

Mindful Work

Mindful hearing

Mindful breathing does not come easily for everyone. If you struggle at first with this, mindful listening is a great alternative.

You simply listen to sounds close by, followed by those in the neighbourhood, and then far away sounds. Notice every little sound.

Notice the tendency for the mind to classify what the sound belongs to, then make it into a story (ah... that sound is a motorbike, he's in a tearing rush, what an idiot, he could kill a child, like Annie next door, who's probably walking home now...etc). See if you can listen without comment – just hearing sound as sounds.

Notice also any tendency to let your ears or mind linger on the sound – just let it go as soon as it's over.

When you've spent some time listening to the sounds, then bring more attention to the silence or gaps between sounds.

Try to conceive of a 'sound space' within which sounds arise. What happens when you bring your attention to this 'space', rather than the sounds themselves?

In your sitting posture, come to a point of comfort and stability.

Then simply listen to sounds close by, followed by those in the neighbourhood, and then far away sounds. Notice every little sound.

Notice the tendency for the mind to classify what the sound belongs to, then make it into a story (ah... that sound is a motorbike, he's in a tearing rush, what an idiot, he could kill a child, like Annie next door, who's probably walking home now...etc). So see if you can listen without that happening.

Notice also any tendency to let your ears or mind linger on the sound – just let it go as soon as it's over.

Again, it is perfectly natural for the mind to wander off. Do not judge this as bad; if you've noticed it happen you've learned a lot. Simply come back to the listening.