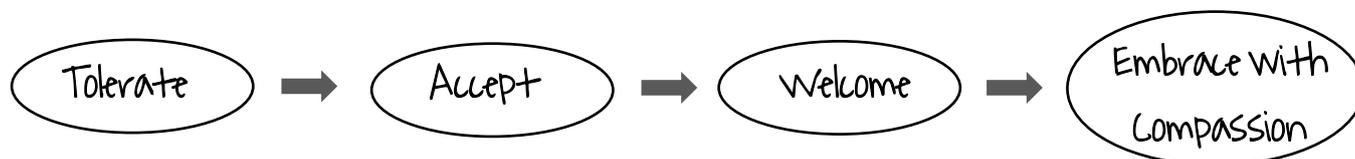


Guidelines for Dealing with Unpleasant Moments

When you are facing something and notice that you feel unpleasant or uncomfortable, take note of what you automatically want to do, e.g. flight behavior. Remind yourself that you want to come out of those old patterns, and instead experience being closer to yourself . . . and seeing more choice. Try one of the following exercises to learn how to:



1. FOCUS ON YOUR BODY

What's happening in your body? Take a few moments to be with yourself, eyes closed. Become aware of different sensations, perhaps scanning your body slowly from top to bottom. Can you describe the sensations (e.g. tension, cold, hot, a knot, vibrations, pressure)?

Can you tolerate each one? Accept? Welcome? Try saying to yourself, "Nothing has to change. Everything is welcome just as it is. I will trust it."

And then what happens? Since feelings last a very short while, you may notice a change?

Finally, try to embrace it with compassion. What is the sensation about? Is it associated with one or more emotions that you can name, e.g. irritation, sadness, fear, frustration, anger? (Use a [list of feelings](#) to get to know yourself better.)

Approaching your emotions with compassion means that you know what is underneath the unpleasantness . . . your longings, needs, drivers (use a [list of needs](#) for reference). What is important for you at an abstract level? Can you stay with that without you or someone else having to DO something?

This is self-acceptance and self-compassion.

2. FOCUS ON YOUR THOUGHTS

Sometimes our thoughts are in the way of being able to concentrate fully on the wisdom of our body. You can choose to give the dialogue in your head some attention, in order to then focus on your body / emotions / longings. Below are some examples:

Aversion for physical focus (#1):

Thought: "This exercise really does not help me." Or "This is just too unpleasant."

Response: "Of course I do not like this so much . . . I'd much rather do something enjoyable!"

Action: Remind yourself that unpleasant feelings are there to indicate our longings, the positive direction we wish to move toward. Say to yourself: "There is some suffering in me, and I'd like to take care of it / of me."

Aversion for physical sensations (with thoughts that block acceptance):

Thought: "I hate this tension I feel."

Response: "Yes, of course, I do not like this. That's normal. "

Action: Try to allow this last thought to simply be, and tolerate the unpleasant feeling . . . accept . . . welcome . . . embrace with compassion.

Random thoughts:

Thought: "I have to do groceries."

Response: "Yes, there are other important things as well—now I'm caring for me."

Action: Write it down if you do not want to forget it. Try to let the thought be without letting a story develop. You can name it as a thought, and then focus on your body / emotions (tolerate . . . accept . . . welcome . . . embrace with compassion).