



The Intuitive Experience in Insight Meditation Practice in Thailand: USAC American Student Reports

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Vanessa Rojo-Merida Ajarn Phisit Kotsupho Mindfulness and Mindfulness Based Intervention March 30, 2024 Reflection Focusing my thoughts into my palm during my first meditation helped me achieve a moment of clarity; it was almost as if the thoughts disappeared from my head. Even though we had studied breathing techniques in the earlier meditations, on this occasion I felt my legs hurt and go numb, followed by drowsiness, and then, for a brief while, I was able to achieve clarity in which my body was at ease and my mind was clear. Usually, when I'm in pain, I can't concentrate and end up hyper focusing on the hurt. This time, even though I was in pain, I was able to focus on the task at hand by employing the strategies and acknowledging that my thoughts were distinct from me. Later, I was no longer experiencing the discomfort in the present. The sound of the birds chirping contributed as well me in focusing. I found the sound to be wonderfully tranquil and it soothed me when my mind wandered. I applied the methods he described, which involved paying attention to my breathing and visualizing it as thoughts leaving my mind. The fact that we were timing everything and that I had only anticipated ten minutes, which seemed like a fair amount of time, may have also been helpful to me. I usually become quite impatient and



find it difficult to concentrate on anything but the timer, but this time I ignored it because I thought it would only last a short while. I believe that when I have a lot on my plate and I put things off, I still have trouble being totally present in the moment. However, there are times these days when I become aware that my thoughts are not in the here and now, and I am able to concentrate by focusing on sounds or other people's remarks. With continued practice and dedication I think that I will be able to attain a more aware life

Vanessa Rojo-Merida Ajarn Phisit Kotsupho Mindfulness and Mindfulness Based Intervention March 20, 2024 Reflection My thoughts were disorganized before the class, but they were clearer after the meditation. During the walking meditation, I was lifting my heel up before the instructor indicated that there was another step, so at first I was unable to discern how the motions differed from the initial ones. Although the actions were simple, they needed the greatest concentration. I found it harder and harder to focus as we covered additional walking meditation movements. The right-side walking meditation motions were difficult for me to perform completely. There are moments when I felt unbalanced even if my foot is healed. My thoughts were consumed with the possibility that I was doing the meditation incorrectly when I could only walk on my left foot. As time passed, the teaching monk's encouragement helped me to concentrate. Eventually, I let the thoughts pass through me and gave myself permission to try my hardest. I noticed in the prior meditation class that occasionally, even though I was calm and concentrated, I would occasionally hear outside noises like brooms being swept or birds singing. Because I was so intent on the task at hand—lifting my legs—I did notice that my concentration levels had improved this time. I was only focused on positioning my feet to maximize balance, and I had no other thoughts going through my head.

hailey neuburger <haileyneuburger@gmail.com>

I prefer walking meditation because my mind is more calm than when I am practicing a sitting meditation. Acknowledging each step of the walking



mediation; heal, lifting, moving, lowering, treading, and pressing, brings absolute presence to my mind. Additionally, mindfulness keeps my mind from wandering to thoughts about the past or present. Circling a stupa in an outdoor environment will bring distractions such as surrounding nature sounds, however, in my opinion this is grounding. When I hear these noises I allow them to be in the background, and I feel closer to universal love and connection. If I become too distracted, then I will repeat to myself, “noticing” which brings me back to my breathing and practice.

Amelia Celeste <ameliacorner10@gmail.com>

Amelia Corner Ajarn Phisit Mindfulness 29 November 2023 Mindfulness practice #4 I find indoor and outdoor meditations both peaceful in their own ways. I will say that with indoor meditations, I can sit in my silence more without outside noises pushing in, which makes it easier to control and be mindful. However, while outdoor meditations can be more challenging, I find that breathing in the fresh air and hearing the life around me allows me to be more at ease with myself and the world around me. So, I do not necessarily have a favorite, as both are equally rewarding.

Chazin, Victoria <vrchazin@smcm.edu>

Victoria Chazin 11/24/23 Mindfulness Reflection #4 Personally, I enjoy outdoor practice more. I find it much easier to be mindful when I have other things stimulating my senses. For example when I can focus on the sun on my face or the bird chirping in my ears I can separate myself from my racing thoughts faster and focus on the sounds outside or my breathing. I find when I meditate inside while I am more comfortable temperature wise, but the silence tends to make me focus on my racing thoughts and it can be hard to disconnect from them and focus on my breathing. Outside I feel more connected to nature which helps me feel more grounded and centered, connecting me back to my body and breathing aiding in mindfulness. The hot weather can make it complicated



to relax though. I like feeling the ground under my feet outside during walking meditation and there's also prettier things to look at, feeling things under my feet helps me tune into the feeling of them and become more mindful.

Tyler, Lily (tylerly) <tylerly@mail.uc.edu>

Mindfulness Retreat #4 Assignment Lily Tyler “Between in-door and out-door practice mindfulness meditations which is easier to control you being mindful successively and why express your supported reason.” For me, it is easier to control my mindfulness and be able to be successfully mindful when I am practicing mindfulness indoors. I think this is because there is too much stimuli outdoors to keep my attention focused and controlled and mindful. When I am indoors, I find that there is less stimuli to distract me because it is quieter, fewer distractions, and everyone is doing the same thing. Whereas outdoors, there are other people doing other things around me, airplanes flying above, dogs barking, etc. This abundance in stimuli makes it harder to focus on being mindful because when there is too much of it, I dwell on those distractions instead of accepting them and letting them go. When we are inside, I am comfortable, there are no bugs, not noise besides what is indoors, and I find that being mindful is much easier in a quiet indoor space like this. Bugs also bother me a lot outdoors when trying to meditate because I become very aware of bodily sensations, so I will flinch at every feeling thinking it's a bug crawling on me or something. I do really enjoy meditation and mindfulness in an outdoor setting when it is more quiet and less populated, so I can experience the sounds of nature in a non-distracting way. Otherwise, I much prefer to be inside when being mindful because it keeps me more at focus with less distractions.

Ellen Callender <ellencallender@gustavus.edu>

Between in-door and out-door practice mindfulness meditations which is easier to control you being mindful successively and why express your supported reason. I feel that indoor meditation practice is much easier for me



to control my mind, as there are less distractions present. I find it is easier to become lost in thought while I am walking. I feel that walking meditation is effective sometimes because it gives my mind something to focus on, whereas the sitting, indoor meditation is easier to remain still and have my eyes closed. I think when my eyes are closed, I am not tempted to look around. Also, I believe that it is distracting when I can see everyone else doing the walking meditation, as I always start thinking about the way they are walking, the speed, or their posture. I think I may prefer sitting meditation because I have much more practice with it, so maybe if I practice walking meditation on my own I would find it easier to control my mind. However, the best way for me to control my mind is through yoga, because it feels much more intense than the walking meditation, so I can focus on the sensation a lot more. Overall, I think indoor meditation is easier, but I want to practice outdoor more so I can be successfully mindful in all ways.

Wachter, Mary <mkwachter@smcm.edu>

Mary Wachter Mindfulness Retreat #4 Between indoor and outdoor meditations, I prefer outdoor meditations because it is easier for me to be successively mindful. It is easier for me to be successively mindful when outdoors because I have more motivation to meditate in the first place. Being indoors does not inspire me to meditate and be mindful as much as being outdoors does. I have a high respect towards nature and I value the time I get to spend in it. Having natural beauty around me tends to give me happiness and a sense of calm. I feel grateful for nature and this feeling of gratitude gives me more passion to practice mindfulness meditations. Having more passion for being mindful makes it easier to do and makes me incorporate it into my life more.

Amelia Celeste <ameliacorner10@gmail.com>

Amelia Corner, Ajarn Phisit, Mindfulness, 8 November 2023

Mindfulness practice #3



The walking meditation is performed in 6 steps, which are 1. Heal 2. Lifting 3. Moving 4. Lowering 5. Treading 6. Pressing. We begin by lifting the left foot, usually starting with three steps and working our way up. However, you can use whatever combo of steps you want that makes you most mindful. I use lifting, moving, treading, and pressing because I find it the easiest to remember and makes the most sense as I walk while also helping me keep a steady pace. I enjoy this meditation a lot as it forces me to be in the moment and mindful, as I have to keep my steps in order and be aware of my surroundings at the same time.

Chazin, Victoria <vrchazin@smcm.edu>

Victoria Chazin 11/22/23 Mindfulness Reflection #3 Walking meditation begins with lifting the heel, then lifting the entire foot off the ground, moving the foot forward, slowly lowering the foot, touching the ground then finally pressing the foot into the ground and beginning the six step process over again with the other foot. you can also do the process with 5,4,3,2 or 1 steps as well. I find I am most mindful during the last step of the process, pressing my foot into the ground. Feeling the sensation of my foot being pressed into the ground makes me focus on that and become more mindful rather than letting my mind wander

Grace Ertel <ertelgrace08@gmail.com>

Grace Ertel Professor Kotsupho Buddhism in Thailand 13 Novemeber 2023 I went on a hike with someone the other day and they asked me what meditation looked like and if meditation was being in a state of nothingness. I thought about it for a while and then said maybe that is the word to describe how it feels to be in a deep meditative state for some people, but it is not the word I would dedicate to how I feel. I think I would choose abundance. I learned a lot in the last couple of visits to the meditation center. I have learned how to keep my mind focused on the stepping and sitting meditation guidelines and respected when it would wander. The last couple weeks, however, have been hard to stay



focused. My grandma was decreasing in the capacity of her usual liveliness for the last month and passed away. Any time I sit down to meditate, I go into a thought spiral of memories with her from the past and it's not a fun place to sit in. I'm not ready to sit with it yet. My grandma was truly my best friend in my life- she understood me more than any person ever can or will. She saw me for me and loved me. And her love was so warm and comforting. She raised me to be the person I am today and I am so grateful for her. My brain is having a hard time processing that she isn't here. I love meditation and the meditation center we have visited and I heard everything the monk was telling us in how to better practice meditation. I saw what he showed us and there are a lot of aspects I will take with me back home and practice and show others later in life. Right now, I am not in a good place to meditate. I feel that it is not good for my own well being to sit with emotions so deep I have never felt. My heart is broken right now. The other part of me thinks this might be the best time to get in touch with my internal self in the most raw way. I just lost the most important person in my life and if I take the mental choice to meditate now and apply things we have learned in the meditation center, then it will be easier to make it a habit in my everyday life when I am back to my status quo emotion set. I think I will continue to try standing meditation for the next few weeks as the movement helped me at least have some other physicality to think about as well. I really enjoyed when we added more steps to the usual "lifting, moving, stepping." I liked when the monk went more detailed from the the lift the heel motion to the move the foot motion to the tap the ground motion to the press the foot into the ground motion. I will practice this more. I am hopeful for getting back to a place where I can meditate daily again.