

Mindfulness Worksheet - Everything Fresh and New

You may have heard meditation practitioners talk about the importance of the beginner's mind, or childlike mind. This is a state of mind in which we approach everything with curiosity, as if it's fresh and brand new.

In this state of mind, we are free from our habitual judgements, and we're better able to see the infinite potential in all things. By approaching everything as if it's fresh and new, we give everything the opportunity to surprise us with how perfect it is.

Our pre-judgements, or our prejudices, are so strongly ingrained in us that we often aren't able to see that we have them. Our habitual way of operating in the world takes a significant amount of mindfulness and awareness to overcome.

In the following exercise, we play with seeing the world as brand new, and play with breaking free from our usual patterns of movement by doing everything with our non-dominant hand.

We use not only the mind, but the body, to bring awareness to our habits and an increased mindfulness to our daily activity.

Mindfulness Activity - Using the Non-Dominant Hand

- Set a timer for 15, 30 or 60 minutes
- Go about your usually day, but do every activity with your non-dominant hand (if you are left handed, do all activities with your right hand, and vice versa)
- For example, brush your teeth, grab your coffee mug, lift your phone, or open doors with your non-dominant hand. As you step forward, downward or up, lead with your non-dominant foot.
- Stay mindful as you do each of your normal, everyday activities, but in a new way
- Let the awkwardness of each action help you see each action as fresh and new

What Did You Notice?

- Describe your general experience with the activity
- How challenging was it to remember to act with your non-dominant hand?
- When doing things with your non-dominant hand, what did it feel like?
- What did you notice about each activity that you hadn't before?
- How do you think this awareness will benefit you as you go about your day normally?
- How does doing things differently contribute to seeing things differently?

- Have you ever judged someone because they reminded you of someone from your past?
- Have you ever had a stranger or an enemy who one day became a friend?
- Have you ever solved a problem by trying a solution you'd never done before?
- What would it feel like to move through your day with no prejudices, or free from past habits?
- How do you think living with a 'beginner's mind' would benefit you?

The above activity lasts for no more than 60 minutes, so we can get better at remembering to act with our non-dominant hand. If you'd like to extend this activity to a full day, try it and see how it changes your experience.

Review

By calling awareness to our habitual actions physically, we can call awareness to the habits of the mind. The way in which we move through the world, and the way in which we see the world are equally loaded with habits, assumptions and pre-judgements.

Sometimes, it takes an extreme action to break us free from judgements, or to at least call attention to the fact that we do it. When we judge the world or the people in it, we only give them permission to show up in one way. But what if that's not how or who they really are?

If we could learn to move through the world with an open curiosity, allowing everything to show us and teach us before we judged it, we just might see that the world is far more perfect than we previously realized.