Repairenting

Imagery for Disrupted Attachment

Imagery designed to facilitate the development and introjection of an emotionally attuned, mirroring nurturing attachment figure -- a competent inner parent providing unconditional positive regard -- not unlike Winnicott's Good Enough Mother.

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Script

Allow yourself to be comfortable...either lying down or sitting up -- with your back, neck and spine fully supported. Knowing that you will not be interrupted for the next little while, begin by gently closing your eyes.

[Instruction] Breathe audibly with the exhalation longer than the inhalation

Now bring your attention to your breath -- the direct experience of your breath -- however it is...and however it changes. Allow yourself to softly focus your awareness on the breath that is arising right now...the in-breath and the out-breath...the rising and the falling. If you can, try to follow one full cycle of the breath -- from the beginning of the in-breath, through its entirety...the beginning of the out-breath, through its entirety. Allowing yourself the time and the space to be in direct contact with the breath throughout one entire cycle.

[Instruction] Breathe audibly with the exhalation longer than the inhalation

As you continue to pay attention to the breath, you may notice distractions that arise. Just allow yourself to notice...those distractions...any bodily sensations...any thoughts that may arise. If possible, allow yourself to become aware of the separateness of those bodily sensations -- notice how those sensations are separate -- distinct from your thoughts, your ideas and your words.

[Instruction] Breathe audibly with the exhalation longer than the inhalation

Now, as you continue with this focused awareness, you will notice how often you lose contact with the breath...maybe you become caught in a thought or an idea or plan or maybe some other bodily sensation has pulled your attention. ...When this happens, simply notice that you have lost connection with the breath, and, gently bring your awareness back to the breath.

[Instruction] Breathe audibly with the exhalation longer than the inhalation

Gently bring your awareness to any sensations in the body....Noticing any tension, pressure, tightness, warmth, coolness, pain or other recognizable sensations. You may also notice that the thinking part of your brain may want to label these sensations. Allow that and then gently return your awareness to the direct experience of the sensations themselves. If you'd like, begin to notice sensations in various parts of the body. You might begin with the feet, working your way up the body...noticing the ankles, shins, knees, thighs, buttocks, hips, lower back, upper back, shoulders, biceps, elbows, forearms, wrists, hands...now beginning again at the neck...jaw, ...behind and under the eyes, forehead, crown of the head and finally the back of the head. If you'd like, you may consciously relax any overly tight muscles -- noticing your

choice to do so or not.

[Pause — 45 seconds]

Now gently allow your attention and awareness to rest on any sensations in the abdomen or belly area. Notice any sensations -- whether "comfort" or "discomfort." Without any effort to distract yourself from them or to change them, allow the sensations to just be there. If you do try to get rid of them or distract yourself from them, simply notice that you have done so, then gently return your awareness to the sensations.

[Pause — 45 seconds]

Now, with a gentle breath, bring to mind a time when you were close to -- that is physically close to somebody -- somebody who you could trust -- fully and completely. It could be anybody: a parent or grandparent, sister or brother, or a family member; it could be a friend; a partner or anybody else -- anyone with whom you have had many experiences of complete trust.

If you are unable to conjure such a person, bring to mind a childhood pet to whom you felt connected and trusted completely.

Bring to mind the image of this person or pet. Invite this person or animal to be here with you now. Take as much time as you need to feel this presence fully. Look deeply into the face of this person or pet -- seeing as clearly as you can. While gazing into one another's eyes, take a few deep breaths -- holding this experience of connection.

Now bring to mind a time in your early childhood when you felt happy -- just comfortable, unworried and at ease...it may be a time when you were with this trusted person or pet. With that image up, gently bring your attention to your abdomen -- noticing any sensations associated with this memory of contentment and happiness in childhood.

Looking deeply into the face of the person or pet notice their reaction to your experience of this fond memory. Perhaps there is no reaction, and if that is the case, simply notice that and then return your attention to your own emotions and bodily sensations. If there is a reaction on the face of the person or pet, notice it...and then again, notice your own emotions and bodily sensations and/or feelings about their reaction.

[Pause — 45 seconds]

Now bring to mind a time in your early childhood when you felt emotional discomfort. Maybe a time when you felt threatened, frightened, frustrated, angry, helpless or ashamed and

humiliated.

Begin looking deeply into the face of the person or pet and notice their reaction to your experience of this unpleasant memory. Perhaps there is no reaction, and if that is the case, simply notice that and then return your attention to your own emotions and bodily sensations. If there is a reaction on the face of the person or pet, notice it...and then again, notice your own emotions and bodily sensations and/or feelings about their reaction.

Try and stay with this experience of your mutual reactions for at least fifteen seconds.

Now, letting go of that image, refocus your attention on your breath -- the direct experience of the breath -- however it is...and however it changes. Allow yourself to softly focus your awareness on the breath that is arising right now...the in-breath and the out-breath...the rising and the falling. If you can, try to follow one full cycle of the breath -- from the beginning of the in-breath, through its entirety...the beginning of the out-breath, through its entirety. Allow yourself the time and the space to be in direct contact with the breath throughout one entire cycle.

[Instruction] Breathe audibly with the exhalation longer than the inhalation

Now, consider the possibility that you may presently have such a person or pet within your own mind. Allow yourself to conjure an image or concept of such a being ...allow it to take any shape or form.

Give yourself a few moments to observe this being. Notice its qualities...does it appear soothing? ...receptive and attuned? ...kind...concerned...understanding? Does it appear forgiving...charitable...patient...tolerant? Does it seem as capable and competent...reliable...trustworthy...nurturing and devoted as the person or pet with whom you interacted just a few minutes ago?

Now, make some gentle inquiries about this being, "Does this being appear to be disapproving and judgmental or loving and accepting? ...Does it appear to be kind and generous or mean spirited and inconsiderate? ...Does this being appear to provide safety and security or does it appear dangerous? How do I feel about this entity? Do I trust this entity or not?"

With this new entity in mind, gently allow yourself to notice any sensations in your body...paying particular attention to your abdomen...noticing any sensations -- whether 'comfort' or 'discomfort.' Without any effort to distract yourself from them or to change them, allow the sensations to just be there. If you do try to get rid of them or distract yourself from

them, simply notice that you have done so, then gently return your awareness to the sensations.

[Pause — 45 seconds]

Now, keeping this being close, bring to mind a time in your early childhood when you felt happy -- just comfortable, unworried and at ease. With this image up, gently bring your attention once again to your abdomen -- noticing any sensations associated with this memory of contentment and happiness in childhood.

Now, looking deeply into the face of this being, notice their reaction to your experience of this fond memory. Perhaps there is no reaction, and if that is the case, simply notice that and then return your attention to your own emotions and bodily sensations. If there is a reaction on the face of this being, just notice it...and then once again, notice your own emotions and bodily sensations and/or feelings about their reaction.

[Pause — 45 seconds]

Again, keeping this being close, bring to mind a time in your early childhood when you felt emotionally uncomfortable. Maybe a time when you felt threatened, frightened, frustrated, angry, helpless or ashamed and humiliated.

Looking deeply into the face of this being, notice their reaction to your experience of this memory. Perhaps there is no reaction, and if that is the case, simply notice that and then return your attention to your own emotions and bodily sensations. If there is a reaction on the face of the being, notice it...and then again, notice your own emotions and bodily sensations and/or feelings about their reaction.

Now, with a gentle breath, begin to notice any appraisals, assessments, judgments, opinions, beliefs, interpretations or any other ideas that occur as you continue to focus on your bodily sensations, feelings and/or emotions as they relate to what you have experienced during this meditation.

[Pause — 20 seconds]

Now, letting go of that image, re-focus your attention on your breath -- the direct experience of the breath -- however it is...and however it changes. Allow yourself to softly focus your awareness on to the breath that is arising right now...the in-breath and the out-breath...the rising and the falling. If you can, try to follow one full cycle of the breath -- from the beginning of the in-breath, through its entirety...the beginning of the out-breath, through its entirety. Allow yourself the time and the space to be in direct contact with the breath throughout one

entire cycle.

[Instruction] Breathe audibly with the exhalation longer than the inhalation

And when you are ready, begin to notice the chair or bed beneath you. Pay attention to the sensations in your feet. Now your hands...gently make a fist, then release it -- stretching your fingers wide. Now bring yourself back to this room by slowly counting up from one to five. When you reach the number five, your eyes will gently open. You will be awake and alert, and feeling only peace. One....Two....Three. Take a deep breath....Four....And five.

"Repairenting" by Linda Curran

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