

# Cultivating Joy

## Mindfulness Worksheet

Date / Time:

So far today, have you brought kind awareness to your:

Thoughts?  Heart?  Body?  None

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



Joy is a particular type of happiness that's infused with a sense of appreciation, gratitude, contentment and awe. When we're joyful, we lose awareness of self and become fully connected to the present moment. We feel a vitality and aliveness that comes from being in harmony with our true nature.

Contrary to what we might think, joy is always available to us. We don't need any special events or circumstances to occur in order to experience joy. We can find joy in something as simple as full immersion in the experience of our first sip of coffee in the morning.

And yet, we don't frequently do this. It's all too easy for us to take the moments of our lives for granted and to see everything as ordinary, uninteresting and unworthy of our wonder and amazement.

Joy is something that can be practiced and cultivated, and should be. When we intentionally and mindfully invite joy back into our lives, we eventually reach a state in which we no longer have to look for joy, it's just there.

The following meditation and daily activities can help us cultivate a sense of joy.



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### MEDITATION TO CULTIVATE JOY

- Sit comfortably in a quiet place
- Set a timer for 4, 8 or 12 minutes
- With your eyes closed, breathe patiently and fully in and out through your nose
- Turn awareness inward towards your breath and your body
- Look upon the breath and the body with wonder and awe
- This body that is breathing itself, the breath that is giving you life
- Recognize how precious each breath is, how extraordinary the body is
- Relax your forehead, and slightly turn up the corners of your mouth
- Feel the reaction in your body
- Rest in the soft, spacious feeling of joy
- When the present moment is stripped of all longing, and stripped of all aversion, joy is what remains
- Identify with joy as if it is your most natural state
- Rest in this present moment, content and aware of the presence of joy until your timer goes off

### WHAT DID YOU NOTICE?

Describe your experience with the meditation in general

What does 'joy' mean to you?

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Describe the process of looking back at your past and selecting your helpers



What feelings or emotions arose?

Have there been helpers in your life that you didn't always recognize, or whom you took for granted?

Do you carry any resentments towards people you thought should have helped you but didn't?

Have you ever thought of someone as unhelpful, but then later changed your mind?

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We often think of our helpers as those with whom we have positive relationships, do you have any helpers who challenged you, frustrated you, or caused you grief? Is that possible?



Is it possible that some of our helpers are 'accidental' helpers? They didn't mean to help us, but they did?

Is it possible that every single person we interact with is one of our helpers?

Are you ever truly all alone?

Who have you helped in the past? Would you know who they are?

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Who do you help right now?

If you could thank just one of your helpers today, who would it be and what would you say?

### **MINDFULNESS EXERCISE**

To become more mindful of your helpers, try the following exercise. As you go about your day, try to see everyone everywhere as your helper.

Of course, the barista making your coffee, or the person who held the door open is helping you. But so too, is the person who cut you off in traffic, or the frustrating person at work. They are helping you see there's room to practice patience.

If you can hold awareness of all beings as your helpers, what changes for you throughout the day?



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### REVIEW

Our culture worships and praises the individual. We point to athletes and entrepreneurs as examples of individuals who achieved things all on their own. We like to think that we too get things done on our own, but this is not the case for them, and this is not the case for us.

Each of us has had countless helpers in our lives, and these helpers are always with us. We are always in relationship with others, and never alone.

By becoming more mindful of the helpers in our life, we begin to understand our inter-connectedness. We begin to understand our own role in each of our relationships. Ultimately, we become more grateful and also more kind. We become the type of person who is best able to help others.

