

Self-Enquiry

By observing ourselves with awareness and compassion we can notice which feelings and beliefs about ourselves are supportive and which may need some attention. We have the ability to look at what is happening within ourselves at any time in our lives, for example:

1. Notice the times you don't feel good enough
2. Notice the way you speak to yourself
3. Notice the things you feel you can't do
4. Notice where your body feels uncomfortable

ACTIVITY

Stage 1

Preparation

- Sit quietly where you won't be disturbed
- Sit on a chair or on the floor with your spine straight
- Rest your hands in your lap or on your knees and let your whole body be still
- Close your eyes softly
- Hold a mind of relaxed curiosity
- Try not to expect anything
- Try not to judge yourself
- Just see what arises
- If your mind wanders, just return it to the exercise

Relaxation

Sensory awareness –

Become aware of your body and how you feel physically in the position you are sitting in. Feel the contact with the chair or floor.

Breath awareness –

Become aware of the rise and fall of your belly as you inhale and exhale. Observe the breath and notice it flowing in and out again. Enquire into the passage of your breath by following it with awareness. Follow the breath rather than trying to change it.

Emotional awareness –

Become aware now of the feelings that arise in your body and mind. You may suddenly be aware of an irritation in the body, a discomfort or feeling of anxiety or tension. When this happens, notice it, be fully aware of it and allow that feeling to be there. Try not to judge it or push it away. Feel it thoroughly then name the feeling silently in your mind. By naming it you are acknowledging it. Accept that is there.

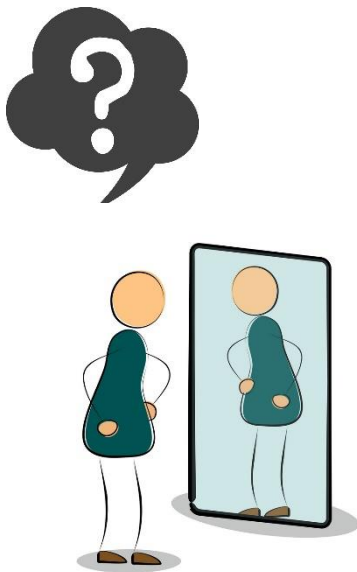
Stage 2

Self-Enquiry Questions

To grow our self-awareness we need to acknowledge what is already there within us. We can do this by exploring, naming and accepting what we find. This can be achieved with self-enquiry questions.

When you have reached the point in the exercise of being the inner observer of your emotions and feelings, you can then begin to enquire further within using gentle open questions. This is done by silently asking these questions to yourself from the position of an inner observer.

Here are some examples;



- How am I feeling right now?
- What is this feeling telling me?
- Can I sit with this feeling?
- What if I accept how I'm feeling rather than resist it?
- What is this uneasy feeling about?
- What is this situation showing me about myself?
- What can I learn from this?
- What is my body trying to tell me?
- What strengths have I realised I have today?
- What am I grateful for in this moment?
- How could I respond differently next time?
- Can this be an opportunity for growth?
- Where does this feeling originate from?
- When I reflect on this, what insights do I get?
- Am I ready to let this go?
- Am I more capable of doing this than I realise?
- How can this help me grow as a person?

It may help to end your enquiry with this intention:

“May I have the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
The courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference”

When you are ready to end the exercise, take some deep breaths and gently open your eyes.