The Path to Wise Mind (WM)

CORE CONCEPT: *The What and How skills lead us to Wise Mind.*

Wise Mind is less elusive when we understand the skills used to lead us there: Observe, Describe, and Participate are the What skills. In other words, these three skills are what we do to get to Wise Mind. Nonjudgmentally, One-mindfully, and Effectively are the How skills. In other words, these three skills are how we apply the What skills to get to Wise Mind.

Although each What and How skill is described individually, remember that they work together to refine our connection with experience and bring us to Wise Mind. To orient yourself to use these skills, practice the directives of this mantra:
Pause, breath, center . . . enter

OBSERVE

Notice your experience without adding to it or subtracting from it, without amplifying it or pushing it away. Let the experience pass through like clouds drifting in the sky or scenery passing by a car window.
Cling to nothing.

Use your senses to gather information. What is seen, heard, smelled, tasted, and touched? What is happening in your mind and body?

Note your emotions, thoughts, and behaviors as well as other people, your situation, and the environment—look inside and outside yourself. Notice what is happening physically in your body and the associated sensations. Direct your attention and decide what enters and what stays out; open and close your mental windows with intention.

Describe

Outline the details of your observations with specific descriptions. Use words to bring your observations to life. Language frequently makes greater sense of experience than thought alone. Clarify your experience for yourself and others.

Do not get caught in analyzing your thoughts, feelings, sensations, impulses, and urges. Instead, remember that thoughts are just thoughts, feelings are just feelings, sensations are just sensations, and impulses and urges are just impulses and urges. You are not your mind, and these experiences are not commands.

Participate

Observe and Describe bring awareness to experience. Use this awareness to make choices and to become one with your experience. Go from simply watching your experience to being connected to your experience. Ultimately, be in your experience. Inhabit it.

Choose whether you want to stay with and relate further to your experience or redirect your Observe and Describe skills. Recognize whether you are participating in symptoms or problems and choose to participate in skills instead. Redirect your attention and what you participate in based on your wisdom of what works and not simply out of aversion to your experience or a desire to escape from your experience.

Practice these skills until they flow naturally from you.

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HOW SKILLS

Nonjudgmentally

Stick to the facts without coloring them with opinions. Focus on who, what, where, when, and how like an objective reporter. Use respectful language to describe yourself, others, and situations. Be impeccable with your words.

Remember that "good" and "bad" judgments are relative and may not be useful. Sometimes what appears to be desirable can be suffering in disguise, and sometimes problems are hidden opportunities.

Stay away from judgments that amplify or reduce experience or get you stuck in a painful experience by adding suffering. Instead, simply accept what is.

When you observe judgments, gently let go of them. We all judge, so do not amplify your judgments by giving them unneeded power.

One-Mindfully

Focus on one thing with your complete attention. Distractions from inside and outside you will happen. Practice stepping out of distractions and avoid being consumed by them. Instead, gently notice and let go of distractions that keep you from your focus.

Treat yourself with kindness and compassion as you practice being One-Mindful and accept distractions instead of judging them. Do not trade the present moment for judgment mind.
If your attention gets divided, stop and focus your attention on what you choose to experience.
Be in the here and now with one mind.

Effectively

Do what works best based on the demands of the situation as it is and not what you would prefer it to be. Do not spend your energies fighting reality, which does not unfold according to your preferences and desires.

Do not act out of judgments and a need to be "right." Instead, stay connected to your goals, priorities, and values and use them as guides to act as skillfully as possible.

Use Willingness to get from point "A" to point "B" to accomplish your goals. Remove your own complications and barriers to get out of your own way.

Train yourself to be responsive to experience rather than reactive to experience. Doing what works is a reflection of Wise Mind.