



Seven Lessons In Mindfulness

A Course For The Nottingham Mindfulness Group Based On UCSD CFM Resources

Week Two – Awareness of Breath

The Next Step – Learning To Engage With Sensation

- Last week's exercise, *Awareness of Breath*, introduced us to meditation and taught us a way to start being aware in the present moment.
- The next step is for us to learn how to experience sensation directly while we are being 'Present' or aware.
- Because we are compulsive thinkers, we have a tendency (when we first try to be Mindful or 'Present') to *think about* the sensations that our body registers, rather than simply letting ourselves *experience* them. We are so used to 'living in our heads' that we've forgotten how to experience the world directly through our senses without judgement or analysis.
- The aim of this next step is to help us rediscover the difference between the 'thinking mind' and the 'sensing mind'. We will do this in two stages – *Awareness of Body* and then *The Body Scan*. The *Awareness of Body* meditation builds on last week's meditation, *Awareness of Breath*, and provides us with the skills required to step forward into *The Body Scan* meditation.

'Awareness of Body' & 'The Bodyscan'

These two meditation exercises (which we will work through over the next two weeks) progressively train us to engage with experience (in this case, the sensations naturally arising in the body) in an open and curious way, without analysis or judgement.

Practice for Week Two

- Every day for the next 6 or 7 days, sit quietly in a calm environment free from distractions and listen to *Meditation Two – Awareness of Body* by Kalika McCure, doing your best to follow her instructions.

Note – it is normal to find that you drift of into thinking frequently while trying to do this exercise. You are not “doing it wrong” and you are certainly not a failure! Whenever you realise that you are caught-up in thinking and not focussed on the meditation, gently (without self-criticism or judgement) let go of your thoughts and return your attention to the meditation.