

Power of the Mind: “Dropping In”

Introduction

In the past, it was more common for parent(s) to leave work at 5 PM and come home. At home, the family would sit down for dinner and then, after the meal, clean up. Once the dishes were put away, the adults would go outside and walk, often “dropping in” on neighbors. “Dropping in” was common. It was a way to check in with a neighbor and see what was going on in their life. One might talk about the weather, house projects, prices at the grocery store or the latest gossip. It was an informal way of checking in with one another.

And, so today, we borrow from this informal tradition and bring it into our current mindful awareness practice. However, instead of actually “dropping in” on a neighbor (which still might be a good idea!), we “drop in” on the neighborhood of our internal experience.

Are you ready to visit the neighborhood?

Practice

Let’s begin this “dropping in” practice by finding a comfortable place. This could be sitting in a chair, laying on a couch or bed, or even walking outside.

(Pause)

Next, see if it is possible to invite the body to relax—just 5% more. This might mean inviting the jaw to soften, the shoulders to release or the abdomen to relax. Again, just 5%.

Next, the invitation is, as you are able, to take three deep, cleansing breaths. See if you can breathe a bit more deeply into the abdomen. It might resemble or feel like a small balloon. If it is comfortable, hold the breath for a few seconds and then exhale, allowing the out-breath to be longer than the in-breath.

Repeat this two more times at your own pace.

(Pause)

Next, let’s drop into our internal neighborhood and see what’s there

(Pause)

As best as you can, “drop in” to what you feel in the body in this moment. What do you notice today in the body, if anything?

(Pause)

And, whatever your experience, whether its pleasant, unpleasant, neutral or blank, can you simply be with your experience without judgement and, if possible, with kindness?

(Pause)

Again, we are simply dropping into the internal experience of the body and feeling what there is to be felt. That’s all.

(Pause)

If it’s too much to do this practice today, let go of this practice and care for yourself in the ways you need to care for yourself. Always listen to your wisdom.

Otherwise, continue with this practice by “dropping in” even more.

(Pause)

We are just being with our felt experience. Just being with our internal neighborhood -as best as we can.

(Pause)

We might feel parts of the body that are loud and noisy.

Can we be with them with kindness and nonjudgment?

(Pause)

We might feel parts which are asking for attention.

Can we be with them with kindness and nonjudgment?

(Pause)

There might be parts which are in pain.

Can we be with them with kindness and nonjudgment?

(Pause)

We might feel parts that are quiet and easeful.

Can we be with them with kindness and nonjudgment?

(Pause)

Again, we are simply “dropping in” to the neighborhood of our own experience with a nonjudgmental attitude as best as we can. Allowing our experience to be just as it is.

(Pause)

Next, letting go of the “dropping in” practice and simply inviting the body to rest, just as it is.

(Pause)

Taking one breath. Breathing in deeply into the abdomen. And, if it is comfortable, holding the breath for a few seconds and then exhaling, allowing the outbreath to be longer than the inbreath.

If the eyes are closed, feeling free to open the eyes.

Nice job. Welcome to the Neighborhood!

Questions

1. What did you notice as you “dropped in” during this activity?
2. Would it be possible for you to try doing 3 “drop ins” throughout the day?
3. What else could you focus on when you do this activity? Thoughts? Emotions?
4. If you did this regularly, what is your best guess on how this practice might influence your health, well-being and stress level?