



Meeting yourself where you are

Welcome to the RelationKit mindfulness series. In this practice, you'll check in with yourself, meeting yourself where you are right now with acceptance and respect.

Make sure that you are comfortable where you are. So finding a comfy position, sitting or lying down now.

Beginning to drop into your space now. Relax your facial muscles, release your jaw if its tense or gripping on in any way, and check that there isn't any unnecessary tension in the muscles around your eyes. Can the eyes be softer now? The invitation is to close your eyes if that feels okay for you, your eyelids soft but heavy.

And draw your attention inwards now to meet your breath, tuning into the feeling of your breath; a sense of your breath as it flows in and as it flows out.

So you're dropping in to this natural experience of breathing, just as you find it, noting how your body feels as you breathe in and as you breathe out.

Your breath is a pathway between what is inside of you and what is outside of you, so each time you breathe in, you are meeting yourself in this moment wherever you are.

So meeting yourself in a physical sense now, notice your posture: how it's held in this space, how your body meets the seat or the ground, feeling into any physical feelings in your body. Maybe there's a tension somewhere, or an ache or pain - meeting those feelings with a loving attention.

Then gently look, feel a little deeper. How are you feeling emotionally in this moment? Is there tiredness there, a feeling of anxiety or stress, some resentment or a sense of rushing, or maybe today a calmness, a quiet feeling?

You're noticing how you are doing right now, as always with an attitude of kindness, not trying to fix or change anything, just acknowledging it. Meeting yourself where you are. Wherever you are in your mind, it's okay. Breathe with what you find.

Where you are right now, how you find yourself in this moment at this point in your life, might be different to what you expected for yourself, and what you thought being a parent would look like or be like, and that's fine - it's pretty normal in fact.

You may reflect on the person you used to be and feel a million miles away from that now. Maybe you were someone with a lot more freedom, energy, money and fun to do what and to go where you liked, to spend as much time with your partner without worrying about the kids.

Again, all of this is okay. It's healthy to recognize. Many changes take place when we become a parent. Perhaps you can consider that for a moment - the journey you've been on up to now. Any loss that you feel you have experienced; loss of an old life maybe. Not judging, feeling any guilt, or trying to fix that, just kindly reflecting; noticing anything that

comes up in your physical body; sensing any feelings or emotions associated with those reflections. Breathing with what you find.

Breathing to soften any resistance to this practice right now, knowing that this is okay too.

Maybe it sometimes feels like you have lost a part of yourself, you don't know yourself very well anymore, or things have changed in your close relationships with people. It's normal and natural to feel this way.

You might look at other parents - maybe on social media, maybe in real life - and feel like they're doing better, being more organised, getting on with their partner better. Remembering what we see is just snapshot of their experience. It's not always so perfect - nothing ever is.

This being a parent is hard, demanding, relentless at times, and often you don't recognise yourself in the normal chaos of it all. But here now, you are just checking in, knowing how and who you are in this moment - acknowledging and meeting those realities with a gentle loving awareness; an acceptance.

It can be useful and healthy to also take some time now to reflect on what you have truly gained in becoming this person you are right now: a mother, a father, a teacher, a person with an inner strength and will power (even if you don't realise it right now) to keep it going, this unconditional love for another, the richness and wonder that your child brings to your life, memories of those magical moments, like seeing your child walk for the first time or hearing their first word - you have all this now in this present moment. What have you gained?

Breathing your soft soothing breath in and out of your body, to stay present with any physical feelings within you. Breathing and being exactly who and where you are in this moment. How does that feel?

Meeting yourself as the parent and the person you are in this moment, with acceptance and with a deep respect and love for yourself. Be with your breath. Be with your body. Be with your true self for a few more moments.

And when you feel ready, gently dissolve your meditation, and slowly blink your eyes open, coming back into your room.

As you go about your day today, try meeting yourself however and wherever you are, with a kind, accepting and loving awareness.

See you next time.