

# Practice Note: Just Notice and Feel

**Transcribed and edited from a short talk by Gil Fronsdal on June 15, 2011**

An interesting approach to practicing mindfulness is to do the basic practice of sitting still in meditation or walking back and forth in walking meditation. You have a certain structure for your experience of sitting or walking. Notice what's happening to you without censoring, without any idea of wrong or right. Just notice yourself and what's going on. Then notice what it feels like in your body for this to be happening.

For example, you could be sitting and meditating, and you're distracted. You think you're supposed to be on your breath, and your mind wanders away a lot. In this approach to meditation, you wouldn't see the mind wandering off in thought as being wrong. It's just what's happening. If you notice what's happening, then notice what it feels like to be a person whose mind wanders off a lot. What does it feel like in the present moment? How does it feel experientially and viscerally? Is there a lot of energy? Is there a lack of energy? Is there a lack of a sense of purpose? Is there interest in something? Are there feelings and emotions going on? How would you describe it if someone asked you, "How are you feeling when this is happening?" Then stay present for those

feelings and see what happens. See how those feelings unfold if you stay present.

So stay in the structure of sitting and walking, and just simply notice what your experience is. All experiences are okay. As you notice your experience, go into yourself and see in the present moment how it immediately feels having this happen. What does it feel like in your body? If you're thinking about the past or the future, that's fine. What does it feel like in the present moment to be thinking about the past or the future?

Keep coming back to your present moment experience. Anything is okay. Your job is to feel it, sense it, be present for it, and then notice what happens as you feel it. If your mind wanders away, that's okay. When you notice when you're present again, what does that feel like? What does the next thing feel like? See what it's like to practice in this way. It's very permissive and allowing because there's no idea at all that you're doing it wrong. It's just whatever your experience is. It's fine and you feel it, sense it and are present for it.

If what I said doesn't make sense, then forget it. Thank you.