



WORKING WITH DIFFICULT EMOTIONS

Find a comfortable position to be in, even for a few minutes, where you can be undistracted and as relaxed as possible. Start by briefly attending to your breath, bringing your attention back to the breath when you become distracted. The following exercise may stir up some uncomfortable emotions; it's meant to. Just be with whatever arises, as you have learned to be with the different thoughts that arise within your mind.

After finding some stability within your mind using the breath as an anchor, think back to a time when you felt strong sadness, jealousy, or anger. Do this in a gentle manner at first, letting the feeling arise slowly. You may find that anger or sadness are the easiest emotions and feelings to invoke. If it becomes too much at any time, let it go and come back to the breath. Take some time to remember an incident or time when strong emotions were present and when you felt swept away or affected by them.

Now, as vividly as possible, open up more and let this memory flood your body and your mind. Feel the feelings; let the physiology of the moment enter you to a level that feels like you can be with it and deal with it. Feel what it felt like when you were angry, jealous, or sad. Be with the feelings. Be with the emotions. Remember, become keenly aware that all of this is happening in your mind, nowhere else. In a way, really "get into" this exercise by drawing the emotions that you felt into the present and seeing how dramatically you can affect your present state of mind and body *without getting lost in the thoughts and emotions!*

Remain with this exercise for as long as you are comfortable doing so. Return to the breath if you become distracted. Return to the remembrance of your compassionate nature if you get stuck in the emotions. Return to a realization that everything is transient, temporary, almost illusory and that anything that you may be feeling at present is without substance.

Stay with the exercise for a few minutes.

And then, just relax in the vividness of this moment, dropping all methods, allowing the thoughts to move through your mind without grasping after or following them.