



Regulation of Stress

This exercise works for a variety of emotions: stress, anxiety, overwhelm, despair, anger, disappointment, shame, etc.

Preparation:

- Familiarize yourself with the steps below beforehand to make it easier to apply when needed.
- If you can't name the feeling in step 3, simply say "an unpleasant feeling" and move on.
- The order of the questions in step 7 is not important. The goal is not to find the "right" answer, but to observe your emotions and what is going on in your body.
- The more you can sharpen your senses for the emotion and observe it from the outside, the better.
- Find a quiet place where you won't be disturbed for a few minutes.

Instructions:

1. Look around your surroundings and ask yourself: "Am I safe?" If yes, say "I am safe here." This sends an important signal to your nervous system (don't skip it, even if being safe is obvious to you).
2. Close your eyes and take 4-5 deep breaths in and out.
3. Ask yourself: "What am I feeling right now?" Is it stress? Anger? Overwhelm? ...
4. Locate the feeling in your body. Where is it? (Stomach, head, chest, throat, hands, face...?) Take your time to find it.
5. Breathe into the feeling in your body for about 1 minute.
6. While breathing in, feel it and name it, e.g. "This is STRESS."
7. Ask yourself the following questions about the feeling:
 - What color would you associate with this feeling?
 - Is this feeling hard or soft?
 - Is it cold, warm, or even hot?
 - Is the feeling moving? If yes, is it fast or slow? Does it perhaps pulsate or radiate...?
8. Observe the feeling for a few more moments.
9. Ask yourself: "Does the emotion feel bad in my body? Or is it rather unpleasant, but harmless? So harmless that I could allow it to stay?"
10. Allow the emotion to be there. Accept it without judgment. Regardless of whether the feeling dissolves afterwards, you can now be completely okay with it.

Tips:

- This exercise may take some practice. Don't be discouraged if you don't feel the effects immediately.
- If you find it difficult to observe your emotions without judgment, try using a mantra such as "This is just an emotion" or "I am not my emotions."

Short List with negative feelings

Angry, Annoyed, Anxious, Appalled, Apathetic, Attacking,
Bored, Burdened, Charged, Confused, Concerned,
Depressed, Disappointed, Discouraged, Disgusted, Disturbed,
Embarrassed, Energeless, Exhausted,
Fearful, Frustrated, Furious, Guilty,
Helpless, Hopeless, Hostile,
Indifferent, Indignant, Irritated,
Jealous, Jittery,
Lonely, Lost,
Malicious, Mean, Melancholy, Moody,
Nervous,
Offended, Oppressed, Outraged, Overwhelmed,
Painful, Pessimistic, Powerless,
Resentful, Restless, Revengeful,
Stressed, Sad, Scared, Self-conscious, Self-critical, Self-loathing, Sensitive, Shocked, Shy, Stuck,
Sleepy, Spiteful, Stuck, Suspicious,
Tired, Tormented,
Unclear, Uncomfortable, Unhappy, Unsettled, Upset,
Vengeful,
Weak, Worried