



Taming Thoughts & Emotions: Exercises

Mary Tyrte Rooker, tyrtle@ShamanicSpring.com, www.ShamanicSpring.com

Rev. March 2011

BE HERE AND NOW! (Eckhardt Tolle, most philosophies!)

Live in the beauty and power of this moment, preferably without assigning good or bad, pleasing or displeasing, and right or wrong labels to what's happening. Hold yourself and the situation gently in the heart of a humble, open attitude of not knowing what's best or why things happened the way they did. Let go of the left brain's desire to figure it out and just accept what is as it is.

If action on your part is called for, then act from choice and awareness. Otherwise, just move on to the next interesting adventure of your life. Don't live in the past or the future. Quietly bringing forward into the now the power of the lessons from your past is good, but don't dwell on the past. Calm planning for the future is fine (but limit your time spent doing that).

3-MINUTE MEDITATION: OUTSIDE, INSIDE, UPSIDE DOWN (Gestalt, Radical Honesty)

Outside: notice what's around you

Inside: notice what sensations you are having in your body

Upside Down: notice your thoughts (called "upside down" because thoughts are often your judgments or interpretations of reality, not reality itself, not what the person actually said or did)

Nothing [no problem or situation] is important enough for me to assign it significance [be emotionally attached to it, allow it to push my buttons] if it makes me feel tense [or drains my energy or power]. Nothing! —Doc Childre, *Overcoming Emotional Chaos*, p. 180

THE CUT-THRU TECHNIQUE (Doc Childre; Heart Math approach)

- Step 1. Be aware of how you feel about the issue at hand.
- Step 2. Focus in the heart and solar plexus. Breathe love and appreciation (for yourself; for the gift of being alive; perhaps for the other person) through this area for 30 seconds or more to help anchor your attention there.
- Step 3. Assume objectivity about the feeling or issue—as if it were someone else's problem.
- Step 4. Rest in neutral—in your rational, mature heart. Ask yourself: "What if there are other motives than the ones my mind has been focusing on?" "What if there's something I don't know?" The attitude of "I don't know" helps the mind become humble and surrender, so the heart intelligence can surface. Recall Sandra Ingerman's advice: "Your concerns are an illusion. They're what you've been taught."
- Step 5. Soak and relax any disturbed or perplexing feelings in the compassion of the heart. Remember it's not the problem that causes energy drain as much as the significance (emotional importance) you assign to the problem. It's not the issue itself that's bothering you but the way your mind and emotions have interpreted the facts and assigned them personal meaning. Don't take it personally! Dissolve the significance a little at a time.
- Step 6. After taking out as much significance as you can, from your deep heart sincerely ask for appropriate guidance or insight. If you don't get an answer, find something to appreciate for a while.

BECOMING THE OBSERVER

(Excerpt, slightly modified, from Sandra Ingerman, *Medicine for the Earth*, Three Rivers Press, 2001, pp. 84-85) *Note: Sandra gratefully acknowledges that this exercise is based on the work of Roberto Assagioli.* You might wish to record the following meditation or have someone read it to you as you experience it.

Exercise #1.

Breathe and observe your breathing. As you breathe, be aware of what thoughts, emotions, and sensations arise. Breathing focuses the attention and helps develop concentration. As you observe your breath, you will notice that your breathing slows down. The breath and the mind are connected. When the breath slows down, the mind slows down. To better understand the reality and source of thought or emotion that arise, ask yourself the following questions:

From where does this arise?

Who am I?

To whom does this occur?

Simply watch the flow of thought or emotions, and thus the flow of consciousness. Through observation, the mind quiets and becomes calmer, and so does the breath.

Exercise #2.

Relax and sit quietly. Look around you and become aware of every detail. Next, close your eyes and inhale slowly, taking inside you vivid visual awareness. Then exhale slowly, asking yourself, "Who is aware?"

With eyes closed, imagine that you are drawing a circle with chalk on a blackboard. Look at the circle. Then take a deep breath and as you exhale, ask yourself, "Who is aware?"

Now let the circle fade away. Continuing to breathe slowly, stay with yourself as the one who is aware. Take time to really experience being yourself.

Repeat the entire exercise several times until you experience the self as the source of stability and clear perception in the midst of change.

Then, with awareness of being your unchanging self, turn your attention to your body. Recognize the changing sensations and conditions of the body over time, in contrast to your unchanging self.

Still aware of being your unchanging self, turn your attention to your feelings. Recognize that your feelings also constantly change, though the self does not change.

Focus again on being your unchanging self; turn your attention to your mind. Recognize that your mind is filled with thoughts that change, though the self, the center of awareness, remains unchanged.

Focus again on your unchanging self. Recognize that although the three aspects of body, feelings, and mind are valuable means of expression in the world, they are not you. You have the capacity to direct and regulate the body, feelings, and mind at will.

Experience the following as vividly as possible: "I have a body, but I am not my body. I have emotions, but I am not my emotions. I have a mind, but I am not my mind. I am, rather, that which has a sense of being, permanence, and inner balance. I am a center of identity and pure self-consciousness and will."