

Visualizing What We Wish to Experience

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



The brain is an incredible organ with countless functions and infinite potential that we are now beginning to understand in a deeper way. Recent research has sought to explore what happens in the mind when we visualize to better understand the power of our thoughts on our physiology.

Some of the findings suggest that the brain has a hard time differentiating between imagination and reality, meaning that what we imagine has a very similar (or the same) effect on the body as if it were to actually happen.

For example, consider what you might experience if you were to watch a scary movie. While the rational mind knows it is not truly threatened by what appears on the screen, the blood starts beating faster, hormone levels might increase, and the rate of breathing likely shallows and quickens. This is a perfect example of how mental images directly impact physiology even if they are not rooted in reality.

What does this have to do with meditation? Both mindfulness and meditation help us to better understand the link between mind and body. Using the power of visualization, we start to gain a deeper sense of how our thoughts create our physical reality.

Consider the following practice to deepen your insight about how the mind impacts your body.

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PRACTICE:

1. Take a moment to consider something you enjoy doing – something that makes you feel happy, alive, and free. Some examples might include dancing, running, painting, singing, hiking, being in nature, cooking, or swimming. Whatever it is, settle on one activity that brings you increased peace, energy, or contentment.
2. Set a timer for two to three minutes. Spend this time visualizing yourself partaking in this activity. Fill your mind with all the details: What do you look like when you are happily engaging in the activity of your choice? How does your body feel and how does it move? What is your environment like?
3. Continue until the timer goes off and then take a few more silent moments to note what is present for you. How does the mind feel? What about the body? Remain curious towards this exploration, noting how the images you conjured up have influenced your present state of wellbeing.

REFLECTION:

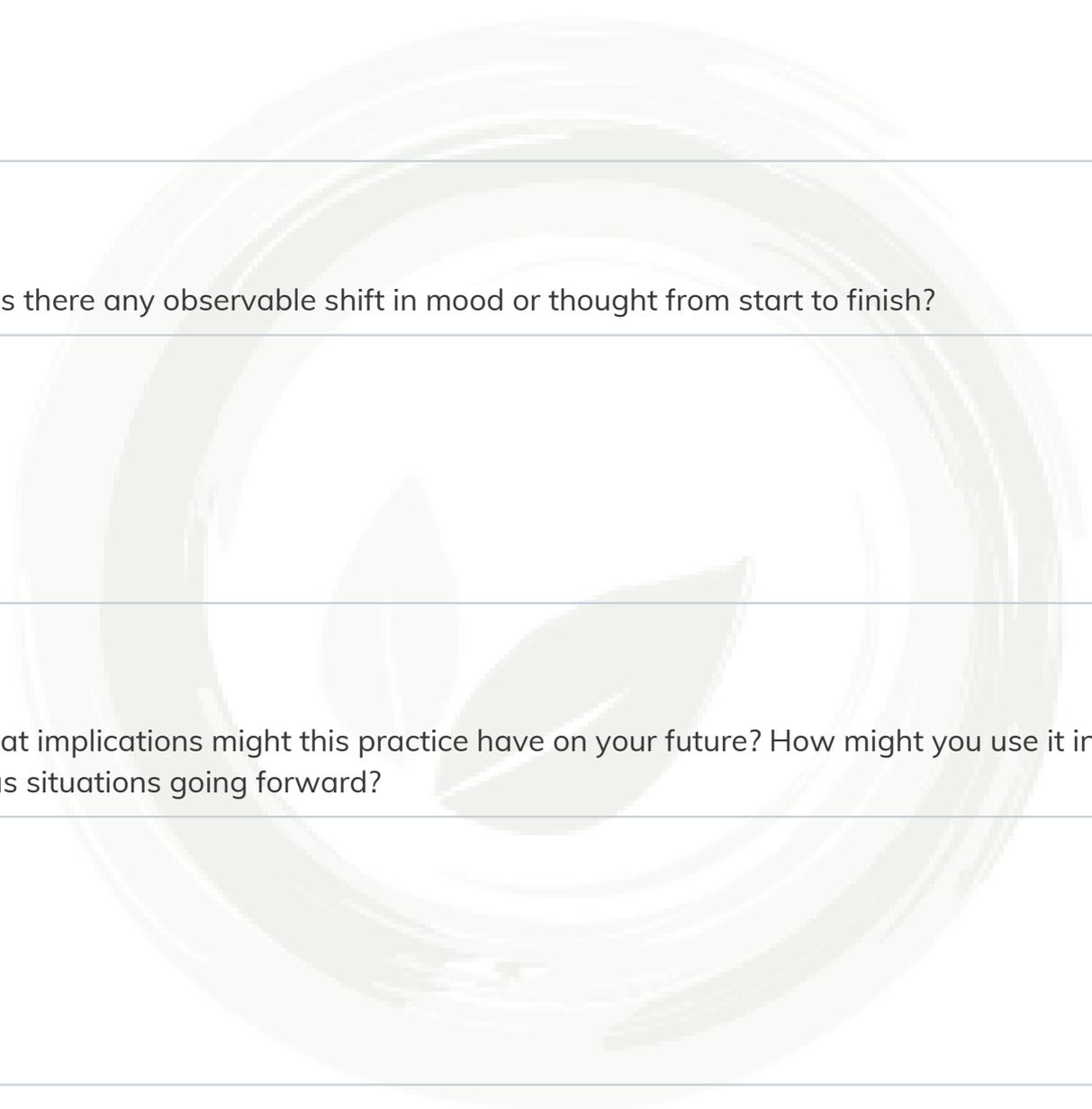
Consider the following questions, filling in your thoughts and insights to deepen your understanding of the mind-body connection.

1. How did the breath move while you were practicing this? Were you aware of it?

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2. How did the body feel? Did the physical body shift in any way from start to finish?



3. Was there any observable shift in mood or thought from start to finish?

4. What implications might this practice have on your future? How might you use it in various situations going forward?