

Meditation Skill 11: Cultivate Skill in Sustaining

Table of Contents

Meditation Skill 11: Cultivate Skill in Sustaining	1
Summary	1
Detailed Instructions.....	2
What You Are Learning this Lesson	2
Create Your Posture for Meditation	2
Establish Mindfulness on the Touch of Your Thumbs.....	2
Widen Awareness to the World Around You Breath.....	2
Become Aware of Your Body as it Sits.	2
Gently soften Into Sensations in Your Body.....	3
Observe the Natural Movement of Your Body as it Breathes.	3
Know if Breath is Coming In or Going Out	3
Know the Full Length of Each Breath.....	3
If Your Attention Wanders or You Control Your Breath	4

Summary

Once you are confident in your ability to meditate using Markers 1-6, it is time to include your seventh meditation object, awareness of the full length of each breath. Paying attention to the full length of each breath means to be aware of the whole length of each breath as it draws in, and the whole length of each breath as it goes out.

This transition increases your noticing's from:

1. One noticing on each in-breath, and one noticing on each out-breath.
2. To multiple noticing's along the length of each breath.

More specifically you are keeping a continuous knowing regarding the whole of each breath from: its beginning, to its middle, to its end.

What this does:

Increasing the applications of your attention along the full length of each breath lowers your mind's ability to habitual apply your attention towards distractions such as thoughts and sounds.

Important note:

It is important to note that awareness of the full length of each breath occurs as a result of the development of calm and tranquillity through tuning into the subtle pleasure of letting go, not through increasing your effort in attention.

The ability to tune into the subtle pleasure of letting go, abandoning of interest in the sensory world, creates the conditions for the development of the calm and tranquility necessary to stabilise attention.

Detailed Instructions

What You Are Learning this Lesson

To develop continuity of your attention by clarifying present experience by using labels.

Create Your Posture for Meditation

Begin meditation by sitting comfortably on a chair or the floor. Seated, place the tips of your fingers below your belly button and slightly press in.

Allow your eyelids to gently close over and relax, feeling that relaxation and bring to mind the purpose of this meditation: to bring deep relaxation to your body with slow softening breaths.

Establish Mindfulness on the Touch of Your Thumbs

MARKER 1

Once your body and mind have relaxed into your meditation posture, bring awareness just to the touch of your thumbs, establishing a stream of remembering on it.

Apply a gentle label by silently saying: "touching, touching".

Keep these labels relaxed with a pause between each word and notice the affect this has on the application of your attention.

Widen Awareness to the World Around You Breath

MARKER 2

Once your attention has settled on the touch of your thumbs, widen your awareness to the room around you.

What it feels like to be in this room.

The touch of air on your skin, the flow of distant sounds, the happiness of the ease that comes with nothing to do.

Apply a gentle label by silently saying: "hearing, hearing" for sounds, or "knowing, knowing", for the experience of the room. Keep these labels relaxed with a pause between each word and notice the affect this has on the application of your attention.

Become Aware of Your Body as it Sits.

MARKER 3

Once your attention has settled on the experience of the room around you, gently soften and allow your awareness to naturally narrow into the experience of your body as it sits, establishing a stream of remembering on it.

Apply a gentle label by silently saying: "sitting, sitting". Keep these labels relaxed with a pause between each word and notice the affect this has on the application of your attention.

Gently soften Into Sensations in Your Body

MARKER 4

Begin to soften and relax awareness into your body, becoming aware of any sensations present. Relax into sounds, into warmth, coolness and pressure with the chair/floor.

Apply a gentle label by silently saying: "warm, warm", "cool, cool", "pressure, pressure".

Keep these labels relaxed with a pause between each word and notice the affect this has on the application of your attention.

Observe the Natural Movement of Your Body as it Breathes.

MARKER 5

As you soften into your body, the natural flow of breathing will appear to you as a subtle movement in your body, establish a stream of remembering on it.

Know if Breath is Coming In or Going Out

MARKER 6

Notice that you can know if your breath is drawing into your body, or if it is going out again.

As the breath draws in, apply a gentle label by silently saying: "in, in", in line with the in-breath.

As the breath goes out, apply a gentle label by silently saying: "out, out", in line with the out-breath.

Establish a continuous stream of remembering regarding knowing each in, and out-breath.

Know the Full Length of Each Breath

MARKER 7

When you can stay with the flow of each in and out breath, then see if you can notice the very moment each breath begins. To do this simply be aware of each out-breath all the way to its end, relax, and wait for the breath to draw back in by itself.

In this way the full length of each in-breath from its beginning to its middle, to its end will become clearer to you.

Once you have experienced an in-breath, relax, and wait for the out-breath to happen naturally, by itself. In this way you will be aware of the length of each out-breath.

Treat this like a game, be playful.

Be careful of over-straining at this stage, being soft and gentle in your observation. Use your softening skills to relax if you find you are becoming tight. Expanding your awareness to your whole body and watching from afar can also help with this.

Clarity of the full length of each breath develops through increasing calm and tranquility. As your mind and body calm, your ability to mindfully observe more subtle experiences will increase.

Tip: Finding the pleasure within each breath, its gentle stretch as it comes in, its natural relax as it goes out, how good it feels. This is the key to calming while maintaining alertness.

If Your Attention Wanders or You Control Your Breath

In mindfulness of breathing, we change the way that we deal with distraction.

When you notice that your attention has wandered:

1. Soften awareness back into your body to ground it.
2. Experience what it feels like to be present.
3. Reflect on what it felt like to be distracted.
4. Let a slow breath out through your nose, relax, and wait for the breath to draw back in by itself. Thereby resetting the natural breath.

If you notice that you are controlling your breathing:

1. Let a slow breath out through your nose, relax, and wait for the breath to draw back in by itself. Thereby resetting the natural breath. You can also practice weakening the desire to control using Meditation Skill 08.

MIDL Mindfulness Meditation www.midlmeditation.com/midl-meditation-system