

Sample Instructions for Blue Sky Focusing

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1. **Mindful sitting (Focuser and Listener do this together)**

Notice the weight on both of your sitz bones as you sit. Try shifting your weight left and right and be mindful of the weight felt on your sitz bones. Now shift forward and backward and be mindful of how your whole upper body changes with the movements.

Find a point of balance that feels right for your body. Don't let your mind dictate how to "sit properly".

Focuser: Let your listener know when you are ready to move on.

2. **Mindful Breathing (Focuser and Listener do this together)**

Be mindful of the air coming in and going out of your nose. Do not control breathing with your mind. It is air that comes in and goes out. Observe where air goes in your body. Observe how air exits the body. When air comes in, your chest and/or abdomen area rises. When air leaves the body, your chest and abdomen area falls. Be mindful of rising and falling.

When thoughts appear, just notice them (be mindful of them) and then return to noticing the "rising and falling".

Focuser: Let your listener know when you are ready to move on.

3. **Mindful Hearing (Focuser and Listener do this together)**

Be mindful of the sounds around you. For example, you might notice; "birds are singing"; "leaves are rustling"; "A bird is moving as it chirps".

Focuser: Let your listener know when you are ready to move on.

4. **Sensing the body-sense mindfully (Listener can read this to the Focuser as instructions, skip the part in parenthesis)**

Sense the middle of your body, your throat, chest, and abdomen area, to see if this area of your body is all clear. Very often you will notice that there is some body-sense (felt sense, direct referent) there. Be mindful of the body sense.

Focuser

Inform the listener of the felt sense. For example, you might say: “there is tension in the chest area”. [If there are several distinct body-senses, start with one of them that seems to need your attention most.]

Listener

(Try to re-experience (*nacherleben*) the Focuser’s body sense and say back the handle words so the Focuser. For example, the listener might say: “There is a sense of tension there, in the chest area”.)

5. Symbolizing the body-sense as a cloud

Focuser (Listener can read this to the Focuser as instructions, skip the part in parenthesis)

Now symbolize the body-sense as a cloud in the sky. Express the quality of this cloud to the listener. (For example: “The tension is like a large orange cloud that emits thunder and lightening”.)

Listener

(Try to re-experience (*nacherleben*) the Focuser’s cloud image and say back the image to the Focuser. For example, the listener might say: “So the tension is like a large orange-colored cloud with thunder and lightening”.)

6. Watch the cloud, or cross into it (Listener can read this to the Focuser as instructions, skip the part in parenthesis)

Now move your point of view to a position higher than the cloud. Then, *look down* at the cloud and observe it. Be mindful of the cloud, for example you might notice that: “this is large orange cloud”. Going higher above, you might notice that there are other clouds below as well. If there were several distinct body-senses, they can now be symbolized as different clouds. (Note: observing a cloud from above feels different from being under the cloud. If you were *under* a large cloud with thunder and lightening, it would be menacing. But if you were high *above* that cloud, thunder and lightening or heavy rain will not affect you.)

Observe the cloud(s) as it (they) drift(s) away. Or you can cross into the cloud if you want to. You can do both, too.

[Crossing into the cloud]

Pick a cloud that seems to catch your attention. Articulate the quality of the cloud with a word or phrase, or with a visual image. ([Word] For example, with a “turbulent orange cloud” you might wonder if there is anything in your life that is “turbulent” or “orange”. [Image] Or perhaps you might have an image of a volcanic eruption on the earth surface that is making the turbulent orange cloud. You might then wonder, “what in my life is ‘erupting’ now”, or “what in my life is like a volcanic eruption”.)

Focuser

Express your experiential process to the listener. As you do this, be mindful of experiencing --- how images, words and the body sense (the cloud) change as you express them, or when the listener reflects the words [verbal symbols] back to you.

Listener

(Try to re-experience (*nacherleben*) the Focuser’s experiencing. Reflect back the handle words (images) and be with the focuser’s experiencing. You can inquire using “asking-responses” with the handle words {as underlined}, for example: “Would it work for you if I asked: what is the turbulent orange cloud telling you?” Variations of asking-responses might be one of the following. Use only one or two of the questions below to leave space for the focuser to process. “*What in your life is like a turbulent orange cloud?*”; “*What does this turbulent orange cloud need?*” “*What is the crux of this?*” “*What happens when you cross your life (situation) with the turbulent orange cloud?*”)

Listener (Can be read to the Focuser as instructions)

After spending some time crossing into the cloud, then just watch the clouds below. (There is no need to continue crossing until you get a felt shift.)

7. Become the sky (Listener can read this to the Focuser as instructions, skip the part in parenthesis)

At this point, you will realize that you have become the sky. You are the sky watching the clouds below. Feelings, thoughts, and scenes that occur to you are clouds. They are not you. And you are just mindful of the clouds below you.

8. Sending compassion to yourself

Focuser (Listener can read this to the Focuser as instructions, skip the part in parenthesis)

You are the sky. Now get an image of yourself on the ground. Perhaps you might get an image of yourself looking up at the sky. Inform the listener of this image. Be specific about the scene: where you are; what you are doing; perhaps you might be with another being.

Listener

Reflect back the image of the Focuser. Then invite the listener to say the following words silently.

Focuser (Listener can read this to the Focuser as instructions, skip the part in parenthesis)

The Focuser then says the following words silently inside. Or the Focuser may voice the following phrase with a voice small enough so that only you {the Focuser} can hear it. *“May I be well and happy, may I be free from any kind of suffering.”* This may be repeated several times.

Inform the listener how the image of you on the ground is responding to this phrase.

Listener

Respond with reflective listening.

9. Ending Mode (Focuser and Listener do this together)

When you are ready to end, inform the listener that you are going into an ending sequence. In this sequence, bring your mindfulness back to the air coming into your nose and going out of your nose. When air comes in, your chest and/or abdomen area rises. When air leaves the body, your chest and abdomen area falls. Be mindful of the rising and falling. Then be mindful of the sounds around you. This may take a few minutes. Then slowly open your eyes and be mindful of the light that is making objects visible. Thank the listener and end the session.

We would very much appreciate hearing about your experiences with Blue Sky Focusing. You can share your experience by writing to us at: blue_sky_focusing@yahoo.co.jp

The experiences you share with us will be studied and may eventually be published. Your identity will not be disclosed. Writing to us at the above address means that you have understood that what you share will be studied and may be published.