Individual and Partner Exercises for Exploring Circuitries and Cycles

From Annual 5-day Course at
Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health

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Individual Exercise: Embodiment

• Find a comfortable posture. Close your eyes. Allow your body to be held, supported by the chair. Notice the sensations of your body in contact with the chair.
• Direct your attention to sensations of your breathing
  • Rising and falling of abdomen
  • Sensations on your upper lip or the tip of your nose
• Allow your attention to rest on any bodily experiences that you notice (e.g., muscle contractions or tensions, rhythms or pulsations, pain, warmth or cold, etc.)
• When you get distracted by something with an emotional aspect (e.g., memory, fantasy, preoccupation), direct your attention to the bodily experience of the feelings
Partners Exercise: Embodiment

• To an extent that feels safe to you, talk with your partner about awareness of and attunement to your body
• You might talk about
  • Your experience of your body as a child
  • How socialization as a girl or boy affected your experience of your body, including your ability to experience your body
  • How other aspects of your culture and/or your family life growing up shaped your bodily awareness
  • Experiences as an adult that have changed your awareness of and attunement to your body – in any important way
  • Current hopes and goals you have for enhancing or altering your experience of embodiment

Individual Exercise: Aversion

• Find a comfortable posture. Close your eyes. Allow your body to be held, supported by the chair. Notice the sensations of your body in contact with the chair.
• Direct your attention to sensations of your breathing
  • Rising and falling of abdomen
  • Sensations on your upper lip or the tip of your nose
• Allow your attention to rest on anything arising in your body, thoughts, memories or fantasies that feels uncomfortable, scary, annoying, irritating or otherwise aversive
• If it’s a thought, memory or fantasy, focus your attention on the sensations that go with it
• Finally, with any of these experiences, you have a choice: At any time, you can let it go or you can investigate it in a curious way; but if it becomes overwhelming, move on
Partners Exercise: Aversion

• Talk with your partner about one to three things that other people in your life do, on a daily or almost daily basis, which you find annoying or irritating

• At some point in the conversation, take a moment to close your eyes and go inside to notice the sensations arising in your body as you think about or remember that annoying experience

• After you’ve explored that a little while, with curiosity and without judgement, share with your partner what you noticed (or continue to notice in your body) as you focus on that irritating thing

Individual Exercise: Seeking

• Find a comfortable posture. Close your eyes. Allow your body to be held, supported by the chair. Notice the sensations of your body in contact with the chair.

• Direct your attention to sensations of your breathing
  • Rising and falling of abdomen
  • Sensations on your upper lip or the tip of your nose

• Allow your attention to rest on anything arising in your body, thoughts, memories or fantasies that involve wanting – either to have, or to hold onto

• If it’s a thought, memory or fantasy, focus your attention on the sensations that go with it

• Finally, with any of these experiences, you have a choice: At any time, you can (a) let it go or (b) investigate it in a curious way; but if it becomes too absorbing, move on
Partners Exercise: Seeking

- Using the *What Do I Do with My Seeking Circuitry* handout...
- Fill in the part under “(Harmful) Quick Fix” on the left, as much as you feel comfortable
- Talk with your partner about one or two things you wrote down – again, only as much as you feel comfortable
- At some point in the conversation, take a moment to close your eyes and go inside to notice the sensations arising in your body as you think about or remember wanting that “quick fix”
- After you’ve explored that a little while, with curiosity and without judgement, share with your partner what you noticed (or continue to notice in your body) as you focus on wanting that experience

Individual Exercise: Comfort

- Find a comfortable posture. Close your eyes. Allow your body to be held, supported by the chair. Notice the sensations of your body in contact with the chair.
- Direct your attention to sensations of your breathing
  - Rising and falling of abdomen
  - Sensations on your upper lip or the tip of your nose
- Call to mind an experience in which you felt very peaceful, soothed or comforted – Or that you imagine would feel that way
- After you’ve settled into that experience, notice the bodily sensations that go with it
**Individual Exercise: Joy**

- Find a comfortable posture. Close your eyes. Allow your body to be held, supported by the chair. Notice the sensations of your body in contact with the chair.
- Direct your attention to sensations of your breathing
  - Rising and falling of abdomen
  - Sensations on your upper lip or the tip of your nose
- Call to mind an experience in which you felt very joyful or happy in a delighted way – Or that you imagine would feel that way
- After you’ve settled into that experience, notice the bodily sensations that go with it

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**Partners Exercise: Fulfillment**

- Using the *What Do I Do with My Seeking Circuitry* handout...
- Fill in the part under “Very Satisfying and Fulfilling” on the right, as much as you feel comfortable
- Talk with your partner about one or two things you wrote down
- At some point in the conversation, take a moment to close your eyes and go inside to notice the sensations arising in your body as you think about or remember one “very satisfying and fulfilling” experience
- After you’ve explored that a little while, with curiosity, share with your partner what you noticed (or continue to notice in your body) as you focus on that experience
Individual Exercise: Default Mode

• Find a comfortable posture. Close your eyes. Allow your body to be held, supported by the chair. Notice the sensations of your body in contact with the chair.

• Direct your attention to sensations of your breathing
  • Rising and falling of abdomen
  • Sensations on your upper lip or the tip of your nose

• Notice the fantasies, preoccupations and planning that distract you from concentrating on breathing sensations

• When you get distracted by a fantasy, preoccupation or planning, attend to the bodily experiences going with it

Partners Exercise: Default Mode

• Talk with your partner about one or two thought processes that dominate your default mode lately – only as much as you feel comfortable

• Talk about what you are (or seem to be) seeking while engaged in those default mode thought processes

• Talk about the roles that seeking wanted experiences and seeking escape from unwanted experiences play in those default mode thought processes

• Close your eyes and go inside to see if you notice any sensations that go with one of the thought processes

• Share with your partner what you noticed internally
Partner Exercise: Seek True Goods

• How has this cycle manifested in you?
• Common patterns – of what is sought, what is truly satisfying?
• Are there other ways that you can engage in this cycle?

Partners Exercise: Play

• Talk with your partner about one or two playful or ‘flow’ experiences that include alternating and interwoven seeking and satisfaction
• Talk about what you are (or seem to be) seeking while engaged in those playful or flow experiences
• Talk about what is satisfying and fulfilling during those experiences
• Close your eyes and go inside to see if you notice any sensations that go with the seeking and satisfaction phases and/or dimensions of those experiences
• Share with your partner what you noticed internally