

## Connection mindfulness

We will begin a short exercise that will both increase your mindful presence and connect you to some new parts of your self. Make yourself comfortable. Please close your eyes if you feel comfortable with that. Visualization is easier if you can look inward and reduce outside stimulation. If you are uncomfortable please focus turn yourself to looking at a blank page or a blank space on the wall. Have your gaze turn inward to your heart almost as though you are able to see the inside of your body. Notice any tightness in your face. Keep your jaw loose, let go of any tightening of the forehead, imagine something that makes you happy and smile inward while maintaining a soft face. Imagine your lungs are a balloon. Place your hand on your stomach. You will begin with exhaling through your mouth. As you inhale imagine the balloon filling up with air. As you inhale your stomach should flare out. Then the mid chest and upper chest fills up. As you exhale the air leaves from the top of your chest, mid chest and then bottom. We will repeat this 2 times. Breathe in filling up stomach mid chest and then upper chest. Breathe out upper chest, mid chest and stomach. Now breathe normally with the awareness of trying to fill up your lower lung before the upper part of the lung and observe any areas of tension or pain in your body and as you breathe out ask that part to relax. Do it two more times. Now continue begin to breathe and I want to take your attention to the safe place you wrote down. We will create a visual image of this space. Imagine a movie screen and this image slowly coming into focus. If your image is in words and not fully pictures yet that is okay. What colors are there? What objects or people are appearing in the picture? What sounds may be joining this image? Where are you in this image relative to the objects? What are your feelings? What are you doing or not doing? Remind yourself that you really enjoy this space. You feel relaxed, you may have several thoughts but you are not holding on to any thoughts and trying to work with them. They are just waves floating in your mind. One passing and another taking its place. As you are in this state place your right thumb on your left wrist and anchor this image of yourself in a relaxed state in your safe space. Now bring into this space 4-5 people who you had identified as sources of caring, championing, energizing, make you feel good just as you are and/or guide you in the right path. Take one breath and as you release your breath expand the image of one person, add details, clothes they are wearing, the look on their face, any smell, and what they may be saying to you. Imagine a thread or rope or tether connecting this person to your finger on your left hand. Take another breath and expand the image of the next person - What are they wearing, colors, expression, smell, one thing they may be saying. Connect them to you to a different finger of your left hand. Your connecting tethers can be the same color and material or different colors, do not work hard on creating these let what happens happen naturally. Have fun in this imaginative process. Breathe in, as you exhale expand the image of the third person, clothing smell, sounds, feeling, tether, connect.

Pause look at yourself so connected to people who have so many good things to say about you. Take your right hand, place your thumb on your wrist and grasp your left

hand with all the fingers of your right hand. Anchor this image to your hands claspng each other. Take a snap shot of you in the safe place with all these people caring, encouraging and connected to you.

Realsee you hands. Put your right thumb on left wrist . Go back to your image of the safe space without your people in it. Hold the image feel relaxed. Now clasp your hand and bring back the people into it one at a time in detail. Hold the image. Feel the connection. You are connected grounded and valuable to these people. You are completely accepted.

Release you hands. Repeat.

In the future when you touch your thumb to your left hand you will bring into focus your safe space and when you clasp you hand you can bring into focus each of these people who value and accept you into this safe space and they will remain connected to you through tethers attached to your fingers.

Open you eyes. Breathe. Close your eyes. Put your right thum