

Make a note in the space below about how you would like to thank your mind:

Different Ways of Being with Thoughts

After you've spent some time practising noticing your thoughts, it's time to start trying out some ways to further build in different ways of responding. We may have become used to treating uncomfortable thoughts with solemnity and reverence . . . how has that worked out for you? How would it be to treat them a bit differently?

EXERCISE: Experimenting with Thoughts

Take a moment to consider two or three thoughts that you often find yourself fused with and make some notes about what these typically *sound* like, for example, do they normally sound high and shrill, or perhaps deep and heavy?

Thought 1. _____

Thought 2. _____

Thought 3. _____

OK, now that you've done that, we'd like you to experiment with some different ways of being with these thoughts. Keep in mind, we're not trying to belittle or undermine these thoughts. Also, we're not trying to pretend they're not there or magic them away. Our aim is to add in some extra ways of being with thoughts that may open the possibility for you to have a little more freedom and choice in their presence. See if you can distil your thought into a few words that are particularly punchy. Now, in the **spirit of experimentation**, let's try either singing your thought out loud or in your head to the theme of one of these well-known tunes:

- Happy Birthday
- She'll Be Coming 'Round the Mountain
- Jingle Bells

Another way to do this is to say the thought in the voice of someone famous, or a cartoon character – try to choose one that sounds very different from how you normally experience this thought. You can really let your imagination and creativity run a little wild here. Some of our favourites include:

- Marge Simpson
- Donald Duck
- Arnold Schwarzenegger
- Miss Piggy

What did you notice in doing this? Was there anything new or different added in? Perhaps a sense of looseness and distance from this thought that often feels really up close and personal? It's all right if you didn't experience this. We'd suggest trying it a few times and in a few different ways.

Make some notes in the space below to reflect on this exercise.
What did you notice? How did you feel? What did you learn?
