

Compassionate Abiding

For working with strong emotions

L. E. S. I. N.

Locate the feeling (mad, sad, scared) in your body that is associated with the strong emotion. Bring your mindful attention to that feeling which is a form of energy in your body, a physical sensation. Locate it in a part of your body; chest, throat, belly, pelvis, arms, head. Where do you feel it? Sometimes it is vivid and strong like a knot in your gut, maybe a shattered feeling in your heart, or a blockage in your throat. Other times it can be vaguer like fogginess in your head. Explore its texture, quality, sensation, and its tone. If this emotion were a colour, an object, or even a sound, would it be black or red, would it be a prickly burr, a glob of tar, a loud piercing siren? Is it hot and burning? Is it a tight restriction? Is it a grey numbness? Stay with the feeling in mindful non-judgmental exploring. Let your awareness itself be an open space around the feeling. You don't need to act out this strong emotion and you don't need to repress it either.

Embrace this feeling with loving kindness just as if it were a little child crying or having a temper tantrum. Embrace it with your mindful and heart-full awareness. Generate compassion for yourself and send it like radiant light, right into that feeling, not trying to change it or make it go away, but being fully present to it, accepting it and embracing it with love and spacious awareness. You can work with your breath too, breathing in the qualities of the energy into your kind and radiant heart and then breathe out love, healing, patient abiding and pure light into the feeling.

Stop the story line. Stop the thinking. Usually our strong emotions will generate and become all tangled up with our thoughts, thoughts about ourselves, thoughts about the other person or people involved in the situation, thoughts about what to do, thoughts about the past, thoughts about the future. Stop all this talking to yourself, right here, right now! Here you need to be very strong in our mindfulness and firm in putting a stop to these wild thoughts. Remind your self that these emotionally charged thoughts will not bring about a solution; on the contrary, they are the structure, the internal context or frame that has caused you to be so upset in the first place. Stop them as soon as you notice them. Be strong, determined and deliberate. Stop your thoughts and come back to embracing the feeling, come back to your breath, come back to your body and compassionate abiding.

Identify Need As you continue to stay with your direct experience of the feeling. Identify the need underneath the feeling. Strong feelings are moving-motivating us to get our needs met. Do you need Safety, Love, Connection, Communication, Appreciation, Support, Respect? (see list of needs) Once you identify your need then you can make a practical plan to get your need met. Promise to yourself that you will be proactive, creative and empowered to get your needs met.

Remember: LESIN Less pain and suffering, more love & healing.