

Waking Up meditation course Step 2 Think



You can only have a problem if you think you do.....

This second step is about the nature of the mind. Here we go into our head.... we use the mind to know the mind so that later we can see beyond it!

I employ logic to show that the world as we perceive it is often not how it is; that there is a deeper, truer reality waiting to be allowed through into awareness. But this truer reality does not have words to describe it, so we let the mind lead us there and then we have to realise it wordlessly.

In this step our simple practices are a mantra, which means the repetition of a sound, and **Jin Shin Jyitsu** (explained later).

We grow up conditioned to believe that our projections are reality, so we confuse what we think with what is. We mistake the menu for the meal. Can you truly see a tree without thinking about it? Or does the noise in your head obscure the tree?

Any moment of experience has only three elements: **Thoughts** (including all mental images), **sensations** (everything sensed by the body and its sense organs), **and awareness** of these thoughts and sensations. Emotions and 'feelings' are a combination of thought and sensation.

Jin Shin Jyitsu is part of a wonderful healing system from Japan. It is based in mindfulness of breathing, and adds finger holding positions. The instructions are to silently count 9 exhalations while gently holding each finger position, on both hands.

Because meridians reach your fingers and toes, holding them and relaxing helps these energies to unblock and flow, rebalancing and giving you wellbeing as well as peace of mind. I suggest you practice this for about 20 minutes, so you may go through each hand more than once.

A variation on this is to observe the pulse in each finger/hand as you hold it (rather than count breaths). When the pulse is steady and strong, which indicates that this meridian is free flowing, move on to the next position. Please practice Jin Shin Jyitsu at least 3 times in this step.

The mind is a wonderful tool but it makes a lousy boss.

Let's become more skilful in choosing what occupies our minds. And let's learn not to think sometimes too.

We need to cultivate a warm hearted accepting attitude towards ourselves, including our thoughts. Rather than ever objecting to this carnival of noise inside our heads, let's make best friends with it and everything else that already exists. If we love what is, we

experience ourselves as peace. In the mind is where this adventure unfolds. This is an ongoing lifetime's journey, well worth it since the alternative is to keep losing your happiness.

In this step another very short and simple practice is saying to yourself at least once every day:

"Today is today and I am glad it is today."

Repeat this phrase every morning and whenever else you remember until 2 consecutive times sound alike, then stop.

Do it often. Try it now.

I find that as I begin this my spirit lifts. We create neural pathways and habits of gratitude and joy.

The mind is restless, it moves. And it seems to like finding or inventing problems! There's a part of us that needs a problem to know that it exists.

Yet, consider:

I am not my thoughts. If I were, who is listening?

A Native American elder tells his grandson that there are two wolves who live inside the child, one kind and the other greedy, who fight.

"Who wins?" asks the child.

"That depends on which one you feed," grandfather replies.

You could see your life as a garden. You nurture those areas that you want to grow, and just leave the rest to itself. The weeds are not deserving of more of your time. Focus on the flowers.

See your mind as a passing parade, as a carnival. Or as a waterfall which you sit beside, rather than underneath its cascade.

Visualise your thoughts as clouds drifting across the wide open sky of awareness. Or as cars passing along a valley beneath you, disappearing from sight. You might treat your thoughts as those pesky in-laws, Mrs Chatty Mouth and Mr BlahBlah, who live down the hall and won't go away but are fine as they are.

It takes resolve to harness this monkey mind, as you practice. Have resolve! You are deepening your love affair with yourself.

With practice we become more adept at being still, however the mind rarely ceases its movement. This is not a problem once we realise we are never obliged to believe a single thought. Thoughts are harmless noises inside your head. They only start to make mischief once you believe them.

Know that you are really awareness itself.

We use the mind to know our mind. Then we drop into the void.

