

Getting the Lingo

Pole pole

“Go slow and let it come gradually.”

— *Swahili greeting*

Narau yori nareyo

“Don’t study it; get used to it!”

— *Japanese proverb*

MARCH HARE: Then you should say what you mean.

ALICE: I do; at least—at least I mean what I say—that’s the same thing, you know.

HATTER: Not the same thing a bit! Why, you might just as well say that, “I see what I eat” is the same as “I eat what I see”!

MARCH HARE: You might just as well say that, “I like what I get” is the same thing as “I get what I like”!

THE DOORMOUSE: You might just as well say that, “I breathe when I sleep” is the same thing as “I sleep when I breathe”!

— *Lewis Carroll*

Alice in Wonderland

The Mad Hatter’s Tea Party

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Section 1: The Importance of Active Learning

An important part of learning any science is becoming comfortable with its technical vocabulary. One of the distinctive features of Basic Mindfulness is that it provides you with a crystal-clear, detailed, and precise vocabulary for describing any and all sensory experience, even seemingly intangible ones such as thought and feeling. Becoming comfortable with this technical vocabulary involves two very different kinds of learning:

Passive learning – You understand what the technical terms mean when you hear them or read them.

Active learning – You actually use the technical terms to think about, talk about, and write about your experience.

Most people are willing to do the passive side of the learning, but tend to be a bit hesitant when it comes to the active side. However, it is of the utmost importance that you make a concerted effort to *speak* in and *think* in the special vocabulary you will be learning. Only by doing this consistently will you be able to internalize the underlying concepts at all levels of your being. When the words and their definitions become second nature to you, you will be able to maintain clarity even within the most intense vortex of daily life. Conversely, until this happens, even minor life challenges will have the potential to overwhelm you.

Active learning requires...

- An abiding *intention* to talk about, and think about your experience in terms of “spaces,” “states,” “aspects,” “focus methods,” “focus options,” “application strategies,” and so forth.
- *Asking* questions whenever you’re not sure how to describe something.
- *Memorizing* a few core category lists in standard order.
- *Memorizing* a few core definitions verbatim.

Section 2: An Example of "Slinging the Lingo"

To get a tangible sense of what it sounds like when someone has mastered the lingo, suppose I were to ask you to describe your daily practice. It would be good if you could respond precisely, something along the lines of the following. (Technical terms first appear in bold.)

"I do about 1/2 hour of **formal practice** most days, and try to do at least one telephone retreat each month.

During formal practice, after in initial **settling in**, I usually take **BIT Space** as my **focus space**, first **noting states**, and then going to **even coverage**. If I have time, I'll **work with Touch Space, Feel Space, Image Space, and Talk Space** individually using one or both of the **standard focus methods**.

When I note states I usually use the **mental label option**. I also use the option of intentionally **enhancing relaxation**, typically by focusing on a few out breaths. I don't usually detect much **flow** or **vanishing**, but when **relaxation, peace, blank, and quiet** are all available I like to **restrict my noting and covering** to those **restful aspects**. I end my formal practice with '**Loving Kindness**.' I rarely work in **Sight Space**, but I do sometimes like to **note sound states**. I find this tends to cool out **talk activity**.

My biggest challenge is getting caught in **Talk-Feel Space**. To work with this I sometimes use the '**Mindful Mantra**' as a **special exercise**. This also tends to cool out talk activity. To deal with **feel activity**, I sometimes use the '**subdivide until you conquer**' strategy by '**Noting Feel Flavors**.' Loving Kindness, Mindful Mantra, and Noting Feel Flavors are the only special exercises I use. Everything else involves the standard focus methods.

Sleepiness is often a problem for me. To deal with it I take Touch Space as my focus space and note states or evenly cover. I find **zooming in** to a **small weak** area of the sleepy sensation helps me have **equanimity** with it. Occasionally the sleepiness breaks up into a **wavy flavor** of flow. I also use several **basic options** such as **eye open practice, straighten up and settle in**, and **spoken labels** to help me remain alert through the sleepiness."

Section 3: Designer Labels

People sometimes have personal preferences regarding the words they use to label various states. As long as you have a clear concept of what each state is, you are allowed to use variants of the standard labels or to substitute words of your own choosing. Here is a list of some common variants and substitutions.

<u>STANDARD LABEL</u>	<u>OTHER POSSIBILITIES</u>
Touch	Physical
Sight	—
Sound	—
Feel	Emotional
Image	—
Talk	—
Relaxation	Relaxed, Relax
Light	Soft, Soft focus
Silence	—
Peace	Neutral, Calm
Blank	Dark, Bright, Background
Quiet	—

Section 4: ***What's Required and What's Not***

Having read this far, it will be evident that Basic Mindfulness puts a great emphasis on being precise in the use of language. However, it is important to distinguish between two meanings of “being precise.”

1. *Being precise* in the sense that you know the standard terminology for a given concept.
2. *Being precise* in the sense that you know exactly how to label or characterize every phenomenon that comes up during formal practice.

We might refer to the first as conceptual clarity and the second as perceptual clarity.

One main goal of Basic Mindfulness is to train you in perceptual clarity. So, if you already possess perceptual clarity, you would have no need for such training! Therefore, it is assured that sometimes, perhaps even quite frequently, you won't be quite sure how to label or characterize an experience that comes up in your practice.

“Should I call this Touch or Feel? Was that an image? Does this count as a kind of flow?”

When you're not sure how to label or characterize an experience...

1. Just guess,
2. without agonizing over it or making a big deal out of it.

With time your guesses will become more and more precise. That's what training is all about – gradually making better and better guesses.

So, the bottom line is: You are not expected or required to always have *perceptual precision*.

On the other hand, Basic Mindfulness does ask you to be *conceptually precise* by actively employing a standard terminology. You acquire the ability to do this by...

1. Reading the preliminary material, the training material, and the reference material.
2. Thinking about what you read.
3. Making a concerted effort to use the special vocabulary when you think about or talk about your experience.
4. Never hesitating to ask questions.
5. Doing the above four, not just once or twice, but *over and over* again.

This requires a bit of work, but will be well worth it, because it will train you into the general habit of clarity in thought, speech, and expression. Clarity comes about through constantly checking whether the words coming out of your mouth actually express the notion that is in your head. Lewis Carroll, who was a mathematician and logician by profession, described this desirable habit succinctly: “You should say what you mean.”

Section 5: ***Tips for Memorizing Definitions and Lists***

In the following sections you will find the definitions and lists, which at some point you should memorize. But before going there, let me give you the specific criteria for what constitutes “memorization.”

We will say that you have memorized a definition when...

- You are able to say the definitions out loud rapidly, confidently, and verbatim whenever asked to do so. (If I wake you up in the middle of the night and ask you to define Feel Space, there should be no hesitation whatsoever.)
- You are able to write the definition verbatim.
- You have some idea of why the definition is worded the way it is. (In the definitions that appear in the next section I explain all the key points regarding wording.)
- By verbatim I mean using *all* and *only* the words that make up the standard definitions appearing in the following sections

The criteria for memorizing a list of categories are...

- You are able to rattle off the list in standard order any time.
- You are able to write the list.
- You know why the list is ordered the way it is.

ORDERING

The last point about ordering is actually quite simple. All you need to remember are the following principles:

1. Active precedes restful
2. Objective precedes subjective
3. Somatic precedes visual
4. Visual precedes auditory

For example, the 12 basic states are listed thus...

Active						Restful					
Objective			Subjective			Objective			Subjective		
Somatic	Visual	Auditory	Somatic	Visual	Auditory	Somatic	Visual	Auditory	Somatic	Visual	Auditory
Touch	Sight	Sound	Feel	Image	Talk	Relaxation	Light	Silence	Peace	Blank	Quiet

Section 6: Core Listings

It is highly recommended that you eventually memorize the following four core lists in their standard order plus the definitions for each item on the lists. The definitions can be found in Sections 7 through 10.

THE 4 CORE LISTS

1. The 12 Basic States
2. The 5 Impermanence Labels
3. The 15 Most Popular Focus Spaces
4. The 2 Standard Focus Methods

THE 12 BASIC STATES

1. Touch
2. Sight
3. Sound
4. Feel
5. Image
6. Talk
7. Relaxation
8. Light
9. Silence
10. Peace
11. Blank
12. Quiet

THE 15 MOST POPULAR FOCUS SPACES

- | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Touch 2. Sight 3. Sound 4. Feel 5. Image 6. Talk | <div style="border-left: 1px solid black; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> | Singles (basic spaces) |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Body 8. Mind 9. Image-Feel 10. Talk-Feel | <div style="border-left: 1px solid black; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> | Pairs (2-element spaces) |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. It 12. FIT 13. BIT | <div style="border-left: 1px solid black; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> | Middle level spaces |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. All 15. Nothing | <div style="border-left: 1px solid black; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> | Extremes |

Note: There are in theory $2^6 = 64$ *logically* possible focus spaces. Of those only about half are ever *actually* used. And of those only about half (the 15 listed above) are *commonly* used.

THE 5 IMPERMANENCE LABELS

1. Flow
2. Expansion
3. Contraction
4. Both
5. Gone

THE 2 STANDARD FOCUS METHODS

1. Noting states
2. Even coverage

Section 7: The 12 Basic States: Definitions

TOUCH

DEFINITION: Any body experience *other than* Feel, Peace, or Relaxation (these three are defined below).

COMMENTS: In other words, Touch covers the whole range of ordinary body experience – body experiences that are not special or “marked” by virtue of being either *emotional* or *restful*.

Smell and taste (“the chemical senses”) are considered special types of Touch. In the standard formulation, they can be labeled simply “Touch.” Some people, however, prefer to apply the more specific labels “smell,” and “taste” to these forms of Touch.

Erotic sensation may be interpreted as...

- 1) A flavor of Touch, or
- 2) A flavor of Feel, or
- 3) Composed of both Touch and Feel components.

Note that as we will be using the word, Touch has a broader meaning than in ordinary English. It includes things like the sensations of sleepiness, fatigue, hunger, pain, ordinary breathing, ordinary heart beat, as well as hot, cold, touch of clothing, etc.

SIGHT

DEFINITION: Looking at physical objects.

SOUND

DEFINITION: Listening to physical sounds.

FEEL

DEFINITION: Any body sensation that seems to be emotional in nature.

REASONS FOR WORDING:

1. The word “any” is meant to remind you that...
 - Feel does not always have a well-defined describable flavor (anger, fear, joy, smile). Sometimes Feel is just a vague emotional something. To get an idea of the range of common Feel flavors, see the list in Section 12.
 - Feel does not always have a well-defined location. If you subtract Image and Talk from an emotional experience, what you’re left with will be “in the direction of your body” whether it has well-defined locations there or not. Indeed, if you’re not sure where Feel sensation is located, it’s safe to assume that it’s subtly present over your whole body. In such cases the even coverage method or the zooming out option may be helpful.

- Feel is not necessarily an intense experience. (Subtle is significant!)
2. The word “seems” is meant to remind you that you may not be sure if a certain body experience is emotional in nature or not. In such cases it’s perfectly okay to guess. In fact, it’s expected that you will be guessing quite a bit regarding Touch, Feel and Peace. The purpose for having the category Feel is to gradually increase your ability to detect the somatic component of your emotional experience. You *are* being asked to note Feel if you happen to notice that something changes in your body when your subjective state becomes emotionally colored. That will make your body sensitive. You *are not* being asked to analyze each sensation in your body and pigeonhole it as either a Touch or a Feel – that will make your mind crazy. The following points may be useful.
 - Heads up 1: If something arises in Touch, Sight, Sound, Image, or Talk Spaces and at the same time or a moment later something, *anything* changes in your body in reaction to it – heads up! That change is very likely Feel activity.
 - Heads up 2: Whenever you have desire, wanting, longing, will, need, and so forth – heads up! There may be pleasant sensations in your body (joy, interest, excitement) at the prospect of getting what you want and/or there may be unpleasant sensations in your body (fear, sadness, impatience) associated with the prospect of not getting what you want. Those pleasant and/or unpleasant sensations are Feel activity.
 3. The phrase “emotional in nature” is meant to remind you of that...
 - As we define it, Feel is not synonymous with pleasant vs. unpleasant. It is true that just about every experience of Feel can be characterized as either pleasant or unpleasant, or some combination of the two. However, there are pleasant and unpleasant experiences that are not intrinsically emotional in nature. Pain, for example, is not emotional in and of itself. On the other hand, the anger, fear, sadness, or helplessness coloring that may be produced in your body in reaction to pain most assuredly is emotional in nature.

COMMENTS: As we define it, Feel is not synonymous with liking and disliking. It is, however, related to liking and disliking in the following way. When you like a thing/person/object/situation, it will probably trigger pleasant Feel. When you dislike a thing/person/object/situation, it will probably trigger unpleasant Feel. So the experience of liking and disliking something often involves Feel activity, but liking and disliking are not *synonymous* with Feel because liking or disliking may also involve Image and Talk activity. Moreover, Feel may arise in other circumstances, which do not involve liking or disliking something.

It is also true that one may speak of “liking” pleasant Feel flavors (such as joy), and one may speak of “disliking” unpleasant Feel flavors (such as fear). In this idiomatic usage of language, like and dislike represent a *relationship* to Feel. If you like a certain flavor of Feel, you will probably resist its passing. If you dislike a certain flavor of Feel, you will probably resist its arising. From this point of view, equanimity can be described as freedom from preference with regard to Feel. When you have no preference (like, dislike, pull, or push) with regard to Feel, then all Feel

takes on the “taste of purification.” Once the taste of purification arises, all Feel, pleasant or unpleasant, becomes in a certain sense “pleasant.” Therefore, paradoxically and perhaps confusingly, the attitude of neither liking nor disliking any particular flavor of Feel can be described as **LIKING** every flavor of Feel!

Note that in Basic Mindfulness, Feel has a narrower meaning than in ordinary English. In ordinary English, Feel can refer to thoughts or opinions: “I feel this is a reasonable proposal.” Or Feel can refer to any body experience: “I feel the smoothness of the material,” or “I feel a headache coming on.” Feel can even refer to physical influence: “The moon feels the gravitational tug of the earth.”

IMAGE

DEFINITION: Any visual thinking.

REASON FOR WORDING:

1. The word “any” is meant to remind you that...
 - Mental images are typically *vague* and *fleeting* impressions of the form of the people, places, and physical objects you are thinking about. For most people seeing mental images is not at all like seeing well-defined pictures of things.
 - Subtle images related to your own body outline and your (eyes closed) awareness of what is around you count as Image activity in addition to the more obvious Image activity associated with remembering, planning, and daydreaming.
 - Images may be still like a photograph or move as if animated.
2. The word “thinking” reminds you that patterns of color or geometrical shapes are not considered Image activity because, although they are visual, they are not forms of thinking per se. (Neither do they constitute blankness. See below.)

TALK

DEFINITION: Any auditory thinking.

REASON FOR WORDING:

1. The word “any” is meant to remind you that Talk can occur at many levels, from preverbal stirring, through explicit words, all the way to imperious screaming. It also reminds us that the voice may be one’s own (self talk) or that of another (parent, child, acquaintance).
2. The word “auditory” reminds us that Talk need not be specifically verbal (in words). Other forms of auditory thinking such as tunes in your head, or the “internal onomatopoeia” through which you remember or imitate external sounds also count as Talk.
3. On the other hand, the word “thinking” reminds you that ringing in your ears (tinnitus) does not count as Talk because, although it is internal and auditory, it is not something *through* which you think (although it may be something *about* which you think).

RELAXATION

DEFINITION: Any perception of bodily repose or muscle relaxation.

REASON FOR WORDING:

1. The word “any” reminds you that...
 - Even the most subtle sense of settling or muscle relaxation still counts as an instance of Relaxation.
 - Relaxation may be confined to one or a few locations or it may affect much or all of your body.
 - Relaxation is often present somewhere in Body Space even though its opposite (physical tension or emotional impatience) is strongly present elsewhere. If you wish to make use of this fact you have to...

Learn to detect that Relaxation (it may be subtle).

Learn to concentrate on it. (This involves letting go of the automatic tendency to focus on what is intense and unpleasant, and learning how to maintain focus on what is subtle and pleasant. It takes practice, but it’s worth it.)
2. The word “repose” refers to your sense of settling into a posture. The easiest posture for detecting global repose is obviously lying down. You are encouraged to make use of this fact to intentionally cultivate and enjoy a “samadhi on relaxation” whenever you lie down.
3. The “muscle relaxation” may be intrinsic to the posture, or it may be intentionally created or enhanced in one of 3 ways:
 - Straightening up and settling in
 - Intentionally relaxing individual body areas
 - Relaxing on an out breath or series of out breaths

COMMENT: Alternative terms for Relaxation are Relax, and Relaxed. These are frequently used for labeling.

LIGHT

DEFINITION: Looking through or around physical objects rather than at them.

COMMENTS: There are many synonyms for this way of relating to external visual experience. Some of those synonyms are: defocusing your eyes, soft focus, open focus, and far mountain gazing.

Using the word “Light” for this way of relating to the external world may be a bit misleading, in that it seems to imply that we’re trying to get some special experience called Light. That is not the case. When you look through and around things rather than at them, you’re ignoring their color and form, and instead relating to them as volumes of light/space in front of you. The word Light is just a short, convenient label for that experience. So, as we’ll be defining the term, Light signifies *nothing more than the soft way the world looks when you slightly defocus your eyes.*

The label Light refers to the restful flavor of external visual experience. So, by definition you only experience “Light” with your eyes open. The corresponding restful flavor in internal vision (Image Space) is labeled Blank. “Real Blank” is defined as looking inward toward Image Space, but not at any image. Real Blank is thus the perfect internal analog of Light. For more on this, see the definition of Blank below.

SILENCE

DEFINITION: When you are in a location where there is little or no sound, Silence means tangibly listening to that absence of sound. When you are in a location where there are sounds, Silence means listening through, around, or away from those sounds.

COMMENT: Silence represents the restful aspect of Sound Space.

PEACE

USUAL DEFINITION: The conscious awareness that the body is free from Feel activity.

COMMENTS: The phrase “usual definition” is meant to remind you that some people can detect emotional peacefulness even when Feel is active. This situation is not considered better than the “usual” case, wherein Feel and Peace are experienced as mutually exclusive phenomena.

Peace is an abbreviation for “emotional Peace.” Notice that we will be using the word Peace in a very narrow way.

BLANK

DEFINITION 1: *During closed-eye practice* – The sense of darkness and/or brightness in front of or behind your closed eyes.

DEFINITION 2: *During open-eye practice* – Looking inward toward Image Space but not at any Image.

REASON FOR WORDING: *Closed-eye practice*

1. The word “darkness and/or brightness” reminds you that (depending on the person and circumstances) there may be mostly darkness, mostly brightness, or a mottled mixture of dark areas, bright areas, and gray areas. This third possibility is the most common. We’ll consider whiteness or gray to be a form of brightness.
2. The words “darkness” and “brightness” remind you that closed-eye mental Blank is defined in terms of the simplest visual experience that is possible – the grey scale of light without regard to its color or form. Many people experience colors when they close their eyes (pinks, purples, and blues tend to dominate). By our definition, such color itself is not part of Blankness, but the degree of its darkness or brightness is. So if you get colors in Image Space and wish to focus on Blankness, focus on the darkness or brightness of the color rather than its hue.
3. The phrase “in front of or behind” reminds you that different people may localize the center of Image Space differently – some more forward, some more back in the head.

COMMENTS: *Closed-eye practice*

Most people use Blank instead of Blankness when labeling this state. If darkness or brightness predominates, some people like to replace the generic label Blank with the more specific label Dark or Bright.

Strictly speaking, closed-eye Blankness is actually a mixture of two restful states.

1. The intrinsic darkness/brightness of the mind, i.e., Real Blank. (See below.)
2. Some physical darkness/brightness that seeps in from the outside through your eyelids. That's why closed-eye Blank will often seem brighter when you face a window and darker when you're in a darkened room.

COMMENTS: *Open-eye practice*

Looking into Image Space, but not at any Image might be referred to as “Real” Blank. By way of contrast, the darkness/brightness definition might be referred to as “virtual” Blank – a convenient way of representing a “blank mental screen.”

It often takes a bit of practice to learn to detect Real Blank, which is why I start people out with the closed-eye virtual Blank. It should be noted, however, that some people experience Real Blank with their eyes closed as well as open.

QUIET

DEFINITION: The conscious awareness that there is little or no Talk activity.

REASON FOR WORDING:

1. The phrase “conscious awareness” is meant to remind you of the following...
 - When you go from a noisy street into a quiet room, you actually hear the silence for a moment. People usually quickly acclimate to that silence – they no longer have a conscious awareness of it. The trick in focusing on mental Quiet is to not acclimate, but to hear it anew moment-by-moment. If the Quiet happens to last for awhile, this will produce a continuous samadhi whose object is the (relative) absence of activity in Talk Space. This, by the way, was the original meaning of the phrase Noble Silence before it came to be used for “no social talking during retreats.”
2. The phrase “little or no talk activity” is meant to remind you of the following...
 - There can occur a kind of “triple point” state in Talk Space that shares the characteristics of all three aspects – activity, rest, and flow. It is a subtle level of preverbal processing because it is the matrix of activity from which clear words may arise. Thus, it can be looked upon as “subtle Talk.” But it is so subtle that it's restful, and therefore could also be looked upon as “course Quiet.” Finally, it tends to be experienced as a kind of fluid vibratory energy and so could also be looked upon as “Flow.” If you experience this triple-point state, feel free to interpret it as Talk, Quiet, or Flow, depending on which aspect you are interest in exploring at the time.

Section 8: ***The 5 Impermanence Labels: Definitions***

FLOW

DEFINITION: Movement or force present within a sensory experience.

COMMENT: This gives a very broad definition to Flow, because even if there is no *change* in the sensory experience, the fundamental *forces* of expansion and contraction may be present in the form of inward and/or outward pressure.

Flow is the generic term for continuous impermanence. Expansion and Contraction are specific flavors of flow (just as male and female are specific flavors of human).

EXPANSION

DEFINITION: Outward movement or force.

COMMENT: The formal term is “expansive flow.”

CONTRACTION

DEFINITION: Inward movement or force.

COMMENT: The formal term is “contractive flow.”

BOTH

DEFINITION: Expansion and contraction at the same time.

COMMENTS: The formal term is “bi-directional flow.”

Notice that the definition does not require that the expansion or contraction be of the same level of intensity, only that they occur simultaneously. Intense expansion with a hint of contraction or the converse of that still counts as an instance of “Both.”

Expansion and Contraction are considered to be the fundamental flavors of Flow, from which other flavors (vibration, bubbling, waviness, and so forth) arise.

GONE

DEFINITION: The abrupt disappearance of all or part of what you are focusing on.

COMMENT: The formal term is “vanishing.”

Section 9: ***The 15 Most Popular Focus Spaces: Definitions***

TOUCH SPACE

DEFINITION: The 3-dimensional volume of the sensed body when experienced from the perspective of detecting Touch or Relaxation.

COMMENTS: The basic states of this space are Touch and Relaxation.

SIGHT SPACE

DEFINITION: The volume of colored and patterned light that appears in front of you when your eyes are open.

COMMENTS: This space is what people commonly call “the material world.”

The basic states of this space are Sight and Light.

SOUND SPACE

DEFINITION: The total volume of perceived sound and silence around you in six directions.

COMMENT: The basic states of this space are Sound and Silence.

FEEL SPACE

DEFINITION: The 3-dimensional volume of the sensed body when experienced from the perspective of detecting the presence or absence of Feel.

COMMENTS: If you have one or more emotional centers in your body, then Feel Space consists of those centers especially, plus the rest of the body. Feel activity often splashes in the emotional centers then ripples through the rest of your body.

If you do not have any emotional centers, then Feel Space is simply the whole volume (height, width, depth) of your body.

An emotional center is a place in your body where Feel activity tends to be prominent. Emotional centers are often, though not inevitably, located along the front central axis of the body.

The basic states of this space are Feel and Peace.

IMAGE SPACE

DEFINITION: The totality of locations where Image activity or Blankness may occur.

COMMENTS: There are three such locations:

- *In front of or behind your eyes* – Where memory, planning and fantasy images tend to occur.
- *Out around you* – Where images of your surroundings and images triggered by sounds tend to occur.

- *Back or down on your body* – Where your overall image of self and images triggered by body sensation tend to occur.

We will sometimes refer to the area in front of or behind your eyes where memory, planning, and fantasy tend to occur as the Center of Image Space. Some people call this area their mental screen. Other people use the term mental screen to refer to the whole of Image Space.

The phrase “mental screen” can be misleading. The first problem with this phrase is that people often interpret it to mean that they should be able to find a rectangular border within which to localize Image activity (like a TV screen). They then consider themselves failures because they cannot find a screen in that sense. Another problem with the phrase “mental screen” is that it seems to imply that Image Space is supposed to be a flat 2-dimensional surface. That is true for some people, but for many people it is more like a 3-dimensional stage than a flat screen, especially when one includes images of one’s surroundings or one’s body.

So, the phrase “mental screen” is meant to be a loose metaphor. You’ll get in trouble if you take it too literally.

The basic states of this space are Image and Blank.

TALK SPACE

DEFINITION: The place where you tend to listen to Talk or Quiet.

REASON FOR WORDING:

1. The phrase “listen to Talk or Quiet” is meant to remind you of the following...
 - Verbal thinking is both a motor act (you generate internal words) and a sensory act (you *listen* to those words). Working with Talk Space is concerned with the sensory part of the experience. For most people that will be located somewhere in the head or at the ears.

COMMENTS: When focusing on Talk, some people are naturally drawn to sensation in their lips, tongue, throat, and so forth. Those sensations represent the motor part of verbal thinking. Unless you *really* want to define such areas as your Talk Space, it is probably best to focus somewhere in your head so that you can contact the auditory part of the experience.

Talk is the least spatial of the basic spaces. The size, shape, and exact location of Talk Space are often rather vague. That’s fine. “Somewhere in your head” is sufficiently specific for the purpose of our work. If you are not sure where Talk Space is for you, simply define it to be at or between your ears.

The basic states of this space are Talk and Quiet.

BODY SPACE

DEFINITION: The 3-dimensional volume of the sensed body when experienced in terms of Touch, Feel, Relaxation, and Peace, i.e., the volume of the body when focused on with an interest in *any* type of experience that may be present there.

REASON FOR WORDING:

1. The phrase “3-dimensional volume” refers to the 3 dimensions of height (up-down distance), width (right-left distance), and depth (front-back distance).
2. The word “sensed” means experienced in terms of body sensations. This word reminds you that mental imagery often accompanies body sensation, giving you a picture of its location, shape and movement qualities. Such Image activity can help you *locate* events in Body Space, but it is not *part of* Body Space. (It is part of Image Space.)

Moreover, the size and shape of the sensed body may or may not agree with that of the physical body. Sometimes the sensed body will hug the outline of the physical body – two arms, two legs, the head, face, and torso. At other times the sensed body may seem larger, and perhaps spherical. Both of these are natural, and neither of these is preferable to the other.

COMMENTS: Geometrically speaking, Touch Space, Feel Space, and Body Space all refer to the same thing – the 3-dimensional volume of your body. When you tune into your body with an interest in Feel and Peace, we refer to it as Feel Space. When you tune into your body with an interest in Touch and Relaxation, we refer to it as Touch Space. When we tune into your body with an interest in *any* experience, we refer to it as Body Space.

Body Space is formally referred to as Touch-Feel Space.

The basic states of this space are Touch, Feel, Relaxation, and Peace.

MIND SPACE

DEFINITION: Image Space and Talk Space taken together.

COMMENTS: Far from being a wispy abstraction, mental experience is tangibly sensory (visual and/or auditory) and spatially distributed (the visual part tends to be centered in the front; the auditory part tends to be centered in the back). This means that you can track Mind as a function of time and space, just as you can track any other phenomenon in nature (for example, a weather system).

So, mental experience is quantifiable in that you can meaningfully speak of it in terms of...

- How much (activity) of
- What kind (visual or verbal) happens
- Where (projected in front, out, on the body, or in the head) and
- When (in real time) and
- Changing at what rate (derivative of mental activity with respect to time, dM/dt)

Mind Space is formally referred to as Image-Talk Space.

The basic states of this space are Image, Talk, Blank, and Quiet.

IMAGE-FEEL SPACE

DEFINITION: Image Space and Feel Space taken together.

COMMENTS: Traumatic memories as well as “archetypal arisings” (spiritual visions and so forth) arise primarily in this space. The subliminal regions of this space are where the sum total of one’s memories and the emotions associated with them (one’s *imago mundi*) are stored.

The basic states of this space are Image, Feel, Blank, and Peace.

TALK-FEEL SPACE

DEFINITION: Talk Space and Feel Space taken together.

COMMENTS: For many people this space is the center of self. Judgments and beliefs come up primarily in this space.

The basic states of this space are Talk, Feel, Quiet, and Peace.

IT SPACE

DEFINITION: Touch Space, Sight Space, and Sound Space taken together.

COMMENTS: “It-Space” is so-called because, roughly speaking, the sense of other (“it”) arise there. The name is meant to contrast with FIT Space, which is where the sense of subject (“I”) arises. Synonyms for It-Space are Objective Space, or the Objective Triad.

It-Space is formally referred to as Touch-Sight-Sound Space.

The basic states of this space are Touch, Sight, Sound, Relaxation, Light, and Silence.

FIT SPACE

DEFINITION: Feel Space, Image Space, and Talk Space taken together.

COMMENTS: Synonyms for FIT Space are Subjective Space, and the Subjective Triad.

Fit Space is formally referred to as Feel-Image-Talk Space.

The basic states of this space are Feel, Image, Talk, Peace, Blank, and Quiet.

BIT SPACE

DEFINITION: Body Space and Mind Space taken together.

COMMENTS: Bodymind Space is big and complex. You can contact it in several ways...

- Directly contact all four spaces at once
- Contact Mind Space and then add Body Space (or the other way around)
- Contact Subjective Space (Feel-Image-Talk Space) and then add Touch Space

Notice that BIT Space contains FIT Space as a proper subset.

BIT Space is formally referred to as Bodymind Space.

The basic states of this space are Touch, Feel, Image, Talk, Relaxation, Peace, Blank, and Quiet.

ALL SENSES

DEFINITION: FIT-Space and It-Space taken together.

COMMENTS: This space is formally referred to as Touch-Sight-Sound-Feel-Image-Talk Space.

The basic state of this space are Touch, Sight, Sound, Feel, Image, Talk, Relaxation, Light, Silence, Peace, Blank, and Quiet.

NOTHINGNESS

DEFINITION: Where experiences go to when they vanish. Equivalently, where experiences come from when they arise.

COMMENTS: For an extensive list of synonyms, see *Introduction to Basic Mindfulness*.

Note that Nothingness is not at all the same things as empty space. Nothingness is attention directed toward nothing-whatsoever. The perception of pure empty space, vast or otherwise, is still a “something.” In fact, the extensionality of empty space represents Expansion Flow. Nothingness is what occurs when Expansion and Contraction cancel each other out. Nothingness is a “focus space” in the sense that it is a direction of focus, but it is not 3-dimensional in the way that the other focus spaces are.

Section 10: **The 2 Standard Focus Methods**

NOTING STATES

STANDARD FORMAT (for a single-element focus space)

1. First, take a moment to position your attention in X Space. Once you've done that...
2. Then begin noting X states. At any given moment...
 - ...if all you're aware of is the active state, note that.
 - ...if all you're aware of is the restful state, note that.
 - ...if both states are available, just choose one to focus on. It doesn't matter at all which.
3. Intently focus on state you're noting for several seconds, unless it completely disappears before that.
4. When it's the active state, just let it activate. When it's the restful state, consciously savor that flavor of rest.

EXAMPLE: HOW TO NOTE TOUCH STATES

1. First, take a moment to position your attention in Touch Space. Once you've done that...
2. Then begin noting Touch states. At any given moment...
 - ...if all you're aware of is Touch, note "Touch."
 - ...if all you're aware of is Relaxation, note "Relaxation."
 - ...if Touch and Relaxation are both available, just choose one to focus on. It doesn't matter at all which.
3. Intently focus on state you're noting for several seconds, unless it completely disappears before that.
4. When it's Touch, just let it activate. When it's Relaxation, consciously savor that flavor of rest.

STANDARD FORMAT (for a focus space involving two or more elements)

1. First, take a moment to position your attention in X Space. Once you've done that...
2. Then begin noting X states. At any given moment...
 - ...if all you're aware of is an active state (list active states), note that.
 - ...if all you're aware of is a restful state (list restful states), note that.
 - ...if, as is probably, more than one of these states is available, just choose one to focus on. It doesn't matter at all which.

3. Intently focus on state you're noting for several seconds, unless it completely disappears before that.
4. When it's the active state, just let it activate. When it's the restful state, consciously savor that flavor of rest.

EXAMPLE: HOW TO NOTE FIT STATES

1. First, take a moment to position your attention in FIT Space. Once you've done that...
2. Then begin noting FIT states. At any given moment...
 - ...if all you're aware of is an active state – Feel, Image, or Talk – note that.
 - ...if all you're aware of is a restful state – Peace, Blank, or Quiet – note that.
 - ...if, as is probably, more than one of these 6 states is available, just choose one to focus on. It doesn't matter at all which.
3. Intently focus on that state for several seconds, unless it completely disappears before that.
4. When it's an active state, just let it activate. When it's a restful state, consciously savor that flavor of rest.

OPTIONS THAT CAN BE UTILIZED WHEN NOTING STATES:

Basic Options

- Use labels (spoken, mental, sub-vocalized)
- Intentionally deepen restfulness (Use primarily when working in Touch Space or Image Space.)
- Work with eyes open as well as closed

Advanced Options

- Zoom in
- Zoom out
- Zoom both ways
- Explicitly note the moment of vanishing (Sub option: "stay until gone" Related option: "stay gone")
- Explicitly note flow (Sub option: just note "expansion, contraction, both, gone")
- Intentionally restrict what you note to just active states, or just restful states, or just impermanence states

EVEN COVERAGE

STANDARD FORMAT

1. Position your attention in X Space.
2. Cover as much of X Space with attention as you can without straining.
3. Beyond that, there's no need to do anything intentional.

EXAMPLE: HOW TO COVER MIND SPACE

1. Position your attention in Mind Space.
2. Cover as much of Mind Space with attention as you can without straining.
3. Beyond that, there's no need to do anything intentional.

OPTIONS THAT CAN BE UTILIZED WHEN EVENLY COVERING SPACES:**Basic Options**

- Use reminder labels (spoken, mental, sub-vocalized)
- Stack the space
- Work with eyes open as well as closed

Advanced Options

- Intentionally restrict what you cover to just active states, or just restful states, or just impermanence states

HOW TO NAME THE STANDARD PROCEDURES

In order to have a convenient way to refer to a procedure, we will use the following convention.

If X stands for the name of the space, then a procedure that involves the noting states method will be called *Noting X States*, while a procedure that involves the even coverage method will be called *Covering X Space*. Here are the standard names for the most popular procedures.

<u>FOCUS SPACE</u>	<u>NOTE STATES METHOD</u>	<u>EVENLY COVER METHOD</u>
Touch	Noting Touch States	Covering Touch Space
Sight	Noting Sight States	Covering Sight Space
Sound	Noting Sound States	Covering Sound Space
Feel	Noting Feel States	Covering Feel Space
Image	Noting Image States	Covering Image Space
Talk	Noting Talk States	Covering Talk Space
Body	Noting Body States	Covering Body Space
Mind	Noting Mind States	Covering Mind Space
Image-Feel	Noting Image-Feel States	Covering Image-Feel Space
Talk-Feel	Noting Talk-Feel States	Covering Talk-Feel Space
It	Noting It States	Covering It Space
FIT	Noting FIT States	Covering FIT Space
Bodymind	Noting Bodymind States	Covering Bodymind Space
All Senses	Noting All Senses	Covering All Senses
Nothingness	Noting Vanishing	Do Nothing

Section 11: Comprehensive Classification of States

BASIC STATES	Active Flavor	Objective	Somatic	Touch
			Visual	Sight
			Auditory	Sound
		Subjective	Somatic	Feel
			Visual	Image
			Auditory	Talk
	Restful Flavor	Objective	Somatic	Relaxation
			Visual	Light
			Auditory	Silence
		Subjective	Somatic	Peace
			Visual	Blank
			Auditory	Quiet
IMPERMANENCE STATES	Continuous Impermanence: Flow	Generic Term		Flow
		Most Fundamental Flavors of Flow		Expansion
				Contraction
				Both
	Abrupt Impermanence: Vanishing			Gone

Section 12: Reference Listings

The following lists are provided for reference. You may or may not wish to memorize them.

THE 5 REFERENCE LISTS

1. 16 Common Flavors of Feel
2. 5 Common Flavors of Flow
3. 3 Common Types of Mental Imagery
4. 3 Locations of Mental Imagery
5. 4 Sizes of Focus Space

16 COMMON FLAVORS OF FEEL

<u>WELL-DEFINED</u>		<u>ILL-DEFINED</u>	
<u>UNPLEASANT</u>	<u>PLEASANT</u>	<u>UNPLEASANT</u>	<u>PLEASANT</u>
1. Anger	1. Interest	1. Something unpleasant	2. Something pleasant
2. Fear	2. Joy		
3. Sadness	3. Love		
4. Embarrassment	4. Gratitude		
5. Impatience	5. Laughter	3. Something	
6. Disgust	6. Smile	4. Mixture	

This list is merely meant to be suggestive of the range of “qualitative distinctions” that can be made within the generic category Feel. A qualitative distinction is based primarily on the actual flavor, or type of body sensation involved. By way of contrast, “spatial distinctions” classify Feel sensations by their size, shape, and locations. “Level distinctions” classify them by how intense or mild they are. “Trigger distinctions” classify them by what triggered the Feel sensation – whether Image, Talk, Sight, Sound, and so forth.

The terms in this list are meant to be interpreted as representing broad generic categories. Anger stands for anything in the anger family – from mild irritation to homicidal rage. Fear stands for anything from mild anticipation to paralytic terror.

Freely modify this list, adding terms, subtracting terms, and substituting different terms – whatever works for you.

Some people consider erotic sensation to be a flavor of Feel (distinct from love, joy, interest, and so forth). Others consider it to be a flavor of Touch or to involve both Touch and Feel flavors. If erotic sensation seems to represent a distinct Feel flavor, then the label “erotic” or “sexual” could be added to the list of pleasant qualities.

Noting and labeling individual Feel flavors is not a standard procedure. It is a special exercise. It can be used when you need to “subdivide until you conquer.”

The catch phrase for labeling different flavors of Feel is: “Use the simplest and most generic word or phrase which seems natural for you.”

5 COMMON FLAVORS OF FLOW

1. Vibratory (bubbling, electricity, pulsating, sparks, scintillating mist, and so forth)
2. Undulatory (wavy)
3. Expansion
4. Contraction
5. Both (i.e., expansion and contraction are both present at the same time)

3 COMMON TYPES OF MENTAL IMAGERY

The following types of thought usually involve some level of image activity.

1. Thoughts that involve People (including yourself)
2. Thoughts that involve physical Objects (including part of your body)
3. Thoughts that involve Places (including your present surroundings)

You can remember these 3 sources of image activity by the acronym POP.

3 COMMON LOCATIONS OF MENTAL IMAGERY

1. “In front” – In front of or behind your (open or closed) eyes.
2. “Out around” – Images of your surroundings. (These arise primarily when your eyes are closed.)
3. “On the body” – Projected upon all or a part of your body.

“In front” imagery tends to involve memory, planning, and fantasy.

“Out around” imagery may arise due to short-term memory of where you are, or may be triggered by sounds you hear.

“On the body” imagery may arise due to your overall “image of self,” or may be triggered by specific Touch or Feel sensations.

4 SIZES OF FOCUS SPACE

1. SINGLE-ELEMENT FOCUS SPACE

Definition: A focus space that consists of one element only.

Synonyms: Basic Space

Examples: Touch, Sight, Sound, Feel, Image, Touch.

2. TWO-ELEMENT FOCUS SPACE

Definition: A focus space that consists of two Basic Spaces.

Synonym: Pair, two-element system

Examples: Mind (Image-Talk) Space, Image-Feel Space, Auditory (Talk-Sound) Space

3. FOCUS SPACES CONSISTING OF THREE OR MORE ELEMENTS.

Definition: A focus space consisting of 3-6 Basic Spaces.

Synonym: Multi-element system

Examples: FIT Space, BIT Space, All Senses

4. NOTHINGNESS

Definition: The “no element” or “space-less” focus space

Comment: For an alternate but equivalent definition see Section 9.