

## Gratitude

What mindfulness does, what an ongoing practice may do, is help us ride the waves of life without drowning. It may allow us to see and feel the wonders of this world, big and small. The greatest act we can do for ourselves and the world may just be to have this fundamental, unshakeable, unconditional friendship with ourselves. In a mindful practice to touch into your basic goodness and be present with yourself, just as you are.

Nothing more profound and also not easy to come by...it always strikes me that the wisdom is right there, in the couch potato, the procrastinator, the angry self....If we can practice giving ourselves unconditional friendship.... We grow this with gratitude....

So today, we are going to be building your resiliency muscle thru this longer practice.....

Just finding a comfortable place, in an upright position and allowing your attention to turn towards your breath....breathing in, notice your chest rise and fall with your inhale...exhale.... and when you are ready, letting your eyes drift closed, or allow your gaze to soften down...

Let's just notice the breath, breathing slowly and deeply....letting your attention rest gently on your breath...feeling the movement as it enters and exits your body...

Perhaps there is a place in your body where your breath is most familiar....just allowing your attention to anchor there...

Noticing if there are any places of tension in the body...and on the exhale..seeing if you can just let go of that tension...and returning to your breath on the inhale.....

Relaxing your face, your shoulders, your torso, stomach and legs...just allowing the weight of gravity to take your body....

Noticing if the mind wanders and gently returning again to the breath, just as you are...no matter how many times the mind wanders off, you can know that this is what minds do....letting go of thoughts of doing it right or wrong...and just coming back again and again with a gentleness and kindness.....

On your next inhale, settle your attention on the area around your heart. Focussing on feelings of love, compassion, empathy, forgiveness.

Perhaps not just thinking about these notions, but actually feeling into them. feeling the sensations: the warmth, the glow, whatever you might be noticing in your body....and with your attention on your heart centre, bring to mind someone or something that you are grateful for...and as you continue with your easy, relaxed breathing....perhaps you feel grateful for being alive or healthy... perhaps you are grateful for the abundance of nature that produces food to nourish your body and the beautiful Scenery of the Shuswap to nourish your soul.

I invite you to bring your attention to the people that truly nourish your life and how they bless you with their presence....

Feel gratitude for your own life and the many gifts you have been blessed with.....Allowing this felt sense of gratitude to really land in the heart, in the body... Exploring these sensation, savouring them.....

Now bring your attention to how this gratitude feels in your heart space....with each inhale...and exhale...let this feeling grow outwards, expanding it to fill your chest, your arms, your hands,

your legs and feet...with each new inhale, this feeling grows,  
filling you up...

And now, even as you return your attention to your breath, let  
your body remember the feeling sensations of gratitude....

And remembering that you can access these sensations any time  
of day, any place...just by checking in...and in your own time...  
returning your attention back to breath, perhaps wiggling your  
fingers and toes and opening your eyes when you are ready.....

Thank you for your practice.....