

# Meditation Practice

## Recovering the Emotional Childhood

This is a daily practice derived from a simple Buddhist meditation. It can be done sitting or lying down. I prefer being prostrate as all tension in the body is more easily relaxed.

### **OPENING COMMENTS**

The length of time for this practice may, at first, be intimidating. As anything, experiment, get some experience, then relax fully into something new. Start, do each step...increase time as is comfortable. The longer this practice is done, the easier it is to drop the focus on actual, wall-clock time and enjoy the ride.

This process can enable enable recover of the emotional childhood...feeling the feelings that were stuffed down to survive; those feelings too painful to ever feel. Until now.

HINT: When encountering an incident during the day - strong (over)reactions to people, places or things - which may have roots in "family of origin"...the following morning, recreate the incident in the mind's eye. The feelings return for immediate use to begin my meditation. If feelings are present anyway, begin there.

Let's get started!

I will use first "I" to describe my experience with this practice.

### **LIGHT A CANDLE**

After I get settled, I invite the feelings into my awareness. Once I have identified the feeling (anger, terror, fear, sadness, etc), I can begin. Note the metaphor I use is that of a loving parent holding a suffering child in their arms...until the child's feelings have passed. This is an act of self-love. I recommend a visit to a local park and observe parents care taking their children, especially when one falls and gets hurt or is upset in any other way. Loving parents will hold and comfort them until the feelings pass. The child will respond with a smile and return to their playful life.

Note that this process of holding feelings until they transform will take time. That is why it is a practice. I recommend a daily time where this practice is honored.

In and out breaths are deep, yet not labored or forced.

### **Practice Step 1: 5-10 minutes**

In Breath - "Hello, feeling (anger, sadness, etc), I know you are in me."

Out Breath - "I am glad you are here. I have been waiting for you."

Repeat "In Breath" wording, use these other "Out Breath" phrases:

"I will take good care of you"

"Come into the living room, have a seat on the couch."

Repeat in/out breathing and mantras for up to 20 minutes.

I do this for one or more emotions at a time. I recommend starting with a single emotion to get comfortable with the process. When I am ready, more than one feeling at a time. I like to invite the feelings down, one a time, until they are all here. Knowing when to go to Step 2 will come intuitively. At first, I suggest 5-10 minutes. Exiting this step, I have one or more specific feelings present in my awareness.

## **EMBRACE & FEEL THE FEELINGS**

**Practice Step 2:** Up to 20 minutes

In Breath - "Hello, feeling (anger, sadness, etc), I know you are in me."

Out Breath - "I hold you in the arms of mindfulness"

Repeat "In Breath" wording, I also use a second "Out Breath" phrase:

"I hold you in the arms of loving kindness."

Repeat in/out breathing and mantras for up to 20 minutes.

This is where I focus on holding the little child in my arms. With practice, this can become a very scary and/or comforting process. At the very beginning, I was face-to-face with my reluctance to feel anything. Deep terror, fear of dying emerged. Your experience may be different. This will pass; I did not die.

## **NATURE OF THE FEELING**

**Practice Step 3:** Up to 20 minutes.

In Breath - "Hello, feeling (anger, sadness, etc), I know you are in me."

Out Breath - "I look deeply, I touch you deeply and together we see all the roots."

Repeat in/out breathing and mantra for up to 20 minutes.

I am consciously open and looking at where this feeling comes, what it's nature. This is a very powerful process and, at first, can also be intimidating. That will pass.

Once I got comfortable with this and continued the practice, I started to get images, flashbacks from my childhood...specifically associated with one or more feelings. I also noticed that I could, after awhile, start identifying a feeling across many experiences.

The process is special and is specific for each who does it. This is a very helpful tool as I started to take apart each emotion from the original, ominous ball of feelings, where I could not distinguish fear from joy.

## **NATURE OF THE TRUTH**

**Practice Step 4:** Up to 20 minutes.

In Breath - "Hello, feeling (anger, sadness, etc), I know you are in me."

Out Breath - "I look deeply, I touch you deeply and together we see all the truth."

Other "Out Breath" option:

"That was then, this is now. I am laying here, in Mountain View, and I am OK."

"These are just my feelings. Feeling them is safe and healthy."

"These are just my feelings. These too will pass."

Repeat in/out breathing and mantra for up to 20 minutes.

This process is particularly helpful in working Steps 1-3. It can be used completely independent of working the steps.

Once I trust that my feelings will not kill me or get worse or last forever (once I break and defy the myths that are my fantasy beliefs about not feeling feelings), I can safely continue my journey - into Step 4 or further down my path.

## **CLOSING COMMENTS**

This process saved my life. I have experienced several transformations that have been rooted in this practice.

I trust this will be a useful tool for your recovery.

**Buckle up, it will be the ride of a lifetime!!! This lifetime. If not me, then who? If not now, then when?**

Blessings!

Robert N.