

## Online Resource 2: Process for Comparing the Goal-State Features Across the Practices

The first step in comparing the features of the goal-states across the practices was to produce a consolidated list of the features identified in any one or more of the practices. To compile the list, for each goal-state feature code in a practice (see SH 2.14, TM 2.7, SM 2.3) it was considered whether there was a conceptually similar feature code in another practice. If there was, a feature label was determined for the consolidated list that captured the conceptual similarity. For example, the goal-state feature code “Conscious” was used for all three practices. In the consolidated list that code was therefore used as the feature label. In contrast, Stillness Meditation had the feature code “Reduced awareness/perception”, whereas Shamatha and TM used the code “No sense-perceptions”. In view of the difference in language, in the consolidated list the label “No or virtually no sense-perceptions” was used. If a goal-state feature code in a practice was not conceptually similar to a code in another practice, that code was used as the feature label in the consolidated list.

Table 1 of this online resource shows for each of the consolidated feature labels the original feature codes from which they were derived. Table 2 is the consolidated list. In that list the consolidated feature labels have been divided into 19 higher-level groupings. This was done simply to make the table, and the discussion of the features in the present evidence synthesis, more accessible. There are alternative groupings that would also be reasonable.

The next step was to compare the extracted material relating to each feature in the consolidated list across the practices. The main sections of the extraction tables relating to each feature are identified in Table 1, but the comparison also took into account sections cross-referenced from them, and any other sections that were relevant.

In conducting the comparison it was possible to refine the list of features in the consolidated list. It became clear, for example, that in some cases multiple features should be collapsed into a single feature, and that in other cases a single feature should be split into multiple features. The final features are set out in Tables 1 and 2 in the paper, and the paper also contains the comparison across the practices. The comparison for the first 18 groups in Table 2 of this online resource is set out in section 2 of the paper. The 19<sup>th</sup> group (“Minimal possible content”) is addressed in section 1.2.

Table 1  
*Consolidated Feature Labels and Corresponding Feature Codes*

| Consolidated feature label <sup>a</sup>          | Original feature code (or component of it) from which feature label derived                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Attentional balance                              | “Attentional balance” – Shamatha<br>No direct equivalent for TM or Stillness Meditation                                                                                                      |
| Attention on the emptiness/silence               | “Attention on substrate/awareness/consciousness/quiescence/mind” – Shamatha<br>“Attention directed inward” – TM<br>No direct equivalent for Stillness Meditation                             |
| Attentional stability                            | “Attentional stability” – Shamatha<br>“... [N]o focus/concentration” – TM<br>“No focus/concentration” – Stillness Meditation                                                                 |
| Attentional vividness                            | “Attentional vividness” – Shamatha<br>“... [C]learness ...” – Stillness Meditation<br>“Clearness” – TM                                                                                       |
| Awake, wakefulness                               | “Awake, wakefulness” – Shamatha, TM<br>“Awake, wakefulness ...” – Stillness Meditation                                                                                                       |
| Beyond peacefulness, stillness and/or goodness   | “Beyond peacefulness”, “Limited or no abstract content”, “Cannot say much about it” – TM<br>“Beyond calmness/stillness/goodness” – Stillness Meditation<br>No direct equivalent for Shamatha |
| Bliss, joy, happiness, goodness                  | “Bliss, joy, pleasantness, wellbeing ...” – Shamatha<br>“Bliss, joy, happiness” – TM<br>“Good, wonderful” – Stillness Meditation                                                             |
| Calm control                                     | “Control ...” – Stillness Meditation<br>No direct equivalent for Shamatha or TM                                                                                                              |
| Calm, ease, peacefulness, absence of disturbance | “Calm, ease, peacefulness, absence of disturbance” – Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                      |
| Cannot say much about the experience             | “Cannot say much about it” – TM<br>No direct equivalent for Shamatha or Stillness Meditation                                                                                                 |
| Clearness                                        | “... [C]learness ...” – Shamatha, Stillness Meditation<br>“Clearness” – TM                                                                                                                   |
| Conscious                                        | “Conscious” – Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                             |
| Consciousness/awareness itself                   | “Consciousness/awareness itself” – Shamatha<br>“Pure consciousness/awareness” – TM<br>No direct equivalent for Stillness Meditation                                                          |
| Deep                                             | “... [D]eep” – Shamatha<br>“Deep” – TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                 |
| Description in words is limited                  | “Difficulty communicating the experience to those who have not had it” – Shamatha<br>“Description in words is limited” – TM, Stillness Meditation                                            |
| Ebb and flow, cycling                            | “Cycling” – TM<br>“Ebb and flow” – Stillness Meditation<br>No direct equivalent for Shamatha                                                                                                 |

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| Effortlessness                                   | “Effortlessness ...” – Shamatha, TM<br>“Effortlessness” – Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Emptiness/nothingness                            | “Empty, contentless” – Shamatha<br>“Contentless, reduced mental activity” – TM<br>“Emptiness, nothingness, reduced mental activity” – Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                  |
| Fullness/depth as opposed to flatness/barrenness | “Fullness/potential” – Shamatha<br>“Dynamic” – TM<br>“Depth/height/fullness” – Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Ground-state                                     | “Ground state” and “Nature state of the mind” – Shamatha<br>“Nature of mind/being, ground state, self/Self” – TM<br>“... [S]imple/pure being ...” and “Nature of mind/being, self” – Stillness Meditation                                                                   |
| Increasing length                                | “Increasing length” – TM, Stillness Meditation<br>No direct equivalent for Shamatha                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Inner freedom                                    | “Inner freedom” – Shamatha<br>“Inner freedom ...” – TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Inner security, safety, strength, contentment    | “Inner security, safety” – Shamatha<br>“Inner security, safety, strength, contentment” – TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                           |
| Integration, coherence, wholeness, unity         | “Wholeness, coherence, unity” – Shamatha<br>“Wholeness, integration, unity” – TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Knowledge/knowing                                | “Cognizance, knowledge” – Shamatha<br>“Knowledge” – TM<br>“Knowledge, understanding” – Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Limited or no abstract content                   | “Limited or no abstract content” – TM<br>No direct equivalent for Shamatha or Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Loss of ego                                      | “Loss of ego” – Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Luminosity, limpidity, transparency, radiance    | “Luminosity ... limpidity, transparency, radiance ...” – Shamatha<br>No direct equivalent for TM or Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                    |
| Mental rest                                      | “Mental rest” – Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Naturalness                                      | “Natural state of the mind” – Shamatha<br>“Naturalness” and “Nature of mind/being ...” – TM<br>“Naturalness” and “Nature of mind/being ...” – Stillness Meditation                                                                                                          |
| Nature of mind/being                             | “Natural state of the mind” – Shamatha<br>“Nature of mind/being ...” – TM<br>“Nature of mind/being ...” – Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                              |
| No feelings                                      | “No feelings” – Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| No grasping to the absent mental content         | “No grasping to the absent mental content” – Shamatha<br>No direct equivalent for TM or Stillness Meditation, but clear conceptual overlap with:<br>“Contentless, reduced mental activity” – TM<br>“Emptiness, nothingness, reduced mental activity” – Stillness Meditation |
| No longer aware of a mantra                      | “No longer aware of mantra” – TM<br>No direct equivalent for Shamatha or Stillness Meditation, although there is a degree of conceptual similarity with “No longer mindful of a meditation object” in Shamatha                                                              |

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| No longer mindful of meditation object    | “No longer mindful of meditation object” – Shamatha<br>No direct equivalent for TM or Stillness Meditation, although there is a degree of conceptual similarity with “No longer aware of mantra” in TM                                                         |
| No or virtually no body-perceptions       | “No ... body-perceptions” – Shamatha<br>“No body-perceptions” – TM<br>“Reduced awareness/perception ...” – Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                |
| No or virtually no sense-perceptions      | “No sense-perceptions ...” – Shamatha<br>“No sense-perceptions” – TM<br>“Reduced awareness/perception ...” – Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                              |
| No memories                               | “No memories” – Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| No mental images                          | “No mental images” – Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Non-changing                              | “Non-changing” – Shamatha, TM<br>No direct equivalent for Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Non-duality                               | “Non-duality” – Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| No thoughts                               | “No thoughts” – Shamatha, TM<br>“No thoughts” and “... [L]oss of logical/critical faculties” – Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                            |
| Possible awareness of rhythm of breathing | “Possible awareness of rhythm of breathing” – Shamatha<br>No direct equivalent for TM or Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                  |
| Possible energy                           | “Possible energy” – Shamatha, TM                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Possible loving-kindness                  | “Possible loving-kindness” – Shamatha<br>No direct equivalent for TM or Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Possible spiritual aspect                 | “Possible spiritual aspect” – Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Profound                                  | “Profound ...” – Shamatha<br>“Profound” – TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Pure/simple being/Being                   | “Pure being/Being” – TM<br>“... [S]imple/pure being, non-doing” – Stillness Meditation<br>No direct equivalent for Shamatha                                                                                                                                    |
| Purity                                    | “... [P]urity” – Shamatha, Stillness Meditation<br>“Purity” – TM                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Recognize in retrospect                   | “Recognize in retrospect” – Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Relaxation                                | “Relaxation” – Shamatha<br>“Relaxation” and “Reduced anxiety/tension” – TM<br>“Relaxation” and “No anxiety/tension” – Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                     |
| Relinquishment of control                 | “Effortlessness, relinquishment of control, non-doing” – Shamatha<br>“Effortlessness, relinquishment of control, non-doing, no focus/concentration” – TM<br>“Effortlessness”, “... [R]elinquishment [of control]” and “... [N]on-doing” – Stillness Meditation |
| Self/self                                 | “... self/Self” – TM<br>“... self” – Stillness Meditation<br>No direct equivalent for Shamatha                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Silence/quietness                         | “Silence, quietness” – Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

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| Simplicity                                          | “Simplicity” – Shamatha, TM<br>“Simplicity ...” – Stillness Meditation                                                                                    |
| Spacelessness                                       | “Spacelessness” – TM<br>No direct equivalent for Shamatha or Stillness Meditation                                                                         |
| Spaciousness                                        | “Spaciousness” – Shamatha<br>“... [S]paciousness” – Stillness Meditation<br>No direct equivalent for TM                                                   |
| Stillness                                           | “Stillness” – Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                          |
| Subjective experience may vary between meditators   | “Subjective experience possibly varies between meditators” – Shamatha<br>“Subjective experience varies between meditators ...” – TM, Stillness Meditation |
| Subjective experience varies across/within sessions | “Subjective experience varies ... across/within sessions” – TM, Stillness Meditation<br>No direct equivalent for Shamatha                                 |
| Timelessness                                        | “Timelessness” – Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                                                                                                       |
| Transcendence of discomfort                         | “... [A]bsence of discomfort” – Shamatha<br>“Transcendence of discomfort” – TM, Stillness Meditation                                                      |
| Unboundedness                                       | “... [U]nboundedness” – TM<br>“... [U]nboundedness ...” – Stillness Meditation<br>No direct equivalent for Shamatha                                       |

*Note.*

<sup>a</sup> Ordered alphabetically.

Table 2

*Consolidated Feature Labels and Higher-Level Conceptual Groupings*

| Group no. | Consolidated feature label, placed within higher-level conceptual grouping | Practice/s from which consolidated feature label derived |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1         | Conscious, awake, wakefulness                                              |                                                          |
|           | Conscious                                                                  | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                       |
|           | Awake, wakefulness                                                         | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                       |
| 2         | Emptiness/nothingness                                                      |                                                          |
|           | No thoughts                                                                | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                       |
|           | No or virtually no sense-perceptions                                       | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                       |
|           | No or virtually no body-perceptions                                        | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                       |
|           | No mental images                                                           | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                       |
|           | No memories                                                                | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                       |
|           | No feelings                                                                | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                       |
|           | Possible awareness of rhythm of breathing                                  | Shamatha                                                 |
|           | Possible loving kindness                                                   | Shamatha                                                 |
|           | No longer aware of mantra                                                  | TM                                                       |
|           | No longer mindful of meditation object                                     | Shamatha                                                 |
|           | Emptiness/nothingness                                                      | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                       |
|           | No grasping to the absent mental content                                   | Shamatha                                                 |
|           | Fullness/depth as opposed to flatness/barrenness                           | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                       |
|           | Ebb and flow, cycling                                                      | TM, Stillness Meditation                                 |
|           | Increasing length                                                          | TM, Stillness Meditation                                 |
| 3         | Non-duality, recognition in retrospect                                     |                                                          |
|           | Non-duality                                                                | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                       |
|           | Recognize in retrospect                                                    | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation                       |

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| 4  | Stillness, silence, simplicity, naturalness      |                                    |
|    | Stillness                                        | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Silence/quietness                                | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Simplicity                                       | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Naturalness                                      | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
| 5  | Calm, relaxation, rest                           |                                    |
|    | Calm, ease, peacefulness, absence of disturbance | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Relaxation                                       | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Mental rest                                      | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Transcendence of discomfort                      | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
| 6  | Bliss/goodness, luminosity, knowledge/knowing    |                                    |
|    | Bliss, joy, happiness, goodness                  | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
| 7  | Luminosity                                       |                                    |
|    | Luminosity, limpidity, transparency, radiance    | Shamatha                           |
|    | Clearness                                        | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Purity                                           | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
| 8  | Knowledge/knowing                                |                                    |
|    | Knowledge/knowing                                | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
| 9  | Relinquishment of control, calm control          |                                    |
|    | Relinquishment of control                        | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Calm control                                     | Stillness Meditation               |
|    | Effortlessness                                   | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
| 10 | Ego dissolution, freedom, spaciousness           |                                    |
|    | Loss of ego                                      | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Unboundedness                                    | TM, Stillness Meditation           |
|    | Inner freedom                                    | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Spaciousness                                     | Shamatha, Stillness Meditation     |
| 11 | Integration, security                            |                                    |
|    | Integration, coherence, wholeness, unity         | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Inner security, safety, strength, contentment    | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
| 12 | Timelessness, spacelessness                      |                                    |
|    | Timelessness                                     | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Spacelessness                                    | TM                                 |
| 13 | Spiritual aspect and energy                      |                                    |
|    | Possible spiritual aspect                        | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Possible energy                                  | Shamatha, TM                       |
| 14 | Ground-state                                     |                                    |
|    | Ground-state                                     | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Consciousness/awareness itself                   | Shamatha, TM                       |
|    | Nature of mind/being                             | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Pure/simple being/Being                          | TM, Stillness Meditation           |
|    | Self/self                                        | TM, Stillness Meditation           |
|    | Beyond peacefulness, stillness and/or goodness   | TM, Stillness Meditation           |
| 15 | Deep, profound                                   |                                    |
|    | Deep                                             | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Profound                                         | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
| 16 | Attention                                        |                                    |
|    | Attention on the emptiness/silence               | Shamatha, TM                       |
|    | Attentional stability                            | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Attentional vividness                            | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Attentional balance                              | Shamatha                           |
| 17 | Description in words is limited                  |                                    |
|    | Description in words is limited                  | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |

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|----|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 18 | Variation within each practice                      |                                    |
|    | Subjective experience may vary between meditators   | Shamatha, TM, Stillness Meditation |
|    | Subjective experience varies across/within sessions | TM, Stillness Meditation           |
| 19 | Non-changing                                        | Shamatha, TM                       |
|    | Minimal possible content                            |                                    |
|    | Limited or no abstract content                      | TM                                 |
|    | Cannot say much about the experience                | TM                                 |

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