

- Complete chapter 20 Visualizing the present

## 20 visualizing the present

Mindfulness is basically just paying attention to what is actually happening in the present moment. The present moment is usually not so bad because, after all, you're alive and breathing, even if you're uncomfortable or things feel uncertain. So with mindfulness, we watch what is happening in the present moment, sometimes paying attention to things outside us, sometimes to things inside us, but mostly just keeping our mind and attention trained on the present without wandering too far into the past or future.

Let's practice now by imagining our thoughts going by without getting caught up in where they come from, or where they're going, just noticing them as they arrive and then letting them go.

### Mindfulness Practice: Thoughts on Parade

- Take a moment to find a comfortable posture, and just begin to bring your awareness to your thoughts.
- Imagine a parade going by on the street; you are sitting or standing and watching the parade go past.
- Now try to imagine each of your thoughts actually on the floats going past, or perhaps on signs and banners carried by marchers in the parade. Take a few minutes, and just imagine the thoughts passing by.
- Remember, don't join the parade and start marching with the thoughts; just stand back and enjoy the show, knowing that even the biggest thoughts will pass by or be carried away by someone in the parade.

What did you notice during this practice?

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How do you feel after this practice?

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There are all kinds of ways we can imagine our thoughts passing other than in a parade. Try a few of these and see which one fits you best.

- Boats or other objects float past on a beautiful river, while you watch from the banks and are careful not to get swept up in the flowing water yourself.
- Cars and traffic rush past on the highway while you stand on an overpass and simply observe them coming and going. The biggest thoughts are in buses or trucks, the smallest in small cars or motorcycles.
- A conveyor belt moves along in a factory, where your job is to inspect each thought as it passes, keeping the good ones moving and tossing out the mistakes.
- Thoughts float by in bubbles.
- Thoughts drift past on clouds in the sky.
- Follow the bouncing ball as if you were singing along with a karaoke machine.
- Watch thoughts as scenery passing by on a train.
- See thoughts as fish swimming in a lake that is still and reflective on the surface.
- Stand in the shallow end of the pool, looking at the deep end without slipping. See thoughts in and under the water.
- Sights and sounds arrive at a factory as raw materials; thoughts come out.

activity 20 \* visualizing the present

*If there is another image that works for you, describe it here, or draw it on a separate piece of paper.*

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- Click the link and follow the instruction for yoga for teens with Adriene: <https://youtu.be/7kgZnJqzNaU>
- Continue Yoga Practice twenty minutes
- Add two new poses that you learn from Arriene