

Inviting a Difficulty In and Working with It Through the Body

Make sure to go through this exercise slowly, allowing time to pause between each statement. For this exercise, first call to mind a difficult situation that you would like to work with.

Noticing the way you are sitting in the chair. Noticing where your body is touching the chair. Bringing your attention to your breath for a moment. Noticing the in-breath ... and the out-breath ... (pause) Now gently widening your awareness, taking in the body as a whole ... Noticing any sensations that arise ... breathing with your whole body.

When you are ready, bringing to mind the difficult situation you would like to focus on ... As you are focusing on this troubling thought or situation, allowing yourself to take some time to tune into any physical sensations in the body that the difficulty evokes ... (pause), seeing if you are able to notice and approach any sensations that are arising in your body ... becoming aware of those physical sensations, deliberately, but gently directing your focus of attention to the region of the body where the sensations are the strongest in the gesture of an embrace, a welcoming ... Breathing into that part of the body on the in-breath and breathing out from that region on the out-breath, ... exploring the sensations, ... watching their intensity shift up and down from one moment to the next ... (pause and explore).

Seeing if you can bring to this attention an even deeper attitude of compassion and openness to whatever sensations, thoughts, or emotions you are experiencing, however unpleasant, by saying to yourself from time to time "It's OK. Whatever it is. It's already here. Let me be open to it." (pause)

Staying with the awareness of these internal sensations, breathing with them, accepting them, letting them be, and allowing them to be just as they are ... Saying to yourself, if you find it helpful, "It's here right now. Whatever it is, it's already here. Let me be open to it." ... (pause) Softening and opening to the sensation you become aware of, letting go of any tensing and bracing ... (pause). If you like, you can also experiment with holding in awareness both the sensations of the body and the feeling of the breath moving in and out, as you breathe with the sensations moment by moment (pause for several moments).

And when you notice that the bodily sensations are no longer pulling your attention to the same degree, simply return 100% to the breath and continue with that as the primary object of attention (pause for several moments).

And now gently bringing your awareness to the way you are sitting in the chair, your breath, and, when you are ready, opening your eyes.