



## Taking Hold of Your Mind: “What” Skills

### OBSERVE

- Notice your body sensations** (coming through your eyes, ears, nose, skin, and tongue).
- Pay attention** on purpose, to the present moment.
- Control your attention**, but not what you see. Push away nothing. Cling to nothing.
- Practice wordless watching:** Watch thoughts come into your mind and let them slip right by like clouds in the sky. Notice each feeling, rising and falling, like waves in the ocean.
- Observe both inside and outside yourself.**

### DESCRIBE

- Put words on the experience.** When a feeling or thought arises, or you do something, acknowledge it. For example, say in your mind, “Sadness has just enveloped me,” or “Stomach muscles tightening,” or “A thought ‘I can’t do this’ has come into my mind.”
- Label what you observe.** Put a name on your feelings. Label a thought as just a thought, a feeling as just a feeling, an action as just an action.
- Unglue your interpretations and opinions** from the facts. Describe the “who, what, when, and where” that you observe. Just the facts.
- Remember, **If you can’t observe it through your senses, you can’t describe it.**

### PARTICIPATE

- Throw yourself completely into activities of the current moment.** Do not separate yourself from what is going on in the moment (dancing, cleaning, talking to a friend, feeling happy or feeling sad).
- Become one with whatever you are doing**, completely forgetting yourself. Throw your attention to the moment.
- Act intuitively from Wise Mind.** Do just what is needed in each situation—a skillful dancer on the dance floor, one with the music and your partner, neither willful nor sitting on your hands.
- Go with the flow.** Respond with spontaneity.



## Taking Hold of Your Mind: “How” Skills

### NONJUDGMENTALLY

- See, but don’t evaluate as good or bad.** Just the facts.
- Accept each moment like a blanket spread out on the lawn,** accepting both the rain and the sun and each leaf that falls upon it.
- Acknowledge** the difference between the helpful and the harmful, the safe and the dangerous, **but don’t judge them.**
- Acknowledge** your values, your wishes, your emotional reactions, **but don’t judge them.**
- When you find yourself judging, **don’t judge your judging.**

### ONE-MINDFULLY

- Rivet yourself to now.** Be completely present to this one moment.
- Do one thing at a time.** Notice the desire to be half-present, to be somewhere else, to go somewhere else in your mind, to do something else, to multitask—and then come back to one thing at a time.
  - When you are eating, eat.
  - When you are walking, walk.
  - When you are worrying, worry.
  - When you are planning, plan.
  - When you are remembering, remember.
- Let go of distractions.** If other actions, or other thoughts, or strong feelings distract you, go back to what you are doing—again, and again, and again.
- Concentrate your mind.** If you find you are doing two things at once, stop—go back to one thing at a time (the opposite of multitasking!).

### EFFECTIVELY

- Be mindful of your goals in the situation,** and do what is necessary to achieve them.
- Focus on what works.** (Don’t let emotion mind get in the way of being effective.)
- Play by the rules.**
- Act as skillfully as you can.** Do what is needed for the situation you are in—not the situation you wish you were in; not the one that is fair; not the one that is more comfortable.
- Let go of willfulness and sitting on your hands.**