

Additional Mindfulness and Self-Compassion Practices

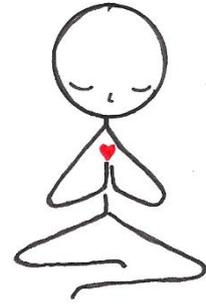
1. "Being in the here and now"

Practice being the observer through all your senses with curiosity, non-judgment, acceptance and kindness. Drop-in your body in this moment: Observe what is there? Notice the sensations with names and no-names. Notice whatever is arising, postponing judgments or expectations...*isn't interesting!*

First, pause, come into your body, find your feet and checking in the sensations in the body

Then use the senses in the here and now, to observe the surroundings

- What can you see? Name 5 things you can see
- What can you hear? Name 5 things you can hear
- What can you feel on your skin? Clothes? Breeze? Warmth? Cold?
- What can you taste?
- What can you smell?



2. STOP to be less on automatic and more present

- o Stop
- o Take a long breath out, Exhale...
- o Observe with curiosity and kindness: surroundings, body sensations, thoughts
- o Proceed with what is important, with intention

3. When in doubt breathe out! Belly breathe!

In moments of struggles or when you want to relax, modify slightly, the way you breathe to reduce the intensity of unpleasant emotions such as anxiety, anger, sadness and pain. When you find yourself being stressed, anxious, angry or overwhelmed, pause and intentionally exhale....As soon as you notice the difficult feelings, breathe out with the mouth open. And then proceed with a gentle belly breathing or soothing breath to activate the vagus nerve and parasympathetic responses to relax as followed:

- Breathing out, exhale, hand on belly, contracting belly
- Belly breathing; hand moving up when inhaling (as if blowing a balloon in the belly) and moving down, contracting the belly with the exhale
- Counting 1,2,3 as you inhale, 1,2 as you hold gently and then 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 as breathe out

Note there are many variations of this exercise but there are three main aims in this practice:

1. to slow the breathing,
2. for the exhale to be longer or the same as the inhale, and
3. each breath goes all the way in and out of the lungs promoting thoracic or abdominal breathing to avoiding shallow, upper chest breathing

4. Helpful self-inquiry to reduce unhelpful ruminations.

Turning our attention to our thoughts or story and asking ourselves about each thought or rumination:

- Is it true?
- Is it helpful?
- Is it kind?
- Is it pointing to a solution?

5. RAIN + Loving-Kindness

- Recognize struggles, emotions, exhale!
- Allow, accept what is with kindness
- Investigate emotions in the body and the thoughts attached to emotions
- Nourishment; offering ourselves some loving Kindness phrases and asking ourselves what do I need now?

-Then notice what happened after the rain; how it feels in the body, in the mind and in the heart
-Examples of Loving Kindness phrases are: *May I feel safe and loved, May I find peace, May I be strong, May I accept what is, May I see the good! May I know what to do in time! May I be able to bear this! May I be able to live one day at the time! May good come out of this!*

And so on... whatever is meaningful for you

For more information on RAIN see Tara Brach video

- <http://www.tarabrach.com/wp-content/uploads/pdf/RAIN-of-Self-Compassion2.pdf>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yXIOHYxllbc>

6. The Third Space: Reflect, Rest and Reset

In between tasks, we can always stop to reflect, rest and reset

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpk_dssZXqs

Helpful Books:

The third space by Adam Fraser

Simple Self-Care for Therapists: Restorative Practices to Weave through your workday Ashley Davis Bush

Experiencing compassion-Focused Therapy from the Inside Out: a Self-Practice/Self-Reflection

Workbook for Therapists by Russell Kolts, Toby Bell, James Bennett-Levy and Chris Irons, 2018

The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook: A proven way to accept yourself, building inner strength and thrive by Kristin Neff and Christopher Germer, 2018

Helpful links

Mindful Self- Compassion Meditations: <https://www.mindfulpath.com.au/resources/meditations>

Other Mindfulness Meditations: <https://www.bloomfieldpsychology.com.au/resources/free-mindfulness-meditations>

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