

Letting go of negative thinking so the real you can shine

Welcome to the RelationKit mindfulness series. In this practice you will be reflecting on how you feel about yourself, and talk to yourself, and building up your self-esteem.

Who taught you to be compassionate and loving towards yourself, to put yourself up on a pedestal? Who taught you how to be brave and sure of yourself - enough to travel out of your comfort zone from time to time? For some of us, a person will come to mind, but for others, we've had to work this out on our own and push ourselves out there. Perhaps a combination of both for a lot of us we've had work this out on our own push ourselves out there.

On top of this, our brains are set up in such a way to notice the negative stuff and to look out for danger or threat, to expect worse case scenarios.

We all have that inner voice that is cruel, that tells us the stories that we can't, we shouldn't, we're not able etc., unkind messages or harmful messages we have been telling ourselves, maybe for years, that can build those defensive layers, hiding away the true version of ourselves.

So, we have to work on changing that setting and hardwire the good stuff into our brain, and the good news is we can do this through meditation we can rewrite the stories we have been telling ourselves for a long time.

We have to start with a willingness not to blame anyone and to accept the road we have been on up to this point, to this moment right now. We have to give ourselves permission to let go of the version of ourselves we think we are and those old stories that hold us back, and begin to create the new version of ourselves that is supportive, kind, loving, encouraging, nurturing. We can start to experience ourselves in a more positive, colourful and healthy way.

So, take a deep breath in and a deep breath out bringing yourself back into this moment - this present moment. Allow your breath to invite calmness into your body and mind.

And when you are ready gently bring your awareness to your heart centre - the centre of your chest. Imagine that you are breathing in and out from here, so your breath softens this place in you. And from your heart centre, imagine an small ball of white light growing and beginning to swirl like a Catherine Wheel, spinning and whirling now. And then as it glows brighter it begins to spread out from your heart centre. This light acts as a feeling or even a wish of yours that you would like to see grow and flourish, maybe that's self-belief, or love, the wish to train in something new, to achieve something or become better at something. As you breathe, feel this energy of you grow and expand. This light starts off as white but then might change colour. Maybe the light becomes yellow, gold orange, red, pink, blue, or purple. The colours don't matter too much, just let whatever colour come. Maybe you imagine the whole rainbow of colours growing from your heart now and flowing outwards: positive wishes and feelings about yourself growing inside you.

If any difficult feelings come along or resistance, breathe with that, to soften their hold. Or if any negative self-talk comes in like: *“you can’t, you shouldn’t, you’re not able to”*, notice that, without judging yourself, and gently question how these old storylines, these negative statements or feelings affect you - are they useful to you? Or do they feel like they limit you, trapping you, holding back this flow of colours and light; holding back your positive feelings and deep desires; holding you back? Just notice.

And then begin to come back to those colours of light, streaming out from your heart. Imagine that stream of light now, coming back to those positive wishes or feelings. Maybe they are the complete opposite feelings to those negative ones that hold you back, those you wish to feel and share with the world. Choose the way that you want to feel and live by, and let that gradually build up and gently sweep over you now. Let the colours of light wash through you.

Noticing how, with time and patience, these opposite or 'anecdote' feelings, qualities you wish to feel can take over from the more negative ones, those limiting ones.

Every time you invite this new positive feeling or quality you are re-writing your story, recording over the old more unhelpful story or messages that you may have been receiving for such a long time.

Feeling your body breathing in and feeling your body breathing out, to keep you present. Breathing in this new version of you and breathing out to let go of the old.

If you can, stay with the felt sense of the light and positive feelings flowing outward around your heart, into your chest, throat, neck, shoulders, arms, belly, legs and head until you are surrounded by a pool of light – perhaps rainbow light - now.

Wherever the light flows and bathes, you there is a feeling of great calm: a feeling of being at peace in yourself, necessary to this life. Taking a moment here to build a strong appreciation and love for yourself.

You are letting your true self shine: the true person underneath the walls you may have put up to protect yourself and all the *“cannot’s, ‘should not’s, ‘not able to’s”* - and you begin to see the loving, caring, brave, interesting, worthy being that has been tucked away underneath, and you start to feel better about yourself and to hold yourself in a more positive light, with more warmth, love and respect.

Gradually begin to draw the light back in towards your heart. Finish with a small ball of white light there that stands for your self-respect, and then melt even that into your heart. But keeping the feeling of this warm light, this source at your heart, always holding that self-respect and esteem there at your heart centre. That is yours to keep.

And now let's end this practice with a positive affirmation that rings true with you, which, if you wish, can maybe become your mantra, such as:

“I am confident. I am able. I am worthy. I am enough.”

And then if you wish, finish with the following:

“I see a fresh me. I see confidence. I see happiness. I see success. I see my true self.”

We have the power within us, the tools of awareness, kindness and compassion to weed out those outdated views of ourselves and to plant seeds of positivity so that our self-esteem and worth can flourish.

Thank yourself for giving yourself this time to grow and become closer to the true being that you are.

Just when you're ready, come back to your breath. Come back to feeling your body in your room, and gently blink your eyes open.

See you next time.