

Naming what is happening

Observation Meditation based on Thoughts

This Meditation, like the counting the thoughts meditation, Naming or noting the sensation or experience teaches you to be fully aware and in the moment by observing with all your senses. For many people, noting or naming what is happening can be helpful in connecting the awareness directly with moment to moment experience. ...

We are focused on an object of meditation. When we talk about the “object” of meditation we are referring to whatever it is that you might be choosing to focus on during your meditation. The object may be a mantra, a candle, your breathing, or something else.

Observation based meditations give us an insight into and an awareness of our mind. We become the observer and, as a result, the effect of our thoughts and emotions on our activities becomes less.

In this meditation we learn to observe our moment to moment experience without being drawn into that experience. Like a lot of other concentration meditation techniques, we are fully aware, alert and present, and every time we are distracted we simply bring our thoughts back to the breath.

The difference is that during this meditation we name each thought, sensation (like itching) or experience. As soon as a thought enters your mind, or you experience a sensation or emotion, or you get caught in a mental activity, you name it without paying any attention to what is happening, and simply bring our thoughts back to the object of meditation. Just begin again.

This exercise is not easy, but you cannot do it wrong. If for a long time there are no distractions and you can stay focused on the object of meditation, that is fine. It means that you concentrate well and with full dedication. If there are a lot of distractions or busyness entering your mind, that is also fine, as long as you are aware of it.

This type of meditation give us some insight into how busy our mind is, and how quickly we get caught up in our every minute experience. As is the case with every form of meditation we try not to judge, or to be too goal-oriented. If your mind wanders, just return to the exercise, and begin again.

Count your Thoughts Meditation Exercise

1. Sit down, close your eyes and concentrate on your breathing. Be aware of every breathing in and breathing out. Breathe automatically and freely, do not try to control your breathing.
2. Pay attention to how the air slowly passes through your nose, fills up your lungs and goes out again.
3. If, after taking a few breaths, you feel fine and at ease you focus all your attention to the object. This may be a mantra, a candle or your breathing. For this guided exercise we will focus on the breath.

Name your Experience Meditation

Kind of meditation	Concentration and Observation
Degree of difficulty	more advanced beginners
Recommended duration	3 to 30 minutes
Posture	Sitting
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It gives you an insight into your mental activity.• It teaches you to accept thoughts and experiences without being carried away by them.• It improves your concentration.• It relaxes your body and your mind.• It teaches you to live in the NOW.
Comments	A basic observation exercise for everybody that wants to get an insight into the functioning of his own mind. It is also a first step on the way to controlling your mind instead of letting your mind control you.

4. Breathe deeply and steadily and focus on the breath as you always do. If you start to think of something else, be aware of this, name it and calmly return to the breath. Do not pay any attention to the content of the thought. Just release it and return to the breath.
5. Breathe easily and focus on the breath.
If all of a sudden you notice itching tingling, or twitching in your body or relaxation reactions in your muscles, that is fine. Simply name the sensation that you are experiencing, and return to the breath. *Let the noting be soft and in the background, with most of your attention directly experiencing what is happening.*
6. Breathe easily and focus on the breath, when a strong sensation arises you might note “tension”, “tightness”, “hot”, “cold”, “pressure”, “ache”, simply name it and return to the breath.
7. Breathe easily and focus on the breath, when a strong sensation arises you might note if there is much pain or pleasure...”unpleasant”, or “pleasant”. simply name it and return to the breath.
8. Breathe easily and focus on the breath, when a strong emotion arises just name or note it - “sadness”, “happiness”, “fear”, “grief”, etc. and return to the breath.
9. Now slowly take your thoughts back to the rest of your body and the sounds in the room. Move a little, stretch your muscles a little and open your eyes.
10. Finished!

