

Conscious Being

Exercise Two: Core False Beliefs

Our wholeness, our essential nature, is who we are without all the false identities we have accumulated throughout our lives. Finding our wholeness is a matter of living beyond all of the illusory ideas we have accumulated about ourselves. These ideas have created a false, limited sense of self, known as our ego. Recovering our wholeness, therefore, involves allowing these illusory notions to dissolve so that our inherent, pristine self can be revealed. There is nothing we need to add. Nothing we need to acquire. Nothing we need to learn. Nothing we need to do. We are *already* whole and perfect. Life is not about learning, it is about unlearning all the stories we have believed about ourselves and the world.

Releasing Statement

I now release any ideas of rightness or wrongness.

Affirming Statement

I choose to have more compassion for myself and others.

Simple Meditation Practice

This module's meditation is an awareness meditation. Set a timer for 10 minutes (or you can adjust the time in whatever way feels right for you in this moment). Now find a quiet place to sit. During the allotted time, the invitation is to simply notice thoughts and feelings. Can you identify any feelings of shame? Is there a thought attached to the feeling? What happens when you allow yourself to feel it? Does it intensify or diminish? What happens when you question the thought? Once the timer sounds, take some time to write about your experience.

1. Unlearning Exercise: Discuss with a partner (or write out if you are alone) a situation that is currently challenging you. Notice how it feels. What about it is so challenging? Read through the following list of core false beliefs and notice if any of these are contributing to the challenge you are experiencing. Circle any of these beliefs that you are, on some level, holding or believing about yourself. (Feel free to add your own.)

I'm not good enough

The world is an unsafe place

I don't deserve to be _____ (e.g., happy)

I'll never succeed

I'm all alone in the world

No one understands me

No one loves me/will ever love me

People are against me

There isn't enough time, money, energy, etc.

Life is hard, a struggle, pain and suffering

I have to be perfect

I'll never amount to anything

I'll never be happy

I'll never heal from my trauma

I have to win at all costs

I am a loser

I am stupid

I am not worthy

I am not lovable

There's something wrong with me

I never get it right

The world/life is unfair

Now, try rewording the belief in a more realistic or positive way (e.g. "I'll never succeed" could be reworded to acknowledge successes you've already had; "I've been successful many times before."). Ask someone for help if you have trouble with this. Then notice if the rewording changes your perspective on the situation.

2. Recognizing the Shadow Approach: In psychological terms, the shadow is the unconscious aspect of ourselves, that we keep hidden due to a desire to repress the negative attributes of our personality. Reflecting on this, please answer the following questions:

- What have you hidden in your shadow?

- What is the deepest darkest, most horrible thing you are hiding from the world?

- Do you have any guilt or shame around this?

- What would it take for you to look at it through a different lens?

- What might happen if you were to learn to treat yourself with compassion and kindness?

- What would it take to forgive yourself? (Forgiveness is not saying that whatever happened is ok; it's making the choice to no longer let it control you.)

3. Moving Beyond Limitation Practice: What does your inner critic tell you?

- Write down 3 self-judgments it gives you

- Notice how those feel and write your observations

- What do you normally do when these judgments appear?

Try this instead: Be present with those judgments without trying to change them in any way. Allow yourself to just experience them, however uncomfortable it may be. Have your partner (or write it out, if you are alone) reword those judgments to be more realistic or positive, as you did in exercise 1. Then notice how that feels.

Now try speaking to yourself as you would to a small child who needs compassion and understanding. What would happen if you were to change that self-talk and speak to yourself with the same kindness and caring that you would have for a small child? You might say the following 3 things to your inner child: *“It’s OK to feel that way. It’s safe to feel that way. I’m here for you.”*

- What was your experience of this process?

- In what ways can you recognize that you have abandoned your inner-child?

- What would it take for you to reconnect with your inner-child?
