

Naming the Feelings

Guided Meditation

Date / Time:

So far today, have you brought kind awareness to your:

Thoughts? Heart? Body? None

To begin this Meditation, please bring kind awareness to

- why you chose this topic
- how your belly, chest, and head each feel when you reflect on this topic
- the emotions that you can associate with these visceral feelings
- the positive or negative impact of any stories you believe in regarding this topic
- the fact that many others are feeling similarly about this topic as you
- how you might feel with increased awareness around this topic
- when you can apply increased mindfulness to this topic in your day-to-day life



MEDITATION

Sit quietly for a few moments, settling into your seat.

Notice the feeling of your breath entering and leaving your body.

Notice the sounds around you... the sensations on your skin... the sensations within your body.

Notice any thoughts that might be floating to the surface.

(pause)

Imagine these thoughts as icebergs. The thought is what we see above the surface of the water. Beneath the surface, the much larger part, is an emotion – or several.

For example, if we are thinking about our long to-do list and how we're never going to get it done, the emotion below the surface might be anxiety, or guilt.

If we're struggling with an argument we had with a loved one, the underlying energy might be sadness, or a feeling of abandonment.

What emotions are beneath your thoughts right now? If you are able to, name these emotions out loud, or write them down.

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When you notice the temptation to get lost in the story (i.e. “I feel sad and I don’t know what to do and what if I tried talking to her...”) gently return to the emotion.

“I feel sad.”

“I feel angry.”

“I feel hurt.”

“I feel lonely.”

Notice if there are any emotions lurking around that might feel less difficult. Is there any joy? Excitement? There is space for all these emotions to coexist.

Every time a thought arises, name the emotion beneath it – that large, often unseen part of the iceberg.

Continue naming the emotions until it feels as though you’ve named them all.

(pause...)

Once you feel like you’ve named all your current resident emotions (don’t worry, if more pop up, it’s never too late), see if you can feel where these emotions are living in your body.

This is a practice that takes some time establish, so be very patient with yourself. We are not accustomed to taking note of what we’re feeling in our body, unless it’s acute pain or an open wound.

One way to do this is to look for tingling, or tightness. Emotions can also show up as a fluttery feeling, or a clenching. Or you might feel actual, physical pain.

Try going through your slowly, body bit by bit, to keep things simple.

Do you notice any sensation of emotion in your head, neck and throat area?

Your chest, upper back and the space around your heart?

Travel through our shoulders... your upper arms. Your hands.

Your stomach area.

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Lower belly and pelvis.

Bring your consciousness to your seat and lower back.

Your legs. Your feet.

If you noticed any feelings in any of these places, observe them, but don't interact.

Note them, but don't try to change anything.

Be curious, but compassionate.

It is human to have emotions. If we are alive, we are feeling them in our physical body.

If we've been busy or preoccupied for some time, we may not have noticed these feelings until now – or we may not want to be experiencing these emotions.

See if you can allow your feelings to just be there.

See if you can pull up a chair next to the fluttering, or the buzzing, and experience it.

Notice if any fear comes up around doing that, which is very natural. If something feels too traumatic or jarring and it doesn't feel safe to feel, please let it go for now.

(pause a while)

Notice if there's a message your body or self needs to hear right now.

It could be, "I'm here." It might be, "You are loved," or "I am loved."

Some other examples that might work:

"It's safe to feel this."

"You're doing your best in this moment."

"Forgiven."

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“I am worthy.”

It may help to place a hand gently on your chest or stomach.

Repeat this message to yourself gently and kindly until you notice a shift.

Then, gently, let it go.

You can repeat this with as many feelings as you like.

