

Practicing with Distressing Thoughts

Now that you have learned several strategies for approaching unwanted thoughts, we would like you to practice one of them on thoughts that you have about a distressing situation.

You can choose which strategy you would like to practice: watching the thoughts on leaves, or bringing compassion to your thoughts, like your compassion for a loved one or pet, or you can practice observing yourself as a mountain as the thoughts swirl around.

At the beginning of this exercise, intentionally call to mind a distressing situation. Once you have one in mind, you will practice one of the skills you have learned.

You may find that your mind moves on to other related or even unrelated thoughts, and that's okay, just so long as you start out with the thought of the distressing situation.

OK, make sure you're in a place with few distractions and seated comfortably. Take a moment to think about which strategy you would like to practice, and call to mind a distressing situation that's been troubling you.

(About 10 seconds of silence)

Ready? Start your practice now, and continue until you hear my voice ending the exercise.

(About 5 minutes of silence)

Now, as the exercise comes to an end, open your eyes and come back to the room.