

The Power of Acceptance

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



Desire is a very powerful thing, and most of us desire a life that's one certain way. Our wishes might change from day to day, or year to year, but we hold in our minds a picture of how we'd like things to be. There's nothing wrong with that, but when we become attached to this vision, it causes us great pain when circumstances don't match our expectations.

In our desire for things to be just so, we often go into warrior mode and fight against our circumstances. We do all sorts of mental gymnastics and even take manipulative actions in our attempt to mold our worlds and the people around us to match our desires. We do this in subtle ways that we're hardly aware of, or in big dramatic ways that end up causing ourselves and others a lot of grief and pain.

Operating in the world as if we are in charge of it is an exhausting way to live. Yes, we're in charge of our own actions, but the outcome of those actions is something we cannot control. To act without attachment to the outcome, and to accept other people and circumstances as they are is very freeing behavior.

Learning to accept things as they are right now gives us space in which to listen to our innate wisdom. We can then act from a place of wisdom, versus acting out of habit and reactivity.

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Acceptance must be practiced. We can begin by developing awareness and acceptance for the things in our life that are going well. Overtime, we practice extending acceptance to circumstances that are uncomfortable, and even downright heartbreaking. To accept something doesn't mean we have to like it. It just means we allow for the truth of how things are today.

Try the following meditation on acceptance, and then answer the questions below:

MEDITATION ON CULTIVATING ACCEPTANCE

- Sit comfortably where you can be free from distractions
- Set a timer for 5, 7, or 12 minutes
- Find a balance between sitting tall, but relaxed
- Close your eyes, or gaze softly at the floor ahead of you
- Breathe in and out through your nose
- Pay attention to the three spheres of mindfulness, your body, your breath and your mind
- Notice what's present, and welcome it all in
- Welcome what arises in body, breath or mind with a spaciousness
- Attach to nothing, push nothing away
- Judge nothing, and refrain from building stories or thoughts around what you notice
- Simply be present, and accept what it is that you notice
- What types of sensations are present in the body?
- Notice, accept, and welcome them
- What does the quality of your breath have to say?
- Notice, accept, and welcome it
- What emotions are arising in the mind? Notice the thoughts calling for your attention
- Notice, accept and welcome it all in
- Remain unattached to what it is that you notice, and continue to identify instead as the watcher, the witness, or simply spacious and pure awareness
- Give everything it is that you notice the space and the freedom to move and to change
- Continue the process until your timer is up

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WHAT DID YOU NOTICE?

Describe your experience with the meditation in general

Were you able to be equally mindful of body, breath and mind?

Do you feel you were accepting of what it was that you noticed?

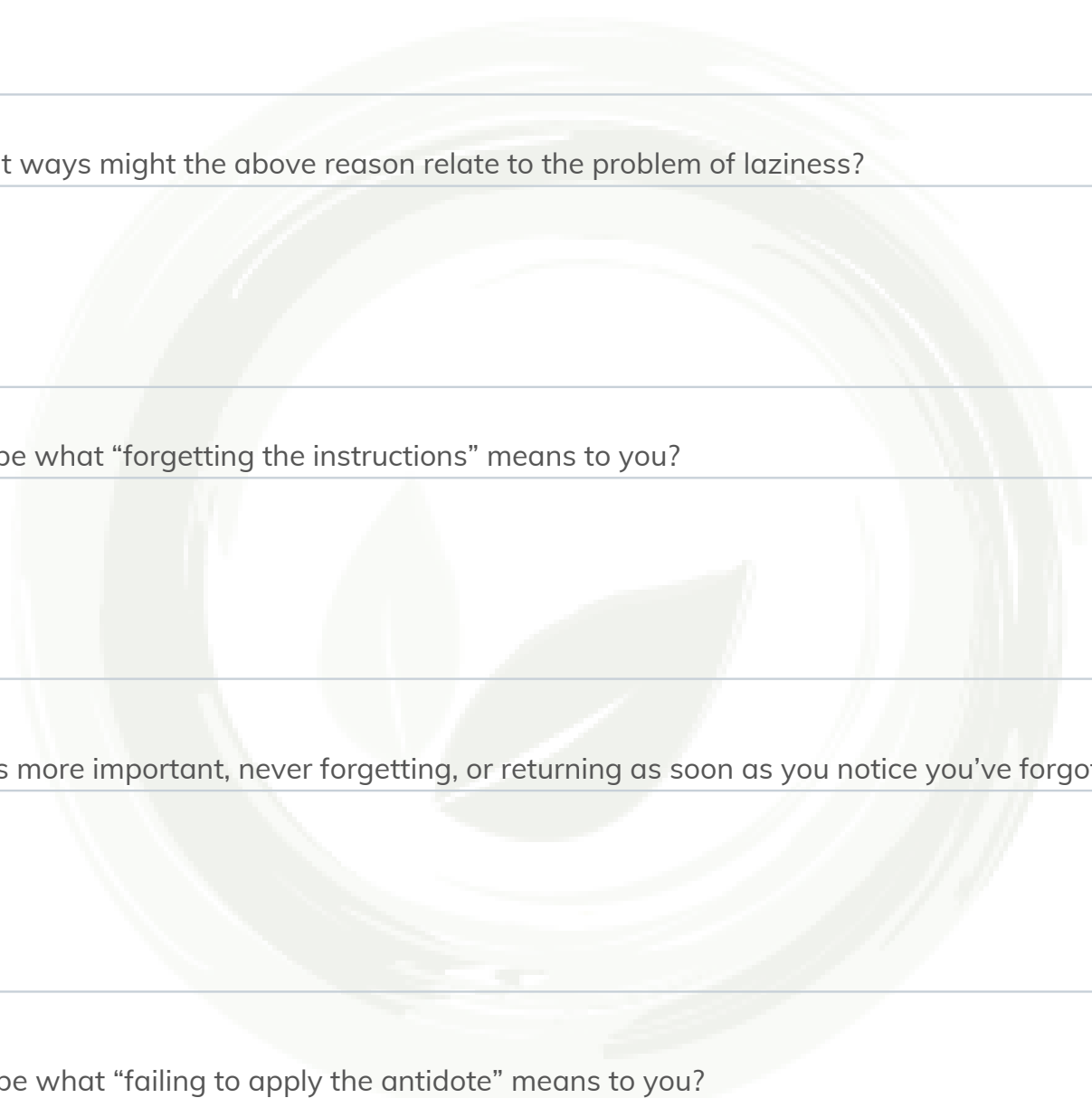
Were there some things you noticed that you became attached to, or tried to push away?

What does acceptance feel like in your body or in your breath?

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Does accepting something mean that you have to like it?



How would you know that you have arrived at acceptance?

When we accept things, does it mean that we cannot take action to change them?

How could acceptance help us respond less reactively, and more intentionally to our circumstances or to others?

What would it look like to act without attachment to the fruit of your actions?

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Describe a time in which you tried to change the people or circumstances around you, and caused yourself and others pain



Describe a time in which you decided to 'go with the flow' and things turned out better than you had planned

Why might we need to accept things as they are, before we can work on changing them?

REVIEW

Acceptance and approval are not the same thing. However, we do need to accept our current circumstances before we can begin to make changes. Acceptance helps us understand where it is that we are starting from, and what we're working with.

Acceptance is not a passive activity. Those who are accepting do not just sit like a bump on a log, doing nothing. Acceptance is the awareness of how things are right now. When we're finely attuned to that awareness, our actions arise from a place of wisdom and intuition, rather than from a place of reactivity, or mindless habit.

To accept is to allow people to show you who they really are. To accept is to fully take stock of where you are and who you are. To accept is to connect with reality as it is in this one moment.