
Taking Time to B.R.E.A.T.H.E.



THRIVING
YOUiversity
empowering individuals & organizations to thrive

Introduction

We spend a lot of time each day reacting to life... throwing the life preserver out to our friends, family, colleagues, even ourselves -- ***after*** we fall into the tumultuous water of life's challenges, flail about, and start drowning. What if instead, we actually spent time each day, building our life vest-- strengthening the skills, competencies, and practices we need to boost our well-being and to keep us afloat? That way, when we fall into life's choppy waters (as we all inevitably do), we will have an incredible ability to bounce back... to be buoyant in the face of adversity... to be resilient.

Additionally, you may get inspired to bring these practices into your workplace and into your home! Often, when the people around us aren't behaving in ways we want them to, we are quick to blame them and get upset with them, which actually increases our stress and unhappiness! We spend time and energy trying to "fix" them, which rarely works. There is a great quote from Alexander den Heijer which says,

"When a flower doesn't bloom,
you fix the environment in which it grows,
not the flower."

What if, instead of blaming or getting upset, we actually took our valuable time and energy and put it into cultivating the environments in our home spaces and workplaces to be the optimum climate for people to flourish?

That's what Taking Time to B.R.E.A.T.H.E. is all about. In our in-person workshops, in our online course, and in this eBook, we'll explore research-based practices from the fields of mindfulness, positive psychology, social psychology, neuroscience, and emotional intelligence that have been shown to boost your well-being, your resilience, and even your happiness.

Introduction

BUILDING ON A FIRM FOUNDATION

According to Jon Kabat-Zinn, mindfulness simply means paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, without judgement. Mindfulness is the foundation of *Taking Time to B.R.E.A.T.H.E.* because it is important for us to learn to pay attention to ourselves and how we are engaging with each of the components of the B.R.E.A.T.H.E. acronym, all of which contribute to us becoming the best possible version of ourselves and living our best lives.

B -- Building **BELONGING**
R -- Reflecting on Your **PURPOSE**
E -- **ENGAGE** in Self-Compassion
A -- **ATTENTION, AWARENESS, and AWE**
T -- **THANKFULNESS** and an Attitude of Appreciation
H -- **HARNESS** Your Thoughts
E -- **EMPATHY** Everyday

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is designed to help you boost your resilience and strengthen your well-being by engaging in some deep self-exploration and connect with the research-based practices of Taking Time to B.R.E.A.T.H.E. and really start to infuse them into your life.

For every letter of the acronym B.R.E.A.T.H.E, you will have a "Why It Matters" section that reminds you of the research and relevance, as well as a "Get Reflective" section that asks you to ***get more effective by getting more reflective.*** You will also notice that many of the concepts have a "Make it Happen" section, which offers additional strategies to deepen your learning and enhance your practice!

We hope that you will enjoy working through this soul-searching, resilience-boosting, life-transforming book as much as we enjoyed putting it together for you.

Happy exploring!

Belonging

B = Building BELONGING

"A deep sense of love and belonging is an irreducible need of all people. We are biologically, cognitively, physically, and spiritually wired to love, to be loved, and to belong. When those needs are not met, we don't function as we were meant to. We break. We fall apart. We numb. We ache. We hurt others. We get sick."

-- Brene Brown

As humans, we are wired to connect. We literally are born into this world looking for people to connect with us and care for us. We are dependent on our relationships with other people for our survival. We long to belong.

What does it mean to belong? Belonging is that sense of feeling valued in any given context. For example, you may feel appreciated, valued, and connected when you are at your Aunt Yvonne's house, but when you go to Aunt Karen's house, you feel out-of-place, judged, disconnected, and discouraged. Your sense of belonging is strong at Aunt Yvonne's and not so great at Aunt Karen's.

When we don't feel like we belong, it actually triggers our fight-flight-freeze response which depletes our cognitive resources and our ability to effectively problem solve and make good decisions, and it can cause emotional pain. Emotional pain is not to be taken lightly-- it lights up the same area of the brain as physical pain. So essentially, the brain is impacted in similar ways from the pain in your broken leg and the pain from your broken heart.

Research has been very clear that a sense of belonging is crucial to our well-being. In fact, did you know that a sense of loneliness is actually as harmful to your health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day? It's true! And, loneliness also increases risks (especially in elderly people) of high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, and dementia.

Belonging

In addition to impacting our health, there has also been a great deal of research that shows how a sense of belonging impacts a student's ability to learn and an employee's ability to engage and produce in the workplace. In fact, employees with a strong sense of belonging are more likely to spend an extra amount of energy toward co-workers, offer more to organizations, and be more positive in attitudes toward work... even when they are away from work!

In our busy, busy world, we are losing our sense of connection. Sure, we are connecting with people across the globe using social media, but in doing so, people are often forgetting to connect with the people sitting across the table from them. One of my favorite ways to describe mindfulness is being where your feet are. Often we are physically in the same space with other people, but our minds are in a million different places thinking about a million different things.

Bringing your mindful self "to the table" and to every room you're in and learning to give others your "flashlight of attention" will not only boost belonging, cultivate connections, and reboot relationships -- it will strengthen your wellbeing, resilience, and happiness!

BELONGING

Belonging has many powerful physical and psychological benefits. What is the one that you think is most important?

Think of a place or a person that makes you feel appreciated, valued, and connected. If you haven't found that yet, what factors would need to be present for you to feel this way?

Now think of a time when you felt like you didn't belong. What did that feel like?

How does belonging impact your performance at work? How much do you feel your children or students are impacted by belonging or the absence of it?

How present are you when you're with your loved ones? With your friends? With your colleagues?

How could you your relationships change if you were able to be more present? Where is one aspect of your life that you would like to be more present and create more connection?

PURPOSE

R = Reflecting on your PURPOSE

"The purpose of life is to discover your gift. The work of your life is to develop it. The meaning of life is to give it away."

-- David Viscott

I have found that many people... young and old, have not given a great deal of time, energy, and reflection to thinking about their purpose. A sense of purpose, though, is a critical piece of our wellbeing puzzle!

Did you know that people with a strong sense of purpose live seven years longer and have a lower risk of cardiovascular disease?

On the flip side, when people aren't connected to their sense of purpose, when they don't feel engaged with life and with work, it not only impacts them, but everyone around them as well. When we show up feeling purposeless and lacking clarity, it has a ripple effect. Emotional contagion is a real thing. I'm sure you have felt this before. If someone at work is passionate, alive, and hopeful on a consistent basis, that inspires and motivates us to reflect that same energy. When someone shows up in the opposite posture, that can be draining and wearing on us as well.

So with that in mind, let's explore some ways that you can tap into purpose.

PURPOSE

What activities make you feel really alive and like you are contributing to the world in some way?

What makes you forget to eat? In other words, what can you spend hours doing without feeling like you need to take a break?

What are things that you often get complimented or thanked for? Or another way to think of it, is what do people often come to you for?

Who are two to three people you admire or aspire to be like? You may even be a little jealous of them. Don't be ashamed. We get it. Often times jealousy is our way of telling ourselves that something we see in someone else is important to us. With that in mind, identify those people and write down what it is you admire about them.

What is something that breaks your heart? Sometimes we find our purpose by asking "What do we love?" but just as powerful is asking ourselves is taking a minute to think of an issue that impacts others that you wish you could do something about.

What will grow you the most? What is that thing that seems really scary, but seems to always keep coming up and you know would be a path of growth for you?

PURPOSE

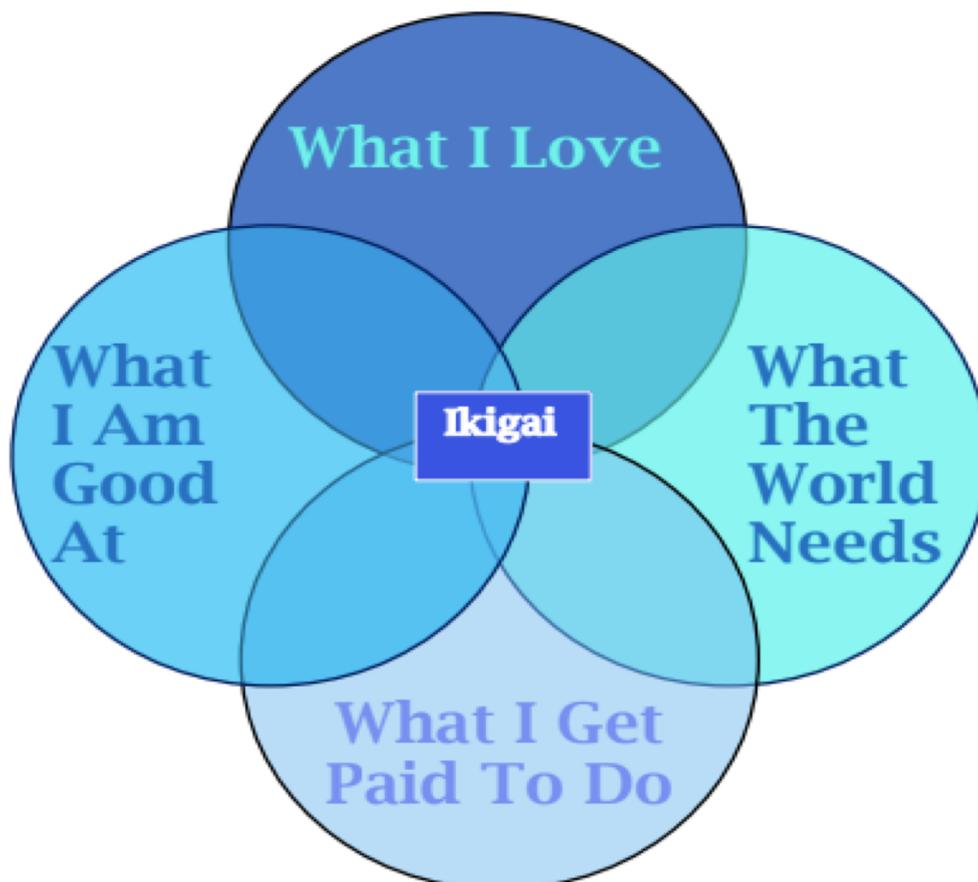
R = Reflecting on your PURPOSE

*"The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why."
-Mark Twain*

In Japan, there is a concept known as Ikigai. Loosely translated, it means a reason for being or a reason for waking up in the morning.

As Hector Garcia writes in his book *Ikigai: The Japanese Secret to a Long and Happy Life*, "Your ikigai is at the intersection of what you are good at and what you love doing."

The following exercise is designed to help you get closer to understanding what makes you jump out of bed in the morning.



PURPOSE

Step One: What I Am Good At – Taking into consideration your answers from the REFLECT section, create a list of strengths, skills, and talents below:

Step Two: What I Love - Create a list of what you are passionate about... what do you love to create? To Do? To make happen?

Step Three: What The World Needs - Brainstorm all of the ways in which the world can use your talent and skills....You can think on a big scale like changing the educational system...or hone in very specifically like positively impacting

Step Four: What I Get Paid For - Create a list of your current sources of income and what additional ideas you have for getting paid:

PURPOSE

Step Five: Passion Look at where your passion (your skills plus interest) overlap from Steps One and Two. Write down combinations you see or imagine:

Step Six: Vocation Look at where what the world needs overlaps with how you get paid. What vocations would allow you to earn and give back to society at the same time? Write down combinations you see or imagine:

Step Seven: Profession Look at how your skills overlaps with how you get paid. What professions would allow you to earn and use your strengths at the same time? Write down combinations you see or imagine:

Step Eight: Ikigai What ideas do you have for where all of these “worlds” collide? Write down combinations you see or imagine to strengthen your ikigai:

SELF-COMPASSION

E = Engaging in SELF-COMPASSION

"If your compassion does not include yourself, it is incomplete."

-- Jack Kornfield

Self-compassion is the simple idea of showing kindness and compassion to ourselves just like we would show it to someone else we care about. Although it is a simple idea, most people find this very hard to do.

Some people think that self-compassion is soft or weak, that it is narcissistic or egotistical, and/or that maybe if we show ourselves a little self-compassion it will somehow make us complacent. Well, I'd like to bust those myths for you!

Self-compassion boosts our physical and mental health and it isn't selfish at all -- in fact, it can actually help us give more to others!

After all, if you feel like you're barely treading water, every instinct within you makes it virtually impossible to extend your hand to another drowning person.

By engaging in intentional and consistent self-compassion, you strengthen your own resilience and increase your capacity for showing compassion for and helping others.

Also, when we are hard on ourselves, we trigger our stress response actually making us less effective and less likely to achieve our goals. Contrast this to when we practice self-compassion, we can operate out of a place of calmness and clarity.

Self-Compassion

What words come to mind when you think of self-compassion? Are they mostly negative or positive?

We have learned that we have so much more to give when we are at our best. In what ways do you currently practice self-compassion. For example, how do you give yourself grace when you make a mistake?

Think of a time a close friend was struggling. What was your response? What did you say to him/her? What was your tone like?

Now compare this to a time that you were struggling with something. What was your inner dialogue with yourself? Write it down. Would you say the way you speak to yourself is the same way you would speak to a close friend or is it more critical? Remember to have grace with yourself as you do this. Get curious about what you notice, rather than furious at yourself. What do you notice?

What is one kind statement you feel comfortable saying to yourself when you need support?

Self-Compassion

SELF-COMPASSION LETTER

TRY THIS

First, identify something about yourself that makes you feel ashamed, insecure, or not good enough. It could be something related to your personality, behavior, abilities, relationships, or any other part of your life.

Once you identify something, write it down and describe how it makes you feel. Sad? Embarrassed? Angry? Try to be as honest as possible, keeping in mind that no one but you will see what you write.

The next step is to write a letter to yourself expressing compassion, understanding, and acceptance for the part of yourself that you dislike.

As you write, follow these guidelines:

- Imagine that there is someone who loves and accepts you unconditionally for who you are. What would that person say to you about this part of yourself?
- Remind yourself that everyone has things about themselves that they don't like, and that no one is without flaws. Think about how many other people in the world are struggling with the same thing that you're struggling with.
- Consider the ways in which events that have happened in your life, the family environment you grew up in, or even your genes may have contributed to this negative aspect of yourself.
- In a compassionate way, ask yourself whether there are things that you could do to improve or better cope with this negative aspect. Focus on how constructive changes could make you feel happier, healthier, or more fulfilled, and avoid judging yourself.

After writing the letter, put it down for a little while. Then come back to it later and read it again. It may be especially helpful to read it whenever you're feeling bad about this aspect of yourself, as a reminder to be more self-compassionate.

Self-Compassion

SELF-COMPASSION LETTER

TRY THIS

First, identify something about yourself that makes you feel ashamed, insecure, or not good enough. It could be something related to your personality, behavior, abilities, relationships, or any other part of your life.

Once you identify something, write it down and describe how it makes you feel. Sad? Embarrassed? Angry? Try to be as honest as possible, keeping in mind that no one but you will see what you write.

The next step is to write a letter to yourself expressing compassion, understanding, and acceptance for the part of yourself that you dislike.

As you write, follow these guidelines:

- Imagine that there is someone who loves and accepts you unconditionally for who you are. What would that person say to you about this part of yourself?
- Remind yourself that everyone has things about themselves that they don't like, and that no one is without flaws. Think about how many other people in the world are struggling with the same thing that you're struggling with.
- Consider the ways in which events that have happened in your life, the family environment you grew up in, or even your genes may have contributed to this negative aspect of yourself.
- In a compassionate way, ask yourself whether there are things that you could do to improve or better cope with this negative aspect. Focus on how constructive changes could make you feel happier, healthier, or more fulfilled, and avoid judging yourself.

After writing the letter, put it down for a little while. Then come back to it later and read it again. It may be especially helpful to read it whenever you're feeling bad about this aspect of yourself, as a reminder to be more self-compassionate.

Attention, Awareness, and Awe

A = Attention, Awareness, and Awe

When we engage in a regular mindfulness practice, we learn to focus our attention and gradually learn how to sustain our attention and improve the quality of our attention. This makes it so much easier to fully engage in conversations, in meetings, in learning, and in doing our work!

Another bonus of learning how to sustain attention is becoming more aware of yourself, others, and the world around you. Think about the last time you drove somewhere... do you remember any people you passed on the street? Do you remember what song was playing on the radio? Do you remember any details about the clouds, the trees, or the buildings you passed along the way?

Odds are, you probably didn't notice much because you were busy thinking about what you were going to do when you got to where you were going. Some of us may have even arrived at our destination and had absolutely no recollection of how we got there!

One of my favorite things about strengthening my attention and awareness is that it builds my capacity to experience awe. Awe is that sense of wonder or astonishment when you see something amazing like a beautiful sunset, a child's first steps, an ant carrying a piece of food twice his size... or when you experience an inspiring piece of music or dance.

How does awe relate to our wellbeing? Research shows that awe can improve our physical and mental health, possibly even lower the risk of Type 2 diabetes, clinical depression, heart disease, and arthritis — benefits similar to those enjoyed by eating right and exercising. Isn't that AWESome?

Attention, Awareness, and Awe

Awe, as we just read about, "is that sense of wonder or astonishment when you see something amazing like a beautiful sunset, a child's first steps, an ant carrying a piece of food twice his size." When was the last time you stopped to really appreciate what was right before you? What was it?

Finish this sentence: I often marvel at...

Finish this sentence: I often feel childlike wonder at...

Finish the sentence: I am inspired or in awe of...

Describe a time when you sought out an experience that challenged your understanding or expectations of the world?

Attention, Awareness, and Awe

Awe Walk

Try This

Background: Past research has shown that spending time in nature can have a restorative effect. For instance, Ottosson and Grahn (2005) found people in an aged care facility who were exposed to nature for one hour a week had improved attention compared to the elderly people who remained indoors. In a completely different context, Kuo and Sullivan (2001) found young adult residents who had a view of nature had higher scores on attentional capacity and were also less likely to be aggressive, compared to people who lived in the inner city. In an experimental attempt to address the effects of exposure to nature, Berto (2005) evaluated if contact with nature could restore attention after mental fatigue. A task was administered that involved individuals sustaining attention and subsequently participants were shown images of natural or urban environments or geometrical patterns and then assessed again on the sustained attention task (Berto, 2005). The results revealed that viewing the nature photographs improved attention, and exposure to photographs of city settings decreased attention. These findings suggest that spending time in nature can be a powerful way to restore attentional resources.

Instructions

Find a quiet, natural area and go on a walk. Choose a natural place to go to. You may for instance choose to visit a wooded area near you or a city park. When you do this with your students, you can just take a walk outside around campus.

- Dress in comfortable clothes and walking shoes
- Visit the natural place: the more quiet and peaceful, the better.
- Keep the mind alert, yet relaxed. Walking through nature peacefully engages the mind, body, and spirit; differently than if you were walking down a city sidewalk.
- During the walk, focus your attention on smells. What does the air smell like?
- Focus your attention on sounds. What do you hear? Is it the rustling of trees? The chirping of birds? Notice all
- sounds as they come and go.
- Focus your attention on sights. What do you see? What are the predominant colors?
- Continue to walk slowly.
- If something you notice is eye-catching, allow yourself the time to fully appreciate it.
- Cycle through steps #5-#7 for as long as feels comfortable to you.
- Walk for as long as you like.

Attention, Awareness, and Awe -

AWEsome Pictures

Try this

Often times disconnecting from technology affords us the opportunity to notice moments and things that we may miss when we are in front of a phone or computer screen. Technology doesn't have to be a negative force though. We can use it to savor an AWEsome moment a bit longer.

1. Over the span of a week, take pictures of items that bring your life joy, excitement, or purpose. These can be people, places, objects, pets, etc. Try to take at least one picture each day.
2. At the end of the week: Once you have collected all of your photos and items, take time to look at and reflect on each one. For each photo or item, write down a response to the following question: "What does this photo represent, and why is it important to me?"

Adapted from: <https://ggia.berkeley.edu/>

Thankfulness

T = Thankfulness and an Attitude of Appreciation

“Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend.”

--Melody Beattie

Most of you probably learned at a young age that it is nice to say thank you. But being thankful is so much more powerful than just being polite!

The art of thankfulness and maintaining a gratitude practice boosts:

- Happiness and life satisfaction
 - Feelings of optimism, joy, pleasure, and enthusiasm
 - Our immune System
 - Our relationships
- Sleep quality (count your blessings instead of sheep!)
 - Wellbeing and Resilience

And has been shown to decrease:

- Blood pressure
- Symptoms of illness
- The experience of our aches and pains
 - Anxiety and depression

On top of that, when we move even further to express our gratitude by letting others know how much we appreciate them, it has these added benefits:

- Your engagement increases
 - Your mood shifts
- Your relationships improve
 - You smile more
- You inspire greatness in others

I'm so thankful that you are reading this right now and my hope is that you will boost your attitude of gratitude and appreciation!

Thankfulness and an attitude of appreciation

GET
REFLECTIVE

What are three relationships you are thankful for? Why is that?

What is something you have learned about yourself this past year that you are thankful for?

There are numerous health benefits to practicing an attitude of gratitude. What is the one that stands out to you most or is important to you?

What is something about my students or my job that I am thankful for?

What is a challenge you have been faced with this year? What did you learn from it and is there any way to be thankful for some aspect of the learning process?

What is one specific way that I can show my appreciation for someone else this week?

Thankfulness

THREE GOOD THINGS

WHAT IT IS:

This activity involves taking a few moments to consciously reflect on what went well that day. By doing this, we start to notice what goes right in our lives as well as wrong. Even on the hardest day, there is something we can look for that went well – however small or seemingly insignificant it may be.

For one week, try the following:

1. **Reflect at night** – Before bed, think about your day. You are reflecting to see what went well, what you enjoyed and/or are grateful for. This does not have to be anything huge. It could be that you had a good cup of coffee, or the sun was out, a friend told a funny joke, etc. Try to think of three good things.
2. **Write it down** – This is important. It may seem like enough to just review the good things in your mind, but there is great benefit to physically writing down what you are thankful for, so grab a notebook and jot it down in as much detail as possible. Some people even like to give each of the events that they are recalling a title. For example, if one of the things that went well for you was a nice conversation with your neighbor, you might title it “Pleasant chat with neighbor.”
3. **How did it make you feel** – Be sure to include how this event made you feel.
4. **Identify the why** – Identify why you think it went well. In other words, what you think caused this event.
5. **Refocus** – If you find yourself dwelling on what didn’t go well, gently refocus your attention on the good events and the positive feelings associated with them. This may be difficult at first, but with practice will get easier.
6. **Review** - After a week, look back over what you wrote. How do you feel? You may choose to keep this up as a regular before bed routine. Many people find it a helpful way to end their day. Even doing it three times or even once a week can be hugely beneficial.

Harnessing Thoughts

H – Harnessing Your Thoughts

"Believing in negative thoughts is the single greatest obstruction to success."

— Charles F. Glassman

Ever think about how you speak to yourself, either silently in your mind or even aloud? Do you find yourself calling yourself stupid, ugly, or an idiot? Many of us wouldn't ever dream of calling someone else one of those word gems, and yet, we let those words flow when we are upset with ourselves.

Well guess what? When we engage in negative self-talk, our brain is listening and taking it all in, causing harm to our physical and psychological state.

"Comparison is the thief of joy."

-- Teddy Roosevelt

Another way that thoughts can be harmful is we find ourselves comparing ourselves to others. We may look at our friends, relatives, and colleagues and think about how we don't measure up... how we're not as smart, lucky, attractive, well-connected as they are.

Social media exacerbates this. Social media gives us the highlight people of those closest to us and additionally, those we barely know. We see their highlight reel and wonder why we don't get to go on those vacations, why our significant other isn't as doting, and why our life isn't as easy as theirs. These thoughts are toxic to our spirit and to our mind and body.

Harnessing Thoughts

We can also engage in other types of toxic thoughts, sometimes referred to as cognitive distortions such as:

- Always or nothing thinking
- Overgeneralization
- Jumping to conclusions
- Catastrophizing
- Personalization
- Shoulding on ourselves (should be... better, stronger, skinnier, more attractive, etc.)

When we realize that we are the DJ of our own minds, however, we can learn how to tune out some of these toxic songs, we can learn to change the station, and we can learn to start playing more positive songs in our heads. When we are more mindful, we increase our ability to pay attention to what we are thinking and even better, we can learn to harness those toxic thoughts.

Harnessing Thoughts

What does it mean to you when you hear that we are the DJ of our own minds? Why is it so important that we are aware of the thoughts or “songs” that we allow to continue to be played?

What are the songs that are regularly playing in your head about...

Yourself –

Your teaching ability –

Your students –

The future -

Other aspects of your life –

Reading back over the songs that you listed in the question above, choose one or two songs that isn't serving you and replace it with a more positive or encouraging title?

What is one way I can reframe any negative songs that might be playing in my mind?

Harnessing Thoughts

NOTICING YOUR THOUGHTS

Try This

This exercise is designed to help you see thoughts as what they are, not as what they say they are.

Step 1: Identify a self-critical thought

Bring to mind a negative, self-critical thought. This might be something your mind says about your appearance, or personality, or intelligence.

Pick something that really bothers you, for the purpose of the exercise. Put your negative self-judgement into a short sentence of the form, 'I'm X.' For example, 'I'm not good at my job'.

Step 2: Fuse with the self-critical thought

Now, gently close your eyes, and become fused with your identified self-critical thought. This means, get completely caught up in the thought in your mind, give it your full attention, and believe it as much as possible. Repeat the thought either silently to yourself or out loud approximately 10 times.

Step 3.: Add 'I'm having the thought that...'

Now, silently replay your thought to yourself with the following phrase in front: 'I'm having the thought that...'. For example, 'I'm having the thought that I'm not good at my job.'

Empathy

E = Empathy Everyday

"Empathy is simply listening, holding space, withholding judgment, emotionally connecting, and communicating that incredibly healing message of you're not alone."

– Brene Brown

What is empathy?

According to researchers at the Greater Good Science Center, affective empathy refers to the sensations and feelings we have in response to others' expressions, and cognitive empathy refers to our ability to label and understand other people's emotions--and even take their perspective on things.

How does empathy improve our wellbeing and resilience? Empathy can lower our stress, is an antidote to burnout, increases our connections to others, and can help us have better insight to challenging situations.

An added component of empathy is that it doesn't just benefit ourselves, it also benefits the world around us! Empathy reduces:

- bullying
- prejudice and racism
- suspensions from school
- Inequalities

Empathy has also been shown to improve relationships, workplace culture, and the best part? Empathy is contagious!

Often times, as educators and parents, we feel like we have to fix whatever problems or issues our students or children share with us. While offering guidance or advice is necessary, sometimes the best place to start is to show empathy. Instead of jumping to the fixing part, try starting with, "Thank you for telling me, that has to be hard."

Empathy

Often times as adults, it is tempting to think that we need to fix things for our students or our children. Often, what they need though is for someone to listen and empathize. Think of a time when you demonstrated empathy with your students or children. What did you do to make them "feel felt." How did they respond?

Think of a time when someone demonstrated empathy. What did they do that made you "feel felt."

What activities, structures, or expectations do you have in place that give students an opportunity to demonstrate and practice empathy for one another?

PARENTS: What activities, structures, or expectations do you have in place that give your children an opportunity to demonstrate and practice empathy for one another?

Empathy

JUST LIKE ME

Try This

Bring to mind someone who you don't know that well or someone who seems different from you. You may even want to bring to mind someone who you are in conflict with right now.

Now thinking of this person in your mind, say the following phrases:

This person has a body and a mind, just like me.

This person has feelings, emotions and thoughts, just like me.

This person has in his or her life, experienced physical and emotional pain and suffering, just like me.

This person has at some point been sad, disappointed, angry, or hurt, just like me.

This person has felt unworthy or inadequate, just like me.

This person worries and is frightened sometimes, just like me.

This person has longed for friendship, just like me.

This person is learning about life, just like me.

This person wants to be caring and kind to others, just like me.

This person wants to be content with what life has given, just like me.

This person wishes to be free from pain and suffering, just like me.

This person wishes to be safe and healthy, just like me.

This person wishes to be happy, just like me.

This person wishes to be loved, just like me.

Now, allow some wishes for well-being to arise:

I wish that this person have the strength, resources, and social support to navigate the difficulties in life with ease.

I wish that this person be free from pain and suffering.

I wish that this person be peaceful and happy.

I wish that this person be loved.

Because this person is a fellow human being, just like me.

We hope you
enjoyed this!

Dr. Joelle Hood

Joelle@thrivingYOUUniversity.com

Janeen Antonelli

Janeen@thrivingYOUUniversity.com

Jessie Fuller

Jessie@thrivingYOUUniversity.com
