

NINE-MINUTE ACCEPTANCE EXERCISES

Acceptance is key to any mindfulness mindset or practice. Acceptance does not mean we approve of or agree with what we are accepting; it simply means we accept that what lays before us is indeed a reality. This acceptance stills our minds, calms our nervous system and heals our hearts.

ACKNOWLEDGING DIFFICULTY AND VALIDATION

When we are faced with a difficult emotion or challenging circumstance, we usually freeze or go into problem-solving mode. Both of these strategies often cause stress and are always barriers to our healing. Acknowledging difficulty and validating our feelings is a practice in accepting what is happening in the moment and creating space for healing. (1) Take a pause, (2) State you notice the challenge and (3) Sit with your feelings with care and compassion.

Here are some examples:

I am noticing this is bringing up difficult feelings.

I acknowledge disappointment is difficult for me.

This behavior is difficult for me to be around.

Feeling like I made a mistake is difficult for me.

The conflicts in the world are difficult to accept.

It is understandable I am upset, feeling abandoned is difficult.

It is understandable I feel misunderstood, I didn't get the acknowledgment I needed.

ALLOW YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE MOMENT

A simple way to move into acceptance in the moment, is to take a pause and allow yourself to experience whatever comes up naturally for you. This might be a physical sensation, an emotion, a thought, or physical response such as crying. You might say to yourself, "I accept this feeling of abandonment lovingly," "I accept my body ache with compassion," "Right now it's like this," or "I accept this thought is a product of my mind and know it might not be true."

When thoughts come up, accept them in the same way you might accept someone else's fantasy—you accept that they are present and part of your experience, but they might not be true.

AFFIRMATIONS FOR UNCERTAINTY

Embracing uncertainty is a deep practice of acceptance. You accept not only what is happening in the moment, you also accept that you do not know what will happen next. Embracing uncertainty does not mean you are "okay" with whatever happens; instead, it means you are "okay" with not knowing what will happen. Use these affirmations to support your comfort with uncertainty:

I am safe when I do not know the outcome.

I find freedom in not knowing what comes next.

Certainty is an illusion I awaken from.

I achieve true clarity when I move into uncertainty.

EMBRACING UNCERTAINTY

Consider three neutral events in your life. For example, *your upcoming business trip or what you will have for dinner tonight*. To begin your exercise, move your attention to your heart area. Take note of any physical sensations in this area. To settle your consciousness more deeply into your heart, state "I do not know what will happen with (your first event). Nor do I know what the outcome of (your second event). And I do not know what will happen with (your third event) either." After you state each event, notice any physical sensations in your heart area, emotions, or thoughts that come up as a result of the statement. Repeat this exercise later using events you feel less neutral about. Ease your way into the most important events or people in your life.

RIGHT NOW IT'S LIKE THIS

Use this affirmation to accept your physical discomfort, your intense emotions, and you're distracted thinking.