



## Choiceless Awareness

### Key Learning

Being with and bringing an open attention to whatever is arising in each moment – the breath, body, thoughts, sounds, emotions etc.

Noticing recurring patterns in the body and mind

Coming back to the breath as an anchor as often as is needed

### Resources required:

Mats/ chairs, bolsters, blankets, cushions, clock, bells / singing bell, handout for client, recording for client to have for home practice

### Benefits

Mindfulness of the full range of experiences; being in the moment with the mind, body, heart and external environment

Working with the pleasant and unpleasant

Accessible for all

Identifies habitual patterns

Encourages a sense of connection with self and acceptance with things as they are

Coming out of autopilot

Easy to access for most

Dealing skilfully with wandering mind

### Potential Challenges

Wandering thoughts

Restlessness and fidgeting

Panic and fear arising

Feeling overwhelmed by thoughts and emotions

Feeling of 'not doing this right.'

Find it hard to concentrate

## Teaching Points and Elements to Consider in Guiding

### Posture

Giving practical information on helpful posture using e.g. chair, stool, cushion. Supporting the transition from 'doing' into 'being' mode of mind: a clear focus on posture at the

beginning of the practice helps to establish the intention of the practice and to facilitate the transition into this period of deliberate cultivation of 'being mind'.

### **Breath**

Anchoring in the present moment: reconnecting with a specific aspect of experience in the here and now. Guidance on where in the body to pay attention to breath sensations. Avoidance of language that encourages thinking about the breath rather than being directly in connection with it.

### **Body sensations**

Transition from breath - expand the attention around the sensations of breathing to an awareness of sensations in the body as a whole

Offering explicit guidance about how to place attention

Offering clear guidance here on options for working with discomfort / pain / intensity whether it is of a physical or emotional origin.

### **Sounds**

Receiving the sounds as they come and go; listening to sounds as sounds – noticing loudness, tone, length, etc.; seeing sounds as events in the mind; noticing layers of meaning added to the direct experience of sounds

### **Thoughts and emotions**

Relating to thoughts similarly to how we relate to sounds – seeing their arising and passing away

Seeing recurring patterns and how these develop and play out within the mind

Using metaphors to help point towards what is being invited here.

Acknowledging the challenge

Use the breath as an anchor when the mind becomes unsettled

Expanding the attention to include emotions, naming these, seeing how they play out in body sensations

### **Inquiry**

**Ask about the participants' experience of the practice and acknowledge and explore any benefits and potential difficulties which come up.**

Examples of useful questions to start the inquiry process with the client:

What came up for you?

What did you notice in your body?

How did it feel?

You noticed that.....

Did anyone's mind wander?

How did you feel about that?

Use the space below to add any that you already use and any new ones that you learn throughout the course.