

Mindfulness of Emotions

Emotions are a natural and normal part of human experience. During the day, we are likely to feel a whole host of basic emotions, like anger, sadness, fear, happiness, and disgust. We also can have more nuanced feelings, like delight, disappointment, or shame.

Typically, emotions come and go like waves on the shore. We have a slight feeling that grows in intensity until it reaches a peak, then subsides. This exercise will help you become more aware of your personal experience of various emotions, your judgments about them, and their natural ebb and flow. Please allow about 10 – 15 minutes of uninterrupted time for the activity.



- Take a few moments to focus on your breathing.
- Notice how you feel emotionally in the present moment?
 - Do you feel good or bad?
 - Are you happy or not happy?
 - Is it pleasant or unpleasant?
- What word best describes the specific emotion that you're feeling?
- Gently maintain your attention on your emotion.
 - How intense is your feeling?
 - Does it change over time or remain the same?
 - How do you breathe while experiencing this emotion?
 - What else is happening in your body?
 - What is your posture?
 - How do you embody the emotion?
 - Do you experience areas of muscle tension? Looseness?
 - How does your face feel physically? Do you notice yourself smiling? Crying? Squinting?
- Notice any thoughts or judgments that arise. You might want to cling to “positive” emotions or reject feelings as being “undesirable,” “unacceptable,” or “intolerable.” Simply notice these thoughts without considering them to be “true” or reacting to them. Return your attention to your experience of the emotion itself in the present moment.
- If other emotions arise, notice what specific feeling has come into your awareness. Describe it as you did previously. Observe how your emotional landscape changes over time.
- After the exercise, take a moment to reflect on your tendency to hold onto or reject certain emotions. Did it work? How did it affect your experience of the emotion itself?