

INDIVIDUAL HANDOUT 9.1

Self-Empathy Meditation

(15-20 minutes)

Begin by connecting with your intention to be fully present to yourself. Identify a painful experience for which you would like to practice self-empathy. Clarify the stimulus and state (or write) it in the form of an NVC observation.

A. GROUNDING

Settle into a stable seated position.

B. STAYING SEATED TO WATCH THE MOVIE

1. Establish breath as your ongoing anchor.
2. Open to present-moment thoughts, feelings, and body sensations.
3. Bring to mind the stimulus that was identified earlier. Notice what thoughts and images come up for you in the presence of this stimulus.
4. Feel what comes up, both physically and emotionally.
5. Return to watch the thoughts and images as if they were being projected onto a movie screen.
6. Alternate your attention between (a) the thoughts and images on the screen and (b) the physical and emotional feelings present in the body.

C. CONNECTING TO MY NEED

1. Ask “What is my need here?” as you continue #6 above.
2. Allow for the possibility of many needs or several layers of needs.
3. Choose the most poignant need and hold it in your heart.
4. Move close to and connect deeply with this need.
5. Feel the yearning and cherishing this need brings up.

D. RESTING IN THE UNIVERSALITY OF MY NEED

1. With each inhalation, take the need more deeply into your heart.
2. With each exhalation, spread it further and further to more people and living beings.

Close by celebrating your intention and efforts to cultivate deep self-empathy — bringing compassionate presence and awareness into the world.