

Acceptance & Change

**Welcome back to
CALM**

**Calming
Anxiety
Living
Mindfully**

Chapter 3

Check-in:



Let's try the 3-Minute Breathing Space Meditation

The 3-minute breathing space is a helpful way to begin to integrate mindfulness into your daily life. There are 3 parts, and each lasts about one minute.

Minute 1: Awareness (becoming mindful of this moment)

Reflect on the question, "What is my experience right now... in thoughts... in feelings... in sensations?"

Notice and acknowledge whatever feelings, sensations, and thoughts arise.

Minute 2: Gathering (mindfully focusing in on your breathing)

"Now gently shift your full awareness to your breath. Notice each in-breath flow into each out-breath."

Your breath can anchor you back to the present to find awareness and stillness.

Minute 3: Expanding (expanding focus to your whole body)

"Expand your awareness around your breathing... include your posture, facial expressions, your whole body."

Source: Segal, et al., 2002

*"The curious paradox is that
when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change"*

- Carl Rogers

Discussion: What does acceptance mean to you?

Acceptance and change almost seem like opposites. If we accept something, why would we change it? When we want to change something, isn't it because we don't accept it?

Acceptance is acknowledging the reality of the situation,



Skill: Radical Acceptance

“Radical” is a term that actually means extreme. So, radical acceptance is extreme or total acceptance; it is “all the way” acceptance.

Radical Acceptance also means NOT GIVING UP on making positive changes that are possible. It is the opposite of rolling over; it’s doing what is most effective!

Radical Acceptance means you acknowledge the facts and see what is happening despite wishing things were different. Then, it’s about deciding to do what is most effective in response. This can be very challenging and extremely powerful!

What is Accepted in Radical Acceptance?

Reality is as it is, even when it’s very painful

Your pain is real and deserves to be acknowledged

Life can be meaningful and beautiful, even with tremendous pain

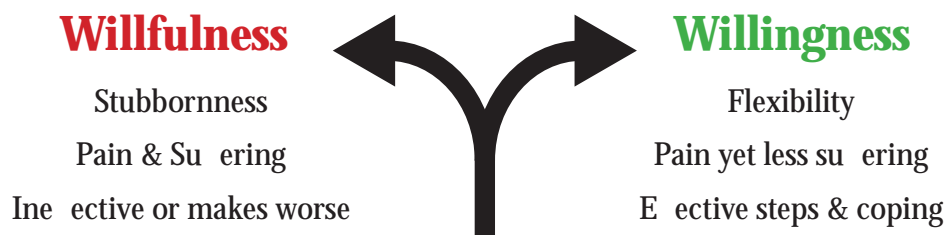
Acceptance allows us to see options we couldn’t before

Change is always possible in some way (at very least how we cope with the pain)

Discussion: Please share a time when suffering played a role in your anxiety

Turning the Mind:

Turning the Mind is when we realize we are at a fork in the road. We see that we can either go down the path of rejecting reality or make a difficult turn toward acceptance.



Willfulness is the desire to fight a difficult reality. This turns pain into suffering.

Willingness requires turning your mind toward acceptance over and over again.

Acceptance and Change:

Please take a moment to consider accepting some area of your life that is affected by anxiety. Then, consider steps you could choose to take (if you're willing!) toward change.

My Steps for Change (example):

I accept that anxiety affects me by:

“Preventing me from answering questions in class, or introducing myself to other classmates.”

I could move toward change by:

“Answering at least one question, or talking to one classmate, each day I have class.”

My Steps for Change:

I accept that anxiety affects me by:

I could move toward change by:

Discussion: Please share any changes you are considering, if you are willing!

Anxiety & Me

Now let's consider what our anxiety actually reflects about us.

Have you ever asked yourself, "*What does my anxiety say about me that is good or amazing?*"

Wait, what?!?! Probably not...

Your worries and sources of anxiety have led to distress and suffering. So, it's pretty rare to look at the values and priorities anxiety reflects about you that are positive.

Imagine a person worrying they may have judged and treated someone differently because of their own bias.

What does that say about their character or values?

It may reflect values of equality and social justice, and strengths of responsibility & fairness.

Recognizing ways your anxiety is related to personal and cultural strengths & values is a

Anxiety & Me

Please circle the strengths and values that match how you (or others who know you well) might describe you.

Strengths: Compassion, humor, thoughtfulness, humility, honesty, fairness, passion for social justice, freedom, connection, empathy, perspective taking, analytical thinking, curiosity, spontaneity, planning, conscientiousness, reliability, trustworthiness...

Other Strengths: _____

Values: Family, the environment, relationships, community, religion, spirituality, education, empowerment, freedom, social justice, kindness, faith, mercy, preparation, independence, inter-dependence, integrity, courage, holistic wellness, equality for all, discipline, fairness...

Other Values: _____

My anxiety about _____

shows my strength/value of _____

My anxiety about _____

shows my strength/value of _____

My strength(s) of _____

will help me manage anxiety and change my relationship with it.

My value(s) of _____

will help me manage anxiety and change my relationship with it.

Additional realizations, strengths, or values that are important to me include:

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Discussion:

