

Mindfulness Meditation 3: Sending Thoughts Away On Clouds

By: Wendy Wolfe, Ph.D.

Introduction: Much of the emotional distress people experience is the result of thinking about upsetting things that have already happened or anticipating negative events that have yet to occur. Distressing emotions such as anger, anxiety, guilt, and sadness are much easier to bear if you only focus on the present – on each moment one at a time. This is an exercise to increase your mindfulness of the present moment so that you can clear away thoughts about past and future events.

Start by observing your breathing.

Don't try to change anything about your breathing, just notice the sensations of breathing air into and out of your body.

Try to focus all of your attention on your breathing.

As you breathe, close your eyes and imagine that you are laying on a lawn of soft grass, looking up at a blue sky.

Let your mind become as clear and empty as a perfect blue sky.

If any thoughts drift into your mind, imagine yourself breathing them out so that each thought forms a cloud that you send blowing across the clear, blue sky.

Allow your thoughts to drift away from you, like clouds across the sky, until your mind becomes empty again – only filled by the image of a clear, blue sky.

Continue with this meditation until you hear the sound of the bell.

Adapted from:

Linehan, M.M. (1993). Skills Training Manual for Treating Borderline Personality Disorder. NY: The Guilford Press.