

Rating Anxiety in the Body

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



Whether we're aware of it or not, our emotions tend to present themselves in the physical body in addition to being something of the mind.

Anxiety, for instance, might present itself as hot palms, swirling sensations in the stomach, tingling in the face, or any other number of sensations (numbness included). Getting to know anxiety as it manifests in the body can help us to be more aware when it arises and to shift our focus away from worried or fearful thoughts and into what is most tangible.

This practice is one you can explore anytime you first notice anxiety creeping up on you. Explore it with patience and compassion, using it so long as it grounds and nourishes you.

PRACTICE:

1. When you notice the first signs of anxiety appearing, take a moment to find a safe and comfortable space to step into if this is possible. In some cases when anxiety arises, it is not easy or convenient for us to step away from the situation.

This exercise can be simplified in those cases, so make any adjustments to it as is required. For instance, rather than journal about it you might simply reflect upon it as soon as it occurs.

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2. Take a moment to draw your attention to the base of your feet, rooting yourself firmly into the floor or earth beneath you. Take three full breaths, softening the belly as you breathe. This will help to ground you.

3. Now, with a curious and compassionate mind, begin to gently scan the body to see where this anxiety might be felt physically. Then, answer the following questions either in writing or mentally:

- In what parts of the body am I feeling this anxiety manifest?

- How would I rate the degree of each of these sensations on a scale from 1-10?

4. Take your time to focus on one sensation at a time, inquiring:

- How much space does this sensation occupy? What shape is it? What color and texture is this sensation?

5. Focusing on whatever sensation is most prominent for you, begin to breathe into this part of the body. Imagine that each inhalation sends nourishing energy to that manifestation of anxiety and that each exhalation allows it to soften. Spend as long as you'd like with this. If you'd like to repeat the same practice with another sensation, do so once you feel 'finished' with the first.

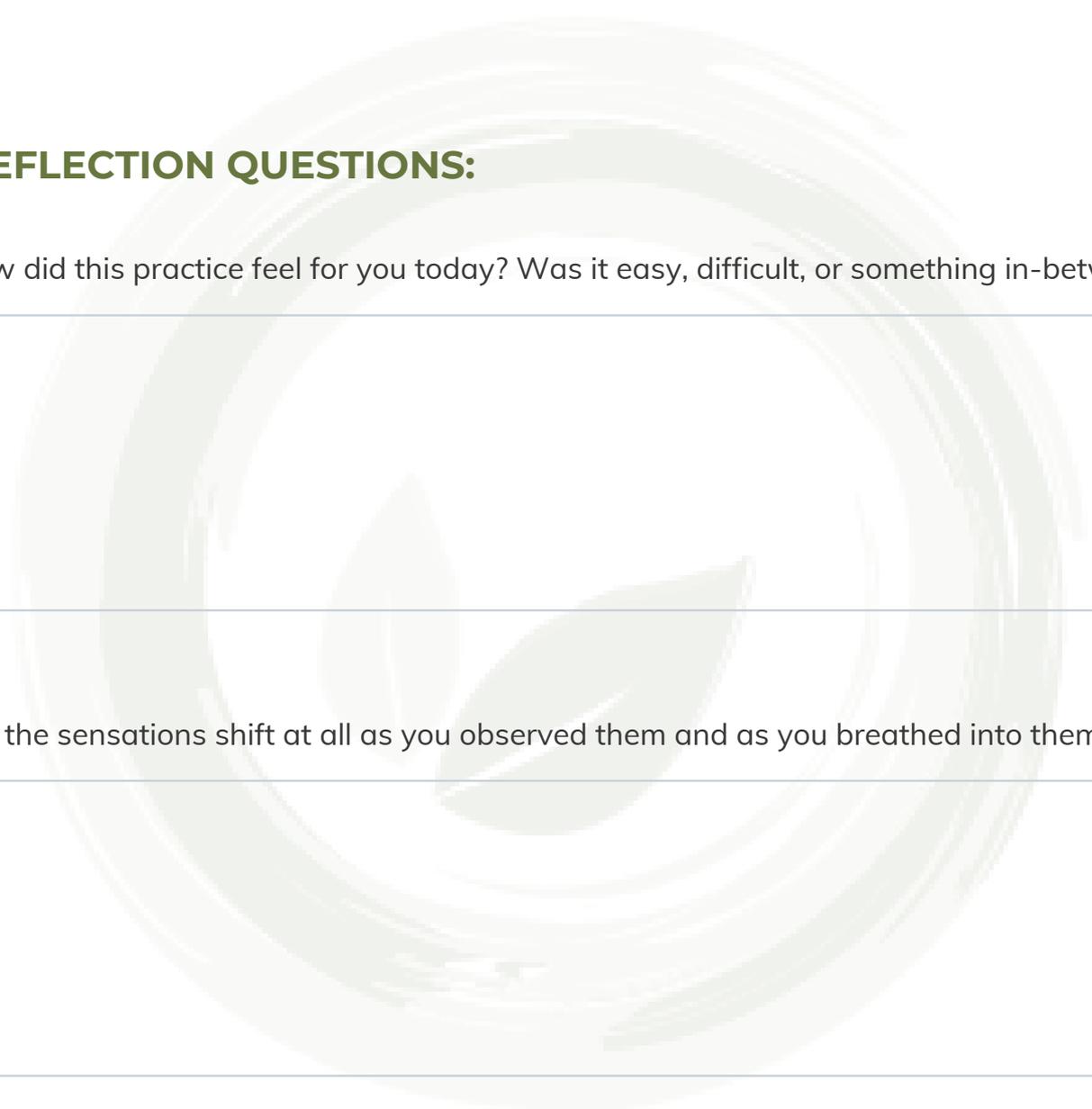
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6. Note if and how both body and mind shift as you practice this. Without forcing your experience to be anything other than what it is, simply be present with what this practice is like for you. When you feel ready, take a few more grounding breaths and slowly open your eyes.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. How did this practice feel for you today? Was it easy, difficult, or something in-between?



2. Did the sensations shift at all as you observed them and as you breathed into them?