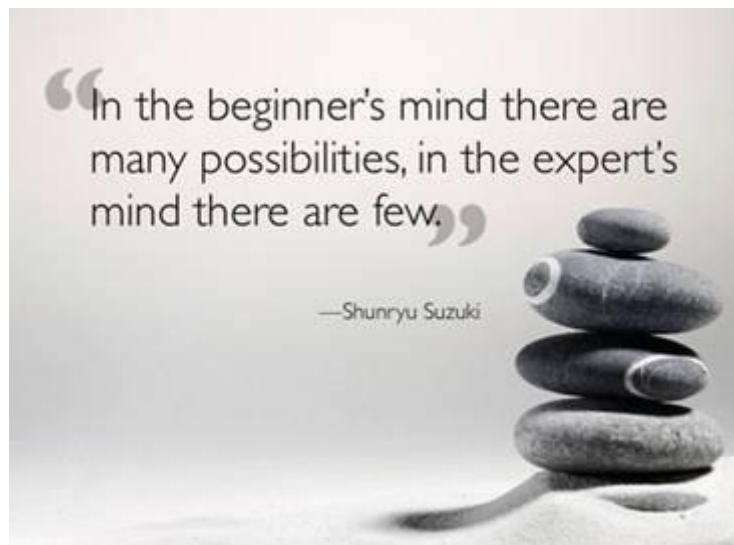


## Mindful Practice Group Worksheet – 16.1.17

### New Beginnings – Beginners Mind



#### About Beginners Mind

Beginner's mind is an aspect of mindfulness which is about letting go of preconceptions and judgments and seeing things through 'new eyes'. Beginner's Mind is an old Zen idea from an old Zen term made popular by Shunryu Suzuki who was a Zen Buddhist monk. When we see something through new eyes, we often see it with awe and wonder. For example when you first move to a new location, and you see awe and beauty in everything and then after a while you don't notice it any more.

Beginners Mind is using being in the present moment and being mindful to experience that 'just arrived' feeling as much as possible. When we use beginners mind we are letting go of any pre conceived ideas and concepts we have about something. For example that we don't like crowded places. Our mind tells us we don't like crowded places, and so we get stressed in a crowded place, but if we go to a crowded place and sense it as it really is, it will just be a place with lots of people in. There will be no judgement or attachment to it, and we will be able to dwell there.

The benefit of beginner's mind to us is that we can see things anew, without the judgements or labels we may have given them in the past. This opens us up to new possibilities, avoids catastrophising and reduces anxiety and stress.

#### Group discussion

What areas of your life could you use beginners mind in?

Do you think beginners mind is something you use in everyday life, or you could use more of?

What scenarios would be good to use beginners mind in?

### **Exercise to try at home**

1. Sit or lie down in a relaxed and comfortable position and close your eyes.
2. Notice the sensation of your breathing and the feel of your body against the surface you're sitting or lying on.

Prepare to see things as if for the first time when you open your eyes. Prepare to be amazed at the experience of colour entering your eyes.

3. When you're ready, gently open your eyes.

Notice colours with a sense of wonder. Notice the range of different colours, the shades and hues, the shadows or bright light.

4. Continue to operate this way as you go about your daily activities and see what happens.

### **Meditation**

There are barely any meditations which focus specifically on beginner's mind. Here's one which focuses on the breath which will help anchor you in the present

**<http://www.fragrantheart.com/cms/free-audio-meditations/relaxation/the-breath-of-life>**

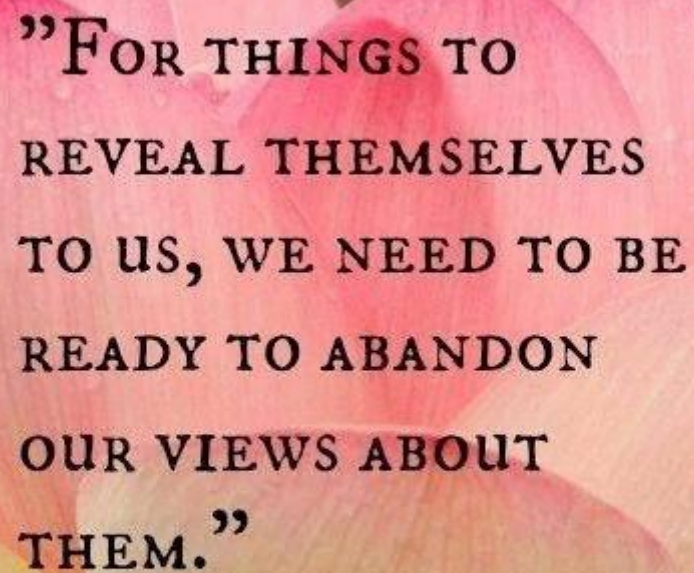
### **Links**

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/stress-remedy/200811/beginners-mind>

<http://www.dummies.com/religion/spirituality/cultivate-beginners-mind-for-mindfulness/>

<https://experiencelife.com/article/beginners-mind/>

<https://clearmind-openheart.com/2015/12/13/attitudes-of-mindfulness-beginners-mind/>



”FOR THINGS TO  
REVEAL THEMSELVES  
TO US, WE NEED TO BE  
READY TO ABANDON  
OUR VIEWS ABOUT  
THEM.”

- THICH NHAT HANH