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1. Learning to Observe. 

Observe events around us.

- *The rain falling, the dog barking, and garbage truck driving by.*

Observe our direct perception/experience of events.

- *It's raining and I am wet; the dog barking is loud; the unpleasant smell of the garbage truck.*


Observe our internal state.

- *I notice disappointment that it's raining, I am delighted to see the dog, the garbage truck reminds me I forgot to put out my garbage and feel anger arising.*

Observe our listening.

- *A stranger asks for directions. I pause and ask her to repeat the question. In a split second, I notice my listening. I set aside arising anger, disappointment, and delight. I now pay attention to the question.*

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2. Practice "Coming Back" (to present). 

FOCUS: the span of attention → *staying present*


CONCENTRATION: the depth of attention → *staying grounded*

- **Focus the mind** on a single object to the exclusion of other objects to foster concentration, or a "one-pointed" mode of mental function.
- **Refrain from giving attention** to distracting thoughts or sensations that arise.
- Gently return awareness to the primary object of experience (the breath, a word or conversation, etc.).

"Your worst enemy cannot harm you as much as your own unguarded thoughts." –The Buddha




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3. Learning To "Not Know" 

1. Be willing to move beyond what we already know.
2. Let go of the need to know, to prove, or to explain. We become unrecognizable to ourselves – *to allow for unexpected discoveries.*
3. Avoid turning something new into something known. This reduces "differences" to similarities.
4. Dissolve fixed views to increase capacity for "unlearning."

- ✓ **Knowledge** seeks certainty, which is fixed and predictable.
 - *Listens through knowledge for answers – tuned into cognition (our head).*
- ✓ **Wisdom** embraces uncertainty with humility by questioning knowledge.
 - *Listens with intention for possibilities, questions – tuned into breath/body (neck-down).*




There is a difference between knowing the path & walking the path. – Morpheus, THE MATRIX.

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4. Practice Resistance Tolerance/Training

- **BE WILLING** to set aside your point of view; drop any assumptions and expectations.
- **BE CLEAR** on your intention; what you care about in this conversation (beyond agenda).
- **BE OPEN** to observing how you resist. During the communication, notice any resistance to what's being said.
 - ✓ **Inquire:** what it is they want to say that I don't want to hear? Then, pause and breathe, and be where they are in the conversation.
- **BE COMMITTED** to get another's full communication.
 - ✓ **Inquire:** am I willing to stay in the conversation until I get someone's full communication? (*Is there anything else to say?*)

What You Resist, Persists – C. Jung.



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5. Learning to Dissolve the “Problem” Paradigm


PROBLEM PARADIGM: Observing problems through a normative lens, we diagnose and solve.

- ✓ We observe *what works*, what’s wrong, and how to fix it.
- ✓ Normative ideals precede problems that should not exist, so **we listen for prescriptions.**

POSSIBILITY PARADIGM: Observing problems from ontological perspective into the nature of being, (or an existential lens).


- ✓ We observe *what’s missing* or essential for a declared possibility.
- ✓ Freedom precedes problems, which are inevitable and universal, so **we listen for possibilities.**

If all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail. —Maslow.



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6. Practice Acceptance




- 1- Let things arise:** *mindfulness meditation* places non-reactive awareness, moving from object to object, as stimuli present themselves in experience (complement of *concentration*).
- 2- Accept others as legitimate beings.** We accept all different views as valid parts of an emerging coherent truth.
- 3- Embrace self-acceptance** (self-compassion). We acknowledge “self,” as a point of view, that unifies the flow of experience into a coherent narrative (Senge).

Practice this Mantra:

- *I am enough.*
- *This is enough.*
- *This moment is enough.*
- *I accept this moment as it is.*

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7. Learning Radical Openness



- **Observe through the layers of “concepts”** that represent experiences; and “beliefs” about those concepts, both of which we forget we made up to explain reality.
- **Observe meaning:** Begin dissolving expectations, assumptions and differences – notice what questions or thoughts emerge.
- **Dissolve identity** and disclose “self” as a point of view no longer separating us from others.
- **Observe what shows itself:** Notice what emerges in the way others recreate you (bring you into being).
- **Observe opposites making wholes:** the arising of polarities, possibility, or potential.

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8. Learning to “be with” possibility



- We can now “be with” what we do not understand, what we do not want to hear. We can stay with things (dwell in ideas) to see through them – to **BE WITH** other views and beings as valid.
- Experience **empty attention** to expand awareness;
- **Clear perception** to view openly; and,
- **Direct presence** to experience emerging holons (partial & whole).

We become the listening (space) for others to sort themselves out in language.

Everyone in a complex system has a slightly different interpretation. The more interpretations we gather, the easier it becomes to gain a sense of the whole. —Margaret Wheatley