

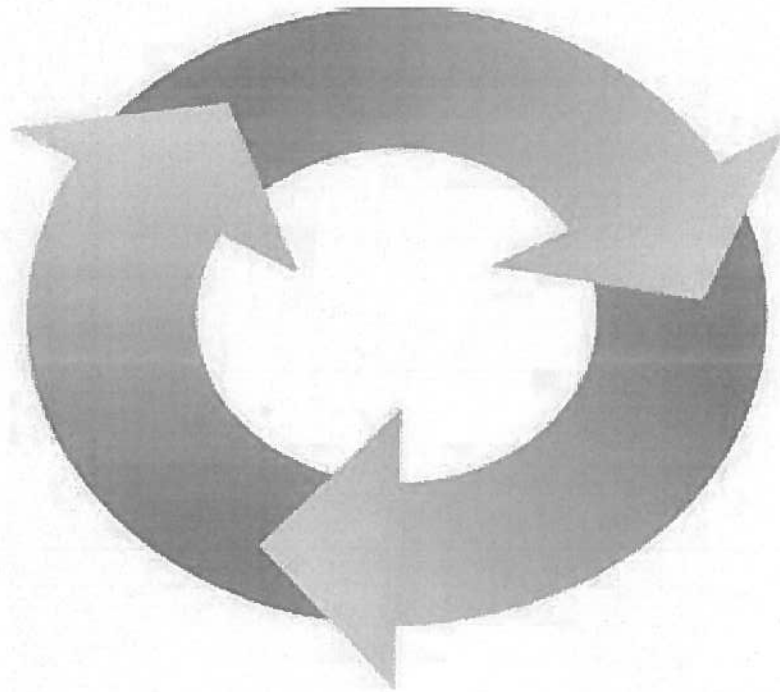
A Model of Mindful Practice

Intention

(why we practice)

Attention

(observing internal/external)



Attitude

(C.O.A.L -curiosity, openness, acceptance and love)

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INFORMAL MINDFULNESS PRACTICE

1. *Mindfulness in Your Morning Routine*

Pick an activity that constitutes part of your daily morning routine, such as brushing your teeth, shaving, making the bed, or taking a shower. When you do it, totally focus attention on what you're doing: the body movements, the taste, the touch, the smell, the sight, the sound, and so on. Notice what's happening with an attitude of openness and curiosity. For example, when you're in the shower, notice the sounds of the water as it sprays out of the nozzle, as it hits your body, and as it gurgles down the drain. Notice the temperature of the water, and the feel of it in your hair, and on your shoulders, and running down your legs. Notice the smell of the soap and shampoo, and the feel of them against your skin. Notice the sight of the water droplets on the walls or shower curtain, the water dripping down your body and the steam rising upward. Notice the movements of your arms as you wash or scrub or shampoo.

When thoughts arise, acknowledge them, and let them come and go like passing cars. Again and again, you'll get caught up in your thoughts. As soon as you realize this has happened, gently acknowledge it, note what the thought was that distracted you, and bring your attention back to the shower.

2. *Mindfulness of Domestic Chores*

Pick an activity such as ironing clothes, washing dishes, vacuuming floors—something mundane that you have to do to make your life work—and do it mindfully. For example, when ironing clothes, notice the color and shape of the clothing, and the pattern made by the creases, and the new pattern as the creases disappear. Notice the hiss of the steam, the creak of the ironing board, the faint sound of the iron moving over the material. Notice the grip of your hand on the iron, and the movement of your arm and your shoulder.

If boredom or frustration arises, simply acknowledge it, and bring your attention back to the task at hand. When thoughts arise, acknowledge them, let them be, and bring your attention back to what you're doing. Again and again, your attention will wander. As soon as you realize this has happened, gently acknowledge it, note what distracted you, and bring your attention back to your current activity.

3. *Mindfulness of Pleasant Activities*

Pick an activity you enjoy such as cuddling with a loved one, eating lunch, stroking the cat, playing with the dog, walking in the park, listening to music, having a soothing hot bath, and so on. Do this activity mindfully: engage in it fully, using all five of your senses, and savor every moment. If and when your attention wanders, as soon as you realize it, note what distracted you, and re-engage in whatever you're doing.

6 Core Human needs you read them, please note that they are all believed to be essential to our well-being and happiness.

1. **CERTAINTY** - The need for safety, security, comfort and consistency.

I can count on something or someone to keep me safe.

2. **VARIETY** - The need for surprise, variety and engaging the unknown.

I have options and choices to excite and stimulate me.

3. **SIGNIFICANCE** - The need to feel important, needed, wanted and worthy of love.

I am unique, important, and valued.

4. **LOVE & CONNECTION** - The need for feeling connected with and loved by other human beings.

I am loved and I belong.

5. **GROWTH** - The need for growth and learning: emotionally, intellectually and spiritually.

I am learning and growing.

6. **CONTRIBUTION** - Giving beyond ourselves and giving to others.

I am sharing what I have with others.

Glancing over the 6 Core Human Needs above, you may reflect on which are your two greatest needs. You may also reflect as to the degree that you feel that these needs are being met: by your work, your family, friends, and life choices in general.

COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING METHOD

Conflict of Needs: Redefines problems in terms of overlapping needs, not differing needs.

1. Define the problem in terms of *needs*, not solutions.
2. Brainstorm possible solutions.
3. Select the solution(s) that will best meet both parties' needs and check possible consequences.
4. Plan who will do what, where, and by when.
5. Implement the plan.
6. Evaluate the problem-solving process and, at a later date, how well the solution turned out.

The ABCs of Compassion

Awareness of the moment	Bring attention to responses	Cultivate compassion
Who? Who is with me or involved in this experience?	Sensations: Using my five senses, what am I experiencing in this moment? What is my body doing?	How can I direct compassion toward my physical being in this moment? What does my body need right now?
What? What is happening in this moment? What's activating my mind?	Thoughts: What am I thinking? How does this thought influence my actions?	Does this thought lead me in valued directions? How might I bring more compassion to my thinking here and now?
Where? Where am I right now?	Emotions: What emotions am I feeling now? What emotional space am I in?	Are other feelings or other parts of me present? How might I bring compassion to these feelings?
When? When is this happening? (Now?)	Attention: What am I focusing on? Is my attention focused on the present, the past, or the future?	How can I become as present as possible, with kindness to myself and others, in this moment? What is available to me right now?
How? How is this happening?	Behaviors and urges: How am I responding? How do I wish to respond?	How can I act skillfully to realize my valued aims? What compassionate action might I take?

Brief Instructions for Loving-Kindness Meditation

To practice loving-kindness meditation, sit in a comfortable and relaxed manner. Take two or three deep breaths with slow, long and complete exhalations. Let go of any concerns or preoccupations. For a few minutes, feel or imagine the breath moving through the center of your chest - in the area of your heart.

Metta is first practiced toward oneself, since we often have difficulty loving others without first loving ourselves. Sitting quietly, mentally repeat, slowly and steadily, the following or similar phrases:

May I be happy. May I be well. May I be safe. May I be peaceful and at ease.

While you say these phrases, allow yourself to sink into the intentions they express. Loving-kindness meditation consists primarily of connecting to the intention of wishing ourselves or others happiness. However, if feelings of warmth, friendliness, or love arise in the body or mind, connect to them, allowing them to grow as you repeat the phrases. As an aid to the meditation, you might hold an image of yourself in your mind's eye. This helps reinforce the intentions expressed in the phrases.

After a period of directing loving-kindness toward yourself, bring to mind a friend or someone in your life who has deeply cared for you. Then slowly repeat phrases of loving-kindness toward them:

May you be happy. May you be well. May you be safe. May you be peaceful and at ease.

As you say these phrases, again sink into their intention or heartfelt meaning. And, if any feelings of loving-kindness arise, connect the feelings with the phrases so that the feelings may become stronger as you repeat the words.

As you continue the meditation, you can bring to mind other friends, neighbors, acquaintances, strangers, animals, and finally people with whom you have difficulty. You can either use the same phrases, repeating them again and again, or make up phrases that better represent the loving-kindness you feel toward these beings. In addition to simple and perhaps personal and creative forms of metta practice, there is a classic and systematic approach to metta as an intensive meditation practice. Because the classic meditation is fairly elaborate, it is usually undertaken during periods of intensive metta practice on retreat.

Sometimes during loving-kindness meditation, seemingly opposite feelings such as anger, grief, or sadness may arise. Take these to be signs that your heart is softening, revealing what is held there. You can either shift to mindfulness practice or you can—with whatever patience, acceptance, and kindness you can muster for such feelings—direct loving-kindness toward them. Above all, remember that there is no need to judge yourself for having these feelings.