

The Heart Skill

Adapted by Dihmes & LaPenna

A way to develop greater self-awareness, self-validation, and self-compassion.

Hands on your heart

Gently place both hands on the area of your chest over your heart. If possible, make skin-to-skin contact between your hands and your chest. Anchor your focus on your heart and allow your attention to settle there.

Easy breathing

Slowly move the focus of attention to your breath. Breathe naturally, neither enhancing nor controlling the breath. Allow a moment to notice your breath naturally flowing in and out of your body.

Aware of sensations

Become aware of the sensations in your body, especially your heart. Notice your pulse and other sensations arising and falling. If at first you feel nothing, just observe the nothingness. If you experience sensations and emotions, become curious about what you are feeling. If you can, name the emotion(s)

Remain in the feeling

If your mind starts to wander, bring it back to observing the feelings and sensations. Notice any urges to move away from what you are feeling. Gently and intentionally remain in the experience. Avoid judging, analyzing, or making any conclusions. Remain focused on the sensations themselves. Stay open to what these sensations are doing in the moment. Ride the experience out like a wave.

Trust your experience

Trust the wisdom of your body and the connection between your heart and mind. Know that the sensations arising are the body's way of communicating important information. Trust that what you observe now will lead to greater self-knowledge.

As you begin to better understand your experience, you will naturally begin to validate your emotions, and with this, you will develop greater self-compassion.