

True Nature of Mind

Mindfulness Worksheet

Date / Time:

What have you brought mindful awareness to today? Check all that apply.

Heart

Mind

Body

Breath

Environment

To begin this Meditation, please bring kind awareness to

- why you chose this topic
- how your belly, chest, and head each feel when you reflect on this topic
- the emotions that you can associate with these visceral feelings
- the positive or negative impact of any stories you believe in regarding this topic
- the fact that many others are feeling similarly about this topic as you
- how you might feel with increased awareness around this topic
- when you can apply increased mindfulness to this topic in your day-to-day life



In our meditation practice, we're not trying to "get" happiness, contentment, joyfulness, or peace, there's nothing outside of us that we can "get" that will lead us to awakening.

The goal of meditation is to "reveal" happiness, contentment, joyfulness and peace. This of course makes the assumption that happiness, contentment, joyfulness and peace are already within you.

So if, at our core, we're already awakened, why can't we see it? Our view is clouded over by thoughts and emotions, and obscured by mental afflictions such as pride, anger, jealousy or doubt.

In our confused state, we identify with those thoughts, emotions and afflictions, thinking that is who we are. In our awakened state, we identify instead with the true nature of our minds. Our true nature is one of open, spacious awareness. That state of awareness is happy, content, and at peace.

You may have heard the analogy that our thoughts, emotions and all the disturbances of the mind are like clouds or the weather. They come and go, always moving and changing. This is the 'appearance' of our mind.

Our true nature, on the other hand is like the sky, always present, stable and at ease, even when obscured by a cloudy day. This is the 'essence' of our mind.

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Mindfulness Worksheet

This essence, our sky-like awareness, is sometimes referred to as our true nature, fundamental nature, inherent goodness, or open heartedness.

Meditating consistently helps us get to know the essence of the mind. We begin to see how fleeting, temporary, and illusory our thoughts, emotions and afflictions are. They are only appearance.

If we begin with the premise that the best version of ourselves is already located deep within, our meditation practice can become less about trying or doing or getting good, and more about simply relaxing, releasing and letting go.

MEDITATION ON TURNING INWARD

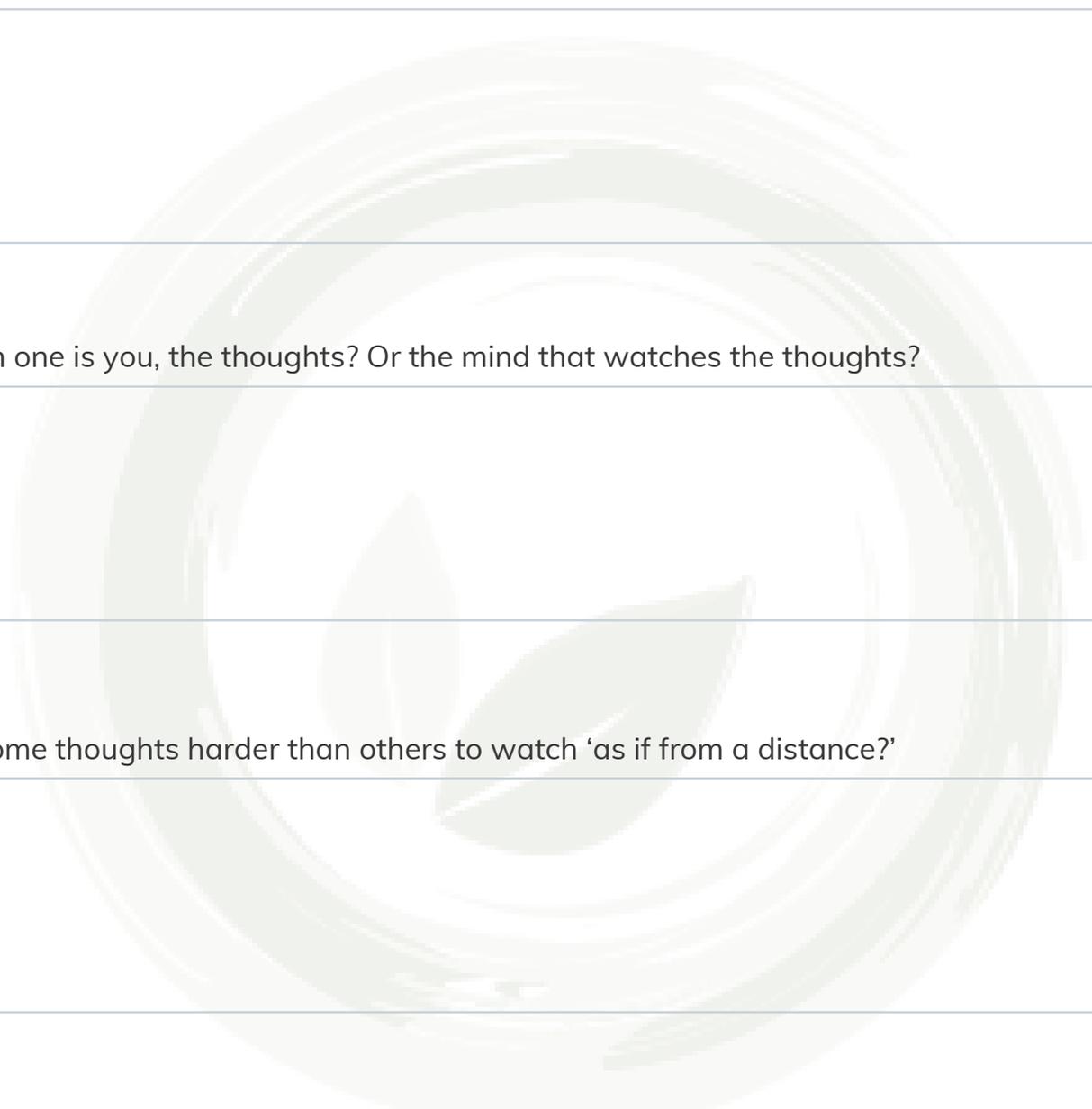
- Take a seat in a comfortable, quiet place
- Set a timer for 3, 5 or 7 minutes
- Close your eyes, lengthen your spine, and release your shoulders
- Breathe slowly and evenly in and out through your nose
- Notice how the energy of the mind is always at play
- Thoughts and emotions never cease to arise and dissipate, come and go
- Notice too, how you can watch these thoughts and emotions as if from a distance
- There's a separation between the part of you that's doing the thinking, and the part of you that notices this thinking
- This is the distance between appearance of the mind, and essence of the mind
- Turn further inward towards the self that is the watcher, the witness, the noticer
- Stay present with this self, rather than the thoughts or the emotions themselves
- What is the nature of this awareness? Can you name its qualities, characteristics or size?
- Rest in the presence of this deep awareness, your most inner sense of self, until your timer goes off

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WHAT DID YOU NOTICE?

Describe your experience with the meditation in general



Which one is you, the thoughts? Or the mind that watches the thoughts?

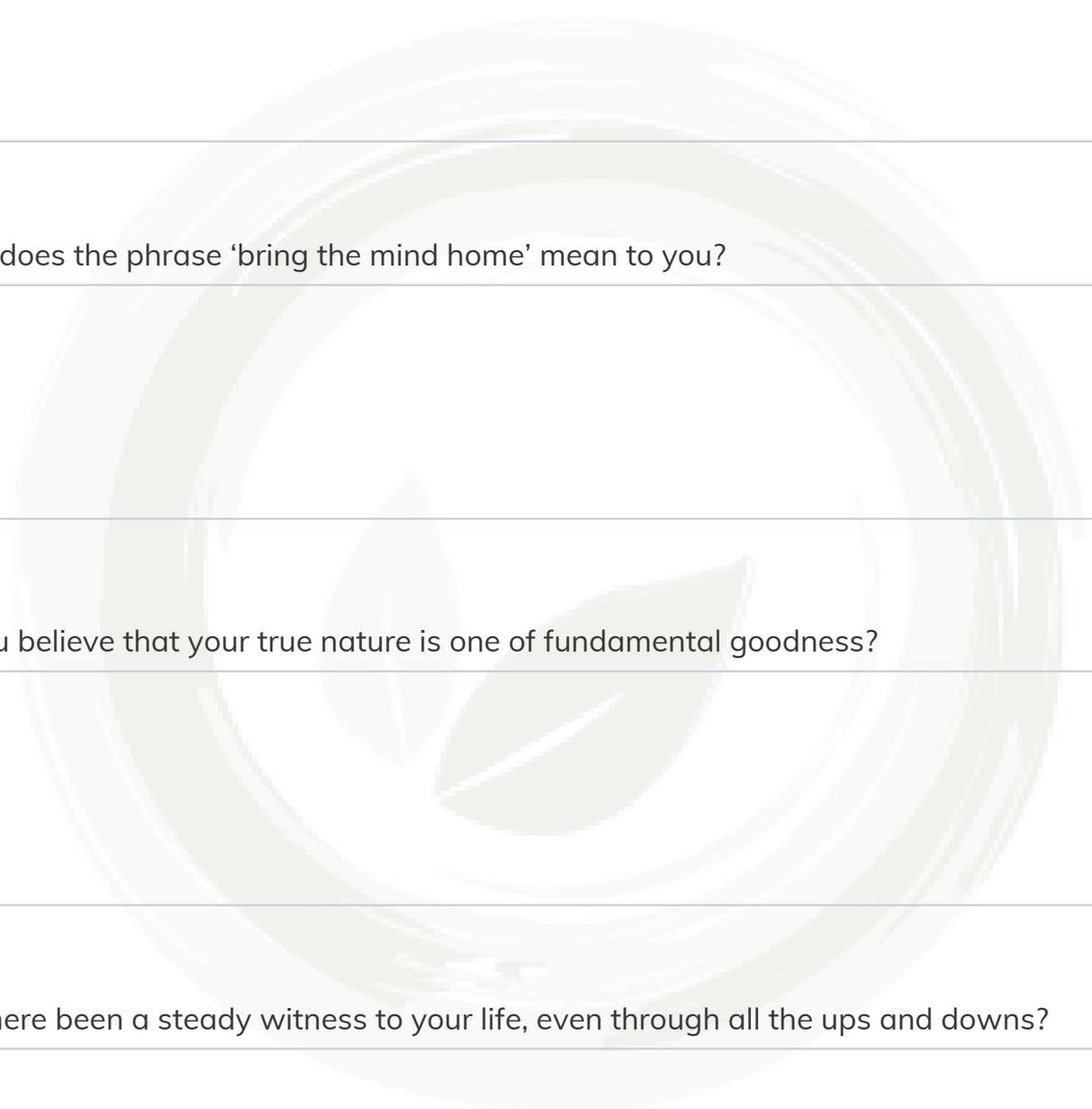
Are some thoughts harder than others to watch 'as if from a distance?'

Were you able to connect with a sense of self beyond the thoughts themselves?

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Mindfulness Worksheet

What are some words you would use to describe this deeper sense of self?



What does the phrase 'bring the mind home' mean to you?

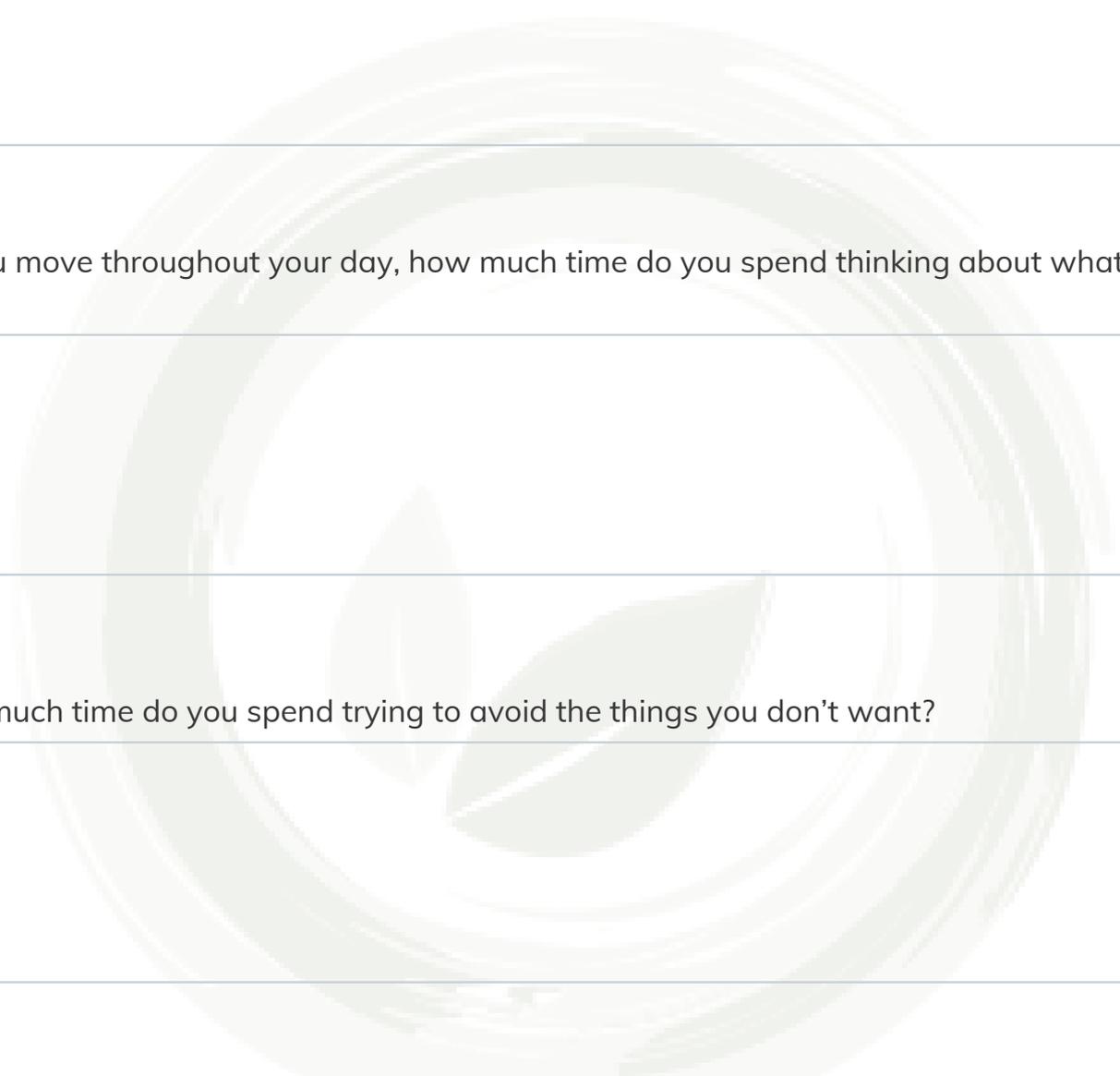
Do you believe that your true nature is one of fundamental goodness?

Has there been a steady witness to your life, even through all the ups and downs?

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It's said "you are what you think." Is this true?



As you move throughout your day, how much time do you spend thinking about what you want?

How much time do you spend trying to avoid the things you don't want?

How much time do you spend in the present, content with things as they are?

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Mindfulness Worksheet

How might it benefit your life to 'do less' and 'rest back' more?

REVIEW

You may have heard someone say that meditation is the process of bringing your mind home. Turning inward towards our own best inner resources, our own highest self, is indeed the solution to our pain.

When the mind is turned outward, we harm ourselves and others by identifying with thoughts, emotions, and perceptions. When the mind is turned outwards, we are constantly in a state of doing. We're grasping at what we want, or pushing away what we don't want.

When the mind is turned inward, we recognize that our true nature is one of joy, contentment and peace. This fundamental nature is unaffected by thoughts and emotions, and always there for us.

Just as the sky is never altered by the clouds. Identifying with this true nature allows us to rest in a state of simply being. There is nothing to get, and nothing to avoid. Everything becomes ok just as it is.