

Three Ways to Set Up Your Basic Mindfulness Session ~ Shinzen Young

00:00:00 How can I use this system?

00:00:05 You can use this system in one of three ways.

00:00:08 You can either say, well, I don't want to deal with choices at all,

00:00:12 and you pick one technique, and that's what you do.

00:00:15 And so the basic mindfulness system was a catalog of techniques,

00:00:20 and you decided to buy one and take it home, and that's it.

00:00:27 Another thing you can do is make a little workout sequence for yourself.

00:00:31 Think of each one of the five ways as a piece of nautilus equipment,

00:00:39 and you're going to go through this psychospiritual workout cycle every morning,

00:00:43 something like that.

00:00:47 The metaphor with physical exercise is actually rather extraordinary.

00:00:53 Once you start to make the comparisons, there's at least a dozen places

00:00:58 where the metaphor just works absolutely perfectly,

00:01:02 including ending with focus on positive being analogous to going into the jacuzzi.

00:01:08 I mean, it's like perfectly analogous,

00:01:13 because not only is it a pleasant balm after what might be a harsh deconstruction,

00:01:20 but if you think about how exercise works,

00:01:24 exercise doesn't make you strong.

00:01:27 Exercise destroys muscle.

00:01:30 Exercise is destructive, but it's destructive in a way that helps nature improve.

00:01:39 And the observing practices that we do in mindfulness,

00:01:44 they deconstruct self and world,

00:01:48 but in a way that helps nature reconstruct better.

00:01:56 One of the things that helps the muscles rebuild in a good direction at the end

00:02:02 is to go into the whirlpool.

00:02:04 So one of the things that ...

00:02:06 I mean, the deconstruction we do would automatically move you in positive directions anyway,

00:02:12 but you can help it along by ending with this jacuzzi of focus on positive,

00:02:17 which tends to then foster that direction.

00:02:19 So it's actually a very nice metaphor.

00:02:22 So you can just, by one technique, keep things simple.

00:02:28 Okay, I like to do noting restful states, body-mind version.

00:02:34 Relaxation, peace, blank, quiet, that's it, that's my practice.

00:02:38 Or you can make a little workout sequence for yourself.

00:02:44 The natural sequence that I tend to follow is focus in, focus out,

00:02:53 note restful states, focus on change,

00:03:00 and then do nothing, and then end with focus on positive.

00:03:06 But you can work out any sequence you want.

00:03:12 And then the most complicated way to use it is you sit down and you decide

00:03:18 which of these themes you'd like to pursue, and you start to do it,

00:03:23 and then you either stay with it and that's it,

00:03:27 or interest, opportunity, necessity comes up, and you decide,

00:03:31 okay, I think I'd like to switch to one of the other approaches,

00:03:34 and that's a looping and branching algorithm.

00:03:38 It gives you a lot of flexibility but at the price of complexity.

00:03:41 So simplest thing you can do, just choose one, and that's fine.

00:03:45 Any one of these ways at one time historically was an entire path to enlightenment.

00:03:53 So it's not like you're going to miss out on something.

00:03:57 If you do any one of them assiduously, you should be able to get the classic results.

00:04:05 Or you want to be a little more elaborate,

00:04:08 you just hit all the psychospiritual muscle groups and you have this little workout routine.

00:04:13 You want to be really elaborate, then we come into the 21st century,

00:04:18 the age of the algorithm.

00:04:21 So now it's a flowchart and you're looping and branching

00:04:25 to keep your interest up and to optimize the efficacy.

00:04:30 When I interactively guide you, we go to the algorithm, we loop and branch.

00:04:36 Part of the reason that I set up the system this way is to optimize interactive guidance.