

Teacher's Instructions for Coloring Meditation with Thought Category Recording

When describing this process to young people, please use your own age appropriate words. These instructions are to guide adult leaders/teachers/meditators.

1. Make a scribble in the center of the page without raising your pencil (marker or crayon) to create shapes to color.
2. During your meditation, do your best to keep your thoughts on the coloring process and follow your breath as well if that is helpful to keep your mind on what is happening in the current moment.
3. Whenever you become aware that you are thinking about the past or future, make a tick mark in the appropriate record box: Upper left for pleasant thoughts of the past, upper right for pleasant thoughts of the future, lower left for unpleasant past and lower right for unpleasant future thoughts. For young non-readers, help them remember “good, fun” thoughts are up, future thoughts are right and visa versa.
4. (Optional) Set a timer to the duration of your choice. The practice is about process, not the artistic quality of the resulting artwork. Setting a time limit allows you to know you won't finish coloring everything in, even though you have finished the meditation.
5. (Optional) At the start of your coloring, and whenever you change to a new fill-in color, color in the next numbered circle at the top of the page. When you have a thought to

record, use the same pencil (marker, crayon) you are using at the time. This will show how many uninvited thoughts come in the beginning, middle or end of your meditation by the color of the tick marks.

6. (Optional) Use a timer that will ring a bell every minute, which signals when to change the color you are using. With this option, don't worry about completely filling in each space, or about making each space only one color. Remember it is all about the process, not how the art looks at the end! This option allows the record of thoughts to show which minute you had each thought by the color of the tick marks.

When everyone has finished their meditation creation(s) for that session, you might want to discuss how the quality of our lives comes from the pleasant thoughts and feelings and is reduced by unpleasant thoughts and feelings. Be sure to emphasize that there is no shame or “problem” with anyone that has a lot of unpleasant thoughts! We all have them some of the time and some days we have more pleasant thoughts, other “bad days” we have more unpleasant ones. You could also talk about how meditation gives us practice in releasing all thoughts, so throughout our day we can choose whether to release unhelpful or unpleasant thoughts when they come uninvited.

Pleasant,
Past



1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10



Pleasant,
Future

Unpleasant,
Past



Unpleasant,
Future