' of the experience of the Emotion present then makes it part of the Habitual Cycle of Reaction. These layers of reaction then strengthen each other.

Anxious Response: The Root Cause

The Anxious Response is the root cause of the arising of all Negative Mental Qualities (*page 35*). It appears as an *'unpleasant tension'* in the middle of your forehead and chest. It is triggered by the desire to escape from a perceived danger at one of the Six Sense Doors (*page 20*). Since your senses are being continuously bombarded in daily life, the chance of an *'unpleasant feeling tone'* to be triggered by a Perception Judgement is quite high.

Anger & Anxiety Based Emotions

Emotional Responses, such as Anger and Anxiety, arise within your body as Habitual Physical Manifestations of Mental Aversion to the feeling of *'unpleasantness'*. Anger based emotions arise as a way of triggering a response of *'attacking'* to remove the perceived threat. Anxiety based emotions arise as a way of triggering a response of *'getting away from'* a perceived threat. Both of these responses whether *'attack'* or *'run away'* are fed by your relationship to the *'unpleasant feeling tone'* present.

Attraction & Addictive Based Emotions

Emotional Responses, based on Attraction and Addiction, are also Habitual Physical Manifestations of Mental Aversion to *'unpleasantness'*. The desire to experience *'pleasant feeling'* arises as a way to escape from a perceived *'unpleasant'* experience within your life. It stands to reason that if you are experiencing *'unpleasantness'* within your life, that to seek its polar opposite of *'pleasantness'* would be the solution. The problem is that any *'pleasantness'* that you can experience through the Six Sense Doors is Impermanent, because it relies on sense stimulation. This means to experience *'pleasantness'* you need to continue to see, hear, smell, taste, touch or mentally experience the Sensory Stimulation associated with triggering the *'pleasant feeling'*. Pursuing happiness based on the *'pleasant feeling'* that arises due to sensory stimulation gives rise to repeated Habitual Patterns that develop into Addictive Behaviour.

Deconditioning Anxious Responses

To Decondition the Anxious Response, you need to separate it from the Emotional Response present. The Anxious Response appears as the underlying tension in the upper chest and forehead below the Emotional Overlay. Addictive or Aversive based emotions are treated in exactly the same way. This is because the root driving factor, the Anxious Response, is the same. It is not necessary to pay any attention to past causal factors or to what has triggered the Anxious Response and the Associated Emotional Reaction. Using Mindful, slow diaphragm breathing and the skill of *'Softening Into'* you can experience *'unpleasantness'* without Mental Aversion. By experiencing the *'unpleasant feeling tone'* present, without reacting by *"seeking pleasantness"* or *"pushing it away"*, the Perception Judgement of *'danger'* Deconditions.

Try your DAILY LIFE DECONDITIONING SKILL

- 1) Whenever you notice that you are Emotionally Responding to something within your life, first *'anchor your attention'* within the *'sensations'* of your body *'touching'* the floor / chair / bed, etc.
- 2) Be aware of the *'Elemental Qualities'* of the *'Emotional Response'* that is present within your body. Separate it into its elements such as *'tight'*, *'tense'*, *'heavy'*, *'light'*, *'cool'*, *'warm'*, *'clammy'* (page 11).
- 3) Notice the Anxious Response appearing beneath the emotion as *'resistance'* to what you are experiencing. It will appear as *'tightness / tension'* in your upper chest and forehead. Notice it is *'unpleasant'*. Separate the experience of *'unpleasantness'* from the *'tightness / tension'*. Do this in the same way you might separate the flavour of a banana from its texture.
- 4) Using slow, deep breathes, *'Soften Into'* (page 13) the pull to move away from *'unpleasantness'* or the pull towards *'pleasantness'*.

Learning to Listen to Life's Lessons

Life's purpose is to teach you, life is your teacher; it is its function, design and gift. One that we all share, regardless of sex, skin colour, health, economic circumstances or religious belief, actually to life all these things are irrelevant. They are all just the wrapping of the teaching, your individual experience of life, mere content. Regardless of the content of your life the message is still the same. Everything that comes into your life, whether you perceive it as good or bad, has a purpose, that purpose is to help you mature as a human being, become a more refined person.

Your relationship to what you experiencing within life, does not go unchecked. Throughout your life you will be given exams, often they will come in the form of difficult times. You will see them reoccur again and again as repeated patterns. Whether you pass (peace) or fail (suffer) depends on how you relate those times when everything feels like it is going wrong. Regardless the lessons and exams keep resetting themselves until they end in the final exam, which is death itself.

There are many ways to view the purpose of life. None of us really know if our view is correct, the important thing is: "Does the view of life that you are holding send you off in the right direction?" This is important because your view of life's purpose affects how you live. It affects the ethical choices you make and how you approach life, it sends your life in a certain direction.

The view that I have shared with you, that life is designed to teach you, to help you develop into a mature human being, is a useful way of looking at life, one that will support your meditation practice. If you view difficulties in life as something to learn from, not as something to be overcome, then difficulties in life will become something that is interesting, not something to run away from, and this in turn changes the journey.

An Example from My Own Life

After many years of intensive practice, I returned back to Sydney to be closer to my ageing parents. During this time the greatest gift I have ever received came into my life. In the place that I was now working, there was someone in a position of power intent on creating suffering, and finding fault in others while making themselves look good. All my years of intensive meditation practice at this stage collapsed. Daily I was going to work and daily I was being shouted at, abused, and belittled and daily I found myself feeling sick, anxious and depressed.

It reached the stage where I was sick to the stomach every single day, my body was shaking, I was breaking down in tears, and the unpleasant feelings filled every cell of my body. The owner of the company ignored this abusive behaviour, they did not want to acknowledge it, other people had already left in tears and at this time I didn't realise there would be many more.

This left me with two choices. I could also run away and leave this job, or I could stay. My tendency throughout my life had been to run away, this was another bully; it seemed like an obvious choice. During my years of intensive meditation practice, I did learn one thing. When I was restless with the discomfort of intensive practice my teacher said to me, "*Take One Seat*". This means to not try to change but to be with and accept whatever you are experiencing 'Now'; to sit still on the cushion without moving. Could I use this same principal in the workplace, in my daily life?

I also reflected on what one of my main meditation teachers, John Hale, told me. He said to "*Embrace all experience like you would a suffering child*". He taught me this not only in words but in action, as he was very ill at the time yet not showing any suffering. This inspired me, I decided that if I cannot find the right conditions to practice meditation, why not make my life my Mindfulness Meditation practice.

A Lesson from Life: Take One Seat

It all became very clear to me at this time, a path started to open and I felt compelled to walk it. I could see clearly that there was no difference between sitting on an intensive meditation retreat and everyday life. Isn't there only one thing happening at any time, regardless of whether our eyes are open or closed? Whether we are doing the washing or being abused in a workplace?

Suddenly my purpose became very clear. I would not run anymore, the pain in my life would become my teacher. I would study it, come to understand it. I started to understand that seated meditation was the way of training Mindfulness and Concentration for the practicing Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life.

Every day I still woke up sick, woke up with fear of what was to come, but my relationship to it had changed.

Why did I feel this way?

What is this feeling of sickness in my stomach?

What is anxiety, what is depression?

Instead of running away I started to investigate. When I woke up feeling sick, I turned the strength of the Mindfulness and Concentration I had developed towards these feelings.

Where were they located? How was I experiencing them? Why do they feel unpleasant? Why don't I like them?

No longer taking pleasant and unpleasant feeling for granted; investigate, investigate, investigate, soften, soften, soften ... "*Take One Seat*". While I was being abused in the workplace, I now looked the person in the eyes, smiling, while internally my attention was on my feelings, on the anger, the fear, the frustration. The abuse became my practice, this person became my teacher and my life began to change.

A Lesson from Life: Developing Understanding

At first I struggled, I fell many times; my habitual tendencies were to run, to react. When the feeling arose within me, this felt like the easiest path, after all, this is what I had practiced throughout my life. But running away from the pain did not work and what I had been taught by my meditation teachers once again came to mind. During intensive retreat I was taught to sit with physical and mental pain, to not run away from but to investigate it.

Would it be possible to do this while being treated this way, while being abused?

I decided to follow the path of taking “*One Seat*” and day by day I could see the path of Mindfulness Meditation in Daily Life open before me, day by day I started to change. I was still being abused, put down, belittled, but the buttons that used to get a response started to weaken until I could stand quite comfortably in the face of the abuse with very little pain.

At this stage I could stop being concerned with my pain and started to observe theirs. This person was in pain; they were screaming in pain, I no longer saw them as bad but as ill, confused, living a false reality inside their head. I began to feel their pain and compassion for their suffering started to arise within me.

I then could stand and take the abuse without experiencing the pain they wanted me to feel. Instead, I stood and spoke quietly, smiling, internally wishing for their happiness and welfare. Aggression needs either a victim or another aggressor to exist; I was now providing neither, I now observed the effect this had.

This person became more abusive, more malicious - for a while, until the pain became too great. I started to notice that this path of love and caring, of balanced mindfulness caused them to feel pain. Since I was no longer providing a victim or aggressor to feed their

anger it reflected back to them. It was their gift to keep, and gradually the pain became so great that they started to avoid me. They still treated others badly but avoided treating me in this way, eventually we could work together without the abuse. At this stage I could see a very clear path, I could meditate in everyday life, my practice could progress, and I started to rejoice in this opportunity to learn more about myself, to continue self study.

I stayed in this workplace for 12 years, helped nearly as many people leave, often in tears, my practice had turned away from my own concerns and I was able to use the protection it provided to help others. The interesting part is that this person didn't change for the better; they were still not a nice person. But I had changed or should I say my relationship had changed to the external situation and more importantly to my internal situation, allowing me to sit in peace within this turmoil. I learnt so much in this time, I am so grateful for the opportunity; it helped me refine the path of Mindfulness in Daily Life.

A Lesson from Life: Loss & Protection

During this time my mother was very ill, I felt that I had nothing more to gain in this workplace. I had made my peace and had learnt a valuable lesson. I handed in my resignation to leave in 2 weeks time with no regrets so that I could spend time with my mother during her last days.

The morning of my last day at work I was called to my mother, she passed away that morning. Holding her hand through the dying process tested my practice, during this time of grief it continued and deepened, I could clearly see the progression that had been made; this practice could be continued regardless of the external situation. I went to work that morning and finished my last day, unpacking a container, continuously protected from negative people by this beautiful path. My anxious patterns ended.

Increasing in Wisdom and Maturity

This meditation practice is about growing up, becoming a fully mature human being. Growing up does not mean getting older; aging and maturity do not necessarily go hand in hand. Aging is a process of the body; maturity is of the heart / mind; based on wisdom. If we do not learn from life, instead falling into habitual responses, then a mature relationship to life will not develop.

A fully mature human being does not harm themselves or others. They are not selfish, greedy, not obsessed with sexuality. They don't lie, cheat or steal. They feel no desire to get intoxicated in any way. Maturity as a human being is developed by looking deeply into and understanding the nature of reality.

This reality is the underlying current, the never changing truth that flows below the conceptual world. The conceptual world is not actually reality, but a mental reflection of past relationships to experience appearing in our mind through habitual perception. Underneath the conceptual world flows reality, it affects us all regardless of our beliefs. These laws of nature are built into the system and govern the world in which we live.

Basic Laws of Nature

- *All thought, speech and action have a positive or negative result.
- *Positive qualities combine, negative qualities cause separation.
- *Resistance creates resistance, softness dissolves resistance.
- *Everything that is of the nature to arise is subject to cessation.
- *All experience arises and ceases subject to external conditions.

Mindfulness is the gift that allows us to develop this understanding through observing reality and realign ourselves with this truth. Not understanding it means a rollercoaster of mental suffering. Alignment with this truth brings peace.

Breaking Through Your Imaginary Box

As you practice Mindfulness Meditation in Your Daily Life and challenge the desire to follow Habitual Patterns of Reaction, you will start to notice the borders of an Imaginary Box that surrounds you. The borders of this box limit your life, they define what you can and can't do; they create who you are. When you reach these borders, a thought may come up: "I can't do that", "I don't like that", "I like this", "I'm a shy person", "I'm a lonely person", "I'm ..."

All these thought patterns arise when you try to cross the boundary of a Habitually Created Personality that arises from running away from Unpleasant Feelings and running towards Pleasant ones. These thoughts come up to contain you in Habit.

In the same way that a sheep dog herds sheep by barking to their left then barking to their right. If you '*run away*' from Unpleasant Feelings and '*want more*' Pleasant Feelings then the barking dog of Aversion and Attraction is creating your personality and the direction in which your life heads. "You have no choice."

Your happiness then is defined and limited by the borders of your box. Reacting through Habitual Patterns strengthens the borders and quite often can make the borders shrink. Mindfulness Meditation in Daily Life is about finding and removing the borders of your box, so that there is no box surrounding you.

When the borders dissolve you will come to understand that right "Now" is all you have and all you ever have ever had. Past and future arise as just thoughts in the "Present." All you ever have to work with is "Now" and right "Now" is always here, it is fixed, it cannot change. At this point "You have a choice", your choice is found in your relationship to "Now." Do you "Resist or Accept" your present reality? Only Mindful Presence offers this choice.

Resistance creates Resistance; Acceptance creates Peace.

MIDL 52 Mindfulness Trainings Menu

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- 02 / 52: Focussing Your Awareness
- 03 / 52: Retraining Breathing Patterns
- 04 / 52: Softening Into Breathing
- 05 / 52: The Skill of Softening Into
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About This Mindfulness Guide

My purpose in life is to educate on how Mindfulness Meditation practice can be brought into daily life.

Mindfulness Meditation in Daily Life (MIDL) practice is designed to be brought into your day-to-day activities – to be lived.

When practicing this style of Mindfulness Meditation there is no difference between sitting on a cushion during seated meditation and everyday activities.

Your relationship to what you are experiencing can still be explored, wisdom can arise and freedom be experienced while living a normal life.

This guide has been written and is offered in the spirit of Dana – Generosity. You are holding it in your hands because someone, like yourself, donated towards its printing costs. Please treat it with respect and offer it to others free of charge.

Walk your meditation path with gentleness,

Take care
Stephen Procter,
Sydney Australia