

Thought as an "Object of Meditation"

An Insight Wisdom Practice

Meditation / Practice Method

One: Recognize/Discern – when thinking is present rather than the direct and immediate experience what is taking place. This involves seeing that we are experiencing and filtering whatever is present thru the content of thought including concepts, beliefs, assumptions, projection, memory, or story making.

Two: Focus on the "Right" Object of Meditation or Attention: The content of thought is not an appropriate object of meditation. When awareness becomes involved with the content of thought, shift focus to investigating the Qualities of thought. (See other side.)

Three: Experience and Explore the Qualities of Thinking. Use the regular Insight process of experience / explore / understand to directly experience the nature & implication of each of the Qualities of thinking. For example, discern that thinking about the past is taking place, then explore the associated sensations, urges, emotions, feelings, desire, aversion, attachments, and expressions of self at an immediate, experiential level.

Qualities of Thought as the Objects of Meditation

When thought is present, shift the focus from content of thought to one of the following Qualities:

Time:	Past Present Future Story Making
Organic Nature:	Happening Reactive Intentional / Purposeful
Base:	Desire Aversion Attachment Self-Oriented
Sensory:	How qualities express themselves in the body and in other senses
Conditionality:	How thought arise What precedes it
Causation:	Role qualities play in reactivity, conditionality, and Dependent Origination

The Don't Know Rule: Identifying and discerning a particular Quality of thought happens quickly, almost simultaneously with the appearance of thinking, once this method is learned and used regularly. If you find yourself needing to thinking about a Quality to identify and discern its nature, you are heading in the wrong direction. When this happens, shift the focus of attention into the regular practice of exploring the senses and sensations in the body.