



The Building Blocks of your Mindfulness Practice

Taking the Simplest Route

In this method of mindfulness training, we try to take the simplest, most direct route to the fundamental benefits. To do that, it helps to understand where we're going, and why.

Where we're going

The training goal of a mindfulness practice is a relaxed and aware stillness of the mind.

Why?

This is because the state of perfect stillness has the beneficial effect of a **clean-slate system reboot**, clearing mental and emotional clutter.

This not only provides a fresh & undistorted baseline to operate from: it also unburdens & frees up our capacity, optimizing our ability to perform.

the Benefits

for the BODY

Relaxed present-moment awareness allows the nervous system to be in a state of rest, creating the conditions for **health, healing & rejuvenation**;

- preventing a variety of stress-related diseases
- giving you more energy when you need it

for the MIND

Over time, we develop a stronger, freer mind; that is capable of clear & undistorted perception.

The improved **focus, sharper insight, clarity**, and **perceptiveness** helps us make skillful decisions which lead to **satisfying & successful** life choices.

Both for body & mind: there is also an **effective natural stress-relief**, due to the **removal of tension and the causes of tension**, especially unnoticed, habitual, conditioned tensions.

Simple doesn't necessarily mean Easy...

In acquiring any new skill (like riding a bike, playing a musical instrument, or learning a new language) proficiency doesn't come overnight! It gets easier as we practice.

aka: "It's a **skill**, stupid..."

Just because you don't have to move very much doesn't mean immediate mastery! We all take a little bit of time and practice to get comfortable & familiar with any new skill, and then gradually we become more fluent & accomplished.

How To Get Started: The Building Blocks of your Mindfulness Practice



• The Relaxation Response

(We're generally quickly able to learn how to turn this on at will)

• Mindfulness / Awareness

Objective, neutral, scientific observation of conditions – eg breath, body sensations, mind.
(Also generally not difficult to practice for short bursts at a time)

• Stillness / Silence

Clean-slate state.
(Often an unfamiliar skill for most of us, can take a little longer. We start with an awareness of experiencing brief moments of silence, gradually lengthening or joining them together)

Putting it all Together

Begin with relaxation. Find a balanced posture that you can be comfortably still in, not needing to move for a long time.

Relax thoroughly.

Bring your awareness to the present movement, letting go of everything external. See how far you can refine your moment-to-moment awareness (this is broadband high definition training) – being aware of as much detail as possible; with a relaxed alertness. Mindfulness, awareness.

Eg: For breath practice, bring your awareness to the breath. Rest your attention on the breath, its ebb and flow, the pauses where it changes.

For movement practice, bring your awareness to the movement, sensation of movement; walking, eating.

Usually, if you're busy doing all this, you won't have room for thoughts in the mind. But if you do, just allow yourself to gently let go of the thoughts. Don't worry, you've spent most of your life practicing to hold more and more thoughts in the mind – this is a new skill.

If at any time you face any difficulties or frustration arises, just go back to the relaxation, and gently start again.

BONUS POINTS: If you are feeling ambitious, you can also use the feeling of frustration or irritation as an opportunity to investigate and understand the way the body-mind processes work. Mentally step away from the emotion, and use your sharpened mindful awareness to note how it feels; observe and investigate how it affects tension in the body.

Then, go back to the relaxation. Again, observe how this affects the body, and the mind.

And that's it! Simple?