

Week Two: STOP Meditation (9 minutes)

00:02: So you can decide for yourself if you would like your eyes open or your eyes closed. We'll begin with a few moments of coming into the present moment. Just notice your body, the fact that you're breathing, or hearing, anything that brings you into this present moment.

[45 second pause]

00:55: And I'll have you take a slightly deeper inhale and a slightly deeper exhale. And as you take that exhale, see if you can soften through your body, relaxing a bit more into the chair if that's possible.

[30 second pause]

01:21: So what I'd like you to do now in your awareness is recall a stressful situation, something that's recent in the last 48 to 72 hours. Please don't pick the most stressful situation. So pick something that has a little bit of charge. It's a little stressful. So take a moment. Now, in your awareness, I want you to recall this stressful situation with as much vividness as you can. And I'll guide you through this. So start first with what you were seeing, so recalling in your awareness. What were the sites, shapes, forms, colors? What was the environment? Were you with other people? Were you by yourself? Now I want you to bring in the auditory, what were you hearing? Was it noisy or quiet in the environment? Were there elevated voices, if you were with others? Might have been other ambient sounds in the room. So see if you can recall this with some vividness. Now, in your awareness, I want you to imagine that you were taking a freeze frame, almost like a picture of that peak moment during this stressful situation where it felt really, really stressful. So imagine that you were taking a freeze frame or a photo of that moment. And as you freeze frame that, I want you to imagine that you were looking at this picture, this photo that captured that moment. Really connect with it.

[30 second pause]

04:13: So now we're going to practice the stop technique. The very first thing I want you to do is slow down. And what I mean by that is to notice that you might be feeling different things, might be emotions, and could be noticing sensations in your body. There could be thoughts or stories around this stressful situation. So the first thing is see if you can take yourself off of feeding that particular constellation of thoughts, emotions, and sensations. So you're creating a little bit of distance. Slowing down. Now I'm going to have you take another intentionally deeper inhale. And then extend the exhale and notice the exhale as you extend the exhale. Now, really bring your awareness into your body. Noticing if there's any signals. It's like the little yellow hazard lights on your car. Noticing if there's anything in your body that's giving you feedback, it's almost like the residue from the stressful situation. So you're just bringing this gentle kind of awareness to it. Noticing it. Now the very last piece, this is the P, which is possibilities.

07:22: So I want you to, as you are thinking about the stressful situation, you can take a moment to just again recall the stressful situation. I want you to imagine that you were acting from your place of highest potential. It could be your place of highest patience or kindness. If that feels like too much of a stretch, what would a mentor do? Somebody that you respect as a role model. How might they respond? And I want you to just take a few moments to consider what some possible responses to this stressful situation are. So there's the initial reaction. What are some of the responses, possibilities?

[20 second pause]

08:42: And so now for just a moment or two more, you can let go of any of the acts of doing this practice. And

come back to noticing the present moment. So just sensing your breath. Might be noticing the entire felt sense of your body. You might be resting with hearing again.

[45 second pause]

Now you can let this particular practice go. And if your eyes are closed, you can gently open your eyes.