

# $f : \text{Meditation} \rightarrow \text{Awareness}$

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## Meditation

If you're an expert at being distracted, meditation can change that. As Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche puts it, "Meditation is awareness". It's akin to a focusing muscle, enhancing your capacity to choose what you're aware of and for how long. In today's fast-paced world, with an abundance of sensory stimuli, meditation offers a way to regain control of your attention. It isn't entirely about clearing the mind, but rather training it to maintain focus. It is clearing the mind in order to fill it, with that which is of value to you. It's a practice teaching you to recognize distractions and gently return to the chosen point of awareness. By doing so, you develop a deeper understanding of your mind and how it operates.

## Why do we need awareness

Awareness is fundamental in navigating life's complexity with purpose. It's more than just being awake; it's being present and conscious, acting instead of reacting. With heightened awareness, we perceive our environment, emotions, and thoughts more clearly. This clarity leads to better decision-making, as we are less clouded by past biases or future anxieties. Awareness also fosters emotional intelligence, enabling us to understand and manage our emotions effectively. In relationships, it helps us empathize and connect deeply with others. Professionally, it enhances productivity and creativity, as a focused mind is more efficient and innovative. Thus, cultivating awareness is essential for personal growth and success.

## 1 minute meditation

- **External awareness:** Shut your eyes and label the sounds and smells around you. Be as detailed as possible, for example, what direction is it coming from, how is it making that sound, what material has that scent. If the mind starts wandering, bring it back to your nose and analyze.
- **Internal awareness:** Focusing on breathing is a very intuitive internal awareness exercise, but it doesn't matter what you focus on. The purpose is to have something to bring your mind back to when it starts wandering. A variation on this is imagining a ball of energy in the center of your chest, with each breath that energy grows and gets brighter. Whenever your mind wanders, bring it back to your ball of energy.