

Ideas for Practicing Describing

Practice describing what you see outside of yourself:

1. Lie on the ground and watch the clouds in the sky. Find and describe cloud patterns that you see.
2. Sit on a bench on a busy street or at a park. Describe one thing about each person who walks by you.
3. Find things in nature—a leaf, a drop of water, a pet or other animal. Describe each thing in as much detail as you can.
4. Describe as accurately as you can what a person has just said to you. Check to see if you are correct.
5. Describe a person's face when the person seems angry, afraid, or sad. Notice and describe the shape, movement, and placement of the forehead, eyebrows, and eyes; the lips and mouth; the cheeks; and so on.
6. Describe what a person has done or is doing now. Be very specific. Avoid describing intentions or outcomes of the behavior that you do not directly observe. Avoid judgmental language.
7. Other: _____

Practice describing thoughts and feelings:

8. Describe your feelings as they arise within you: "A feeling of anger is arising within me."
9. Describe your thoughts when you feel a strong emotion: "I feel X, and my thoughts are Y."
10. Describe your feelings after someone else does or says something: "When you do X, I feel Y."
11. Describe thoughts, feelings, and what you observed others do: "When you do X, I feel Y, and my thoughts are Z." "When X occurs, I feel Y, and my thoughts are Z."
12. Describe as many of your thoughts as you can while feeling a strong emotion.
13. Other: _____

Practice describing your breathing:

14. Each time you inhale and exhale, as you inhale, be aware that "I am inhaling, 1." When you exhale, be aware that "I am exhaling, 1." Remember to breathe from the stomach. When beginning the second inhalation, be aware that "I am inhaling, 2." And, slowly exhaling, be aware that "I am exhaling, 2." Continue on up through 10. After you have reached 10, return to 1. Whenever you lose count, return to 1.
15. Begin to inhale gently and normally (from the stomach), describing in your mind that "I am inhaling normally." Exhale in awareness, "I am exhaling normally." Continue for three breaths. On the fourth breath, extend the inhalation, describing in your mind that "I am breathing in a long inhalation." Exhale in awareness, "I am breathing out a long exhalation." Continue for three breaths.
16. Follow the entrance and exit of air. Say to yourself, "I am inhaling and following the inhalation from its beginning to its end. I am exhaling and following the exhalation from its beginning to its end."
17. Other: _____