Hey Guys!

**THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR JOINING THE COURSE!**

I know that it seems a bit cliché that the first video for a course related to mental health is about Meditation, but what I wanna tell you here is that no one really provides meditation as a solution to overthinking since it is seemingly harder for overthinkers in the beginning to focus on one thing, however it is completely possible to overcome overthinking with the help of meditation alone (if done right)

The only reason I believe I was able to come up with solution for overthinking is because of meditation. As I was too close to my thoughts to figure out why I started overthinking, I needed clarity in my mind which was provided by meditation. And that is why I ask you to meditate as well.

In the next video we are going to see a really simple and commonly known way of meditation called ‘mindfulness breathing’.

**TAMING WILD ELEPHANTS**

Ancient Pali texts compare meditation to the process of taming a wild elephant. The procedure in those days was to tie a newly captured animal to a post with a good strong rope. When you do this, the elephant is not happy. He screams and tramples, and pulls against the rope for days. Finally it sinks through his skull that he can’t get away, and he settles down.

At this point you can begin to feed him and to handle him with some measure of safety. Eventually you can dispense with the rope and post altogether, and train your elephant for various tasks. Now you have got a tamed elephant that can be put to useful work.

In this analogy the wild elephant is your wildly active mind, the rope is mindfulness, and the post is our object of meditation, our breathing. The tamed elephant who emerges from this process is a well-trained, concentrated mind that can then be used for the exceedingly tough job of piercing the layers of illusion that obscure reality. Meditation tames the mind.

## WHY FOCUSING IS IMPORTANT

The first question we might have is why use any focus of attention at all? We are, after all, trying to develop awareness. Why not just sit down and be aware of whatever happens to be present in the mind? In fact, there are meditations of that nature. They are sometimes referred to as unstructured meditation and they are quite difficult.

The mind is tricky. Thought is an inherently complicated procedure. By that we mean that we become trapped, wrapped up, and stuck in the thought chain. One thought leads to another which leads to another, and another, and another, and so on. Fifteen minutes later we suddenly wake up and realize we spent that whole time stuck in a daydream or sexual fantasy or a set of worries about our bills or whatever.

We use breath as our focus. It serves as that vital reference point from which the mind wanders and is drawn back. Distraction cannot be seen as distraction unless there is some central focus to be distracted from. That is the frame of reference against which we can view the incessant changes and interruptions that go on all the time as a part of normal thinking.

## WHY BREATHING?

The next question we need to address is: Why choose breathing as the primary object of meditation? Why not something a bit more interesting? Answers to this are numerous. A useful object of meditation should be one that promotes mindfulness. It should be portable, easily available, and cheap. It should also be something that will not entangle us in those states of mind from which we are trying to free ourselves, such as greed, anger, and delusion.

Breathing satisfies all these criteria and more. It is common to every human being. We all carry it with us wherever we go. It is always there, constantly available, never ceasing from birth till death, and it costs nothing.

Breathing is a non-conceptual process, a thing that can be experienced directly without a need for thought. Furthermore, it is a very living process, an aspect of life that is in constant change. The breath moves in cycles-inhalation, exhalation, breathing in, and breathing out. Thus, it is a miniature model of life itself.

Breath is a phenomenon common to all living things. A true experiential understanding of the process moves you closer to other living beings. It shows you your inherent connected-ness with all of life. Finally, breathing is a present-time process.

The first step in using the breath as an object of meditation is to find it. What you are looking for is the physical, tactile sensation of the air that passes in and out of the nostrils. This is usually just inside the tip of the nose. But the exact spot varies from one person to another, depending on the shape of the nose.

To find your own point, take a quick deep breath and notice and point just inside the nose or on the upper tip where you have the most distinct sensation of passing air. Now exhale and notice the sensation at the same point. It is from this point that you will follow the whole passage of breath.

## NOT ALWAYS EASY

When you first begin this procedure, expect to face some difficulties. Your mind will wander off constantly darting, around like a bumble bee and zooming off into various scenarios. Try not to worry. The monkey mind phenomenon is well known. It is something that every advanced meditator has had to deal with. They have pushed through it one way or another, and so can you.

When it happens, just note the fact that you have been thinking, day-dreaming, worrying, or whatever. Gently, but firmly, without getting upset or judging yourself for straying, simply return to the simple physical sensation of the breath. Then do it again the next time, and again, and again, and again.

Essentially, meditation is a process of retraining the mind. The state you are aiming for is one in which you are totally aware of everything that is happening in your own perceptual universe, exactly the way it happens, exactly when it is happening; total, unbroken awareness in present time.

This is an incredibly high goal, and not to be reached all at once. It takes practice, so we start small. We start by becoming totalIy aware of one small unit of time, just one single inhalation. And, when you succeed, you are on your way to a whole new experience of life.