



Greetings. I'm Tara Brach and I'd like to welcome you to these podcasts. While the talks and meditations are offered freely, we'd very much appreciate your support. To make a donation or learn more about my schedule, please visit www.tarabrach.com and/or www.imcw.org. Thank you.

Please settle in and a way you're sitting comfortably. You might want to collect with the breath a little, taking a nice deep full in breath and then a slow out breath. And again, nice full in breath and releasing the breaths slowly feeling the sensations of letting go. Letting go. And one more time, breathing in fully and exhaling slowly, releasing and letting go. Then as your breath comes back into its natural rhythm just relaxing with the breath for a few moments. Letting your senses be awake.

Letting come to mind a relationship where you feel stuck in a pattern of aversive judging. Where you feel, identify with that scalyness. And choose what you feel will be helpful for this particular time and moment. If there's a lot of trauma in it, you might find that it's not so helpful right now. Feel what you can work with.

And when you've identified a person where you'd like to feel that you're not creating so much armoring or distance. Where you'd like to have more of a forgiving open heart. Let yourself go right to a situation that triggers or brings up the judging. And if you're no longer very actively engaged with the person, it'll be something in the past that happened. Where there was some injury to you. And if it's ongoing, just whatever most exemplifies what comes up that brings up your reactive judging.

And see if without adding more judgment, if you can just become mindful of the flags, all the flags to let you know, "OK I'm in the aversive judgment trance." Certain kinds of thoughts that go through, things you're telling yourself about that person. What you're believing. Perhaps what you're believing the person's behavior means. That they wouldn't be acting this way if they didn't fill in the blanks. So, this is really getting familiar with the scales of aversive judgment are and noticing how your body and heart feel when you're in that defended and reactive place, just as we did earlier.

The Shaman say that if we name an emotional experience, it doesn't control us so much. Well, if you can name and recognize the scales of aversive judgment, you can have some more choice about it. Now, an inquiry is if you were less deffended, if you weren't blaming, if you weren't believing you're blaming thoughts, what is it that's difficult that you'd have to open to and feel? And I'm inviting you to just check in and sense, if you stop blaming so much, what is the pain that you'd have to feel? And I'm going to invite you as you're reflecting on this to sense yourself in a group right now where everyone is reflecting on the same thing. Those that are here, those that will be listening, that we have these judgments and underneath them there's some vulnerability that's difficult to feel and if we let go of the scale of judgment we'd have to feel it. And I'm wondering if a few people might just raise your hand and I'll point and just let's hear the words out loud.



What's the vulnerability underneath the judgment that we have to feel? Loss of friendships. So, we'd have to feel the grief and the loss. Yeah. He doesn't care about me. Rejected. Disappointment. Unworthiness. Not good enough. That feeling of deficiency. Lack of respect. Unseen. Yeah. Abandoned. Sorrow. Thank you. Continue to practice and just sense your own but also just this whole Madala of vulnerability. That this is not my vulnerability it's the vulnerability that's underneath aversive judgment. And for now, see if you can simply acknowledge you've recognized it. Just acknowledge the vulnerability that's there. It's as if you're just pausing and saying, "OK this is part of reality," and it's a willingness to let it be and see if that's possible.

In the Buddhist story of the Buddha encountering Mara, which is the all the vulnerable flavors of anger, greed, hatred, delusion, and so on, the Buddhist response to Mara's appearance, much like the story you heard last night about the demons in the cave, was to say, "I see you Mara. Let's have tea." So, that's what you're doing right now. You're saying, "I see you to this vulnerability. Now, let's have a more intimate attention. Let me get to know you some." So, as a way of getting to know this vulnerability, see if you can just breathe with it and feel it and sense, as directly as possible, how it is living in your body. The felt sense of it. For some people, just feeling the breath is contacting that soft spot, that place of feeling unworthy, rejected, hurt, sorrow. Unseen. Not respected.

This is the courageous part. Being willing to feel it viscerally and if it helps you, and I encourage it, to put your hand on your heart to keep the attention right there. Rumi says, "Keep your eye on the wounded place. That's where the Light enters." Just to keep the attention there. And you might sense if you go right inside the place it feels most vulnerable, underneath the judging scales and ask, "What does this place most want or need? How does it want me to deal with it? What would most help this place to feel right now?"

And that place might need you to just say it's OK that you're here. Or perhaps it needs to be forgiven. Or maybe it needs directly to be bathed in love. Sense if it's possible from the most sincere place in you're being just to offer the love or tenderness or presence that's needed. And if you feel like you need help with that, call on whatever source you trust, the love that lives through someone else that you feel is dear or could be through a deity, God, Buddha, Guanyin, Jesus, could be the love that comes through your cat or your dog, a child, someone who's already passed, just let love embrace you. Let it flow in to this place that needs to be held.

Maybe there are words that you can offer inward that help to carry that loving. You might sense into that. And as you bring that presence and tenderness to the vulnerable place, begin to sense your own experience of your own being. Sense the space, the kindness, beyond any identity because it's from that space that you can now bring your attention to the other person. Look through the eyes of understanding, the heart of understanding and just see the other person in a more whole way. With that kind of discerning wisdom that sees how that person might be hurting, caught themselves with unmet needs, confusion.



To sense perhaps who that being is underneath the scaly skin. To sense into the innocence. The child thing got covered over. The purity that got armoured.

And you might sense your deepest intention towards that person. One master said to not push anyone, including ourselves, out of our heart. Perhaps it's simply to include this being with loving presence. To wish this being well. To know how to take care of yourself and keep your heart tender. Whatever it is, just sense your wish and your intention.

You might again, ask that deep inquiry, who would I be if I let go of judging, of the scales of aversive judgment? Who would I be if I included my own being fully in my heart? This is Rumi. I've gotten free of that ignorant fist that it was pinching and twisting my secret self. The Universe and the light of the stars come through me. I am the crescent moon put up over the gate to the festival.

These last moments, to just rest in the stillness, to rest in that heart of compassion that allows the different waves to come and go. Just holding this life with a tenderness and presence. That's really the truth of who you are.

Namaste and thank you for your presence and your attention.