

A Simple Mindful Method to Deal with Tiredness, Loneliness & Stress

“I discovered that when I believed my thoughts, I suffered, but that when I didn’t believe them, I didn’t suffer, and that this is true for every human being. Freedom is as simple as that. I found a joy within me that has never disappeared, not for a single moment. That joy is in everyone, always.” ~Byron Katie

A loved one has been going through a hard time, dealing with tiredness, stress, and loneliness, and my heart goes out to them as it does anyone going through such struggles.

They can break your heart, these difficult emotions.

But beyond compassion, what I tried to help her with is a fairly simple method for dealing with these difficulties mindfully. I offer it to you all as well, as something to practice and test out.

Here’s the method, to practice if you’re feeling stress, frustration, loneliness, sadness, tiredness:

1. Notice that you’re feeling this difficult emotion, and notice how it feels in your body. Bring a sense of curiosity to the sensations, just being present with them for a moment.
2. Notice what thoughts you have in your head that are causing the emotion. For example, you might be thinking, “They shouldn’t treat me like that” or “Why does my job have to be so hard?” or “These people are stressing me out! Things should be more settled and orderly.” Or something like that. Just notice whatever thoughts you have. Maybe write them down.
3. Notice that the thoughts are causing your difficulty. Not the situation — the thoughts. You might not believe that at first, but see if you can investigate whether that’s true.
4. Ask yourself, “What would it be like if I didn’t have these thoughts right now? What would my experience be right now?” The simple answer is that you’re just having an experience — you have feelings in your body, but you also are experiencing a moment that has light, colors, sound, touch sensation on your skin, and so on. It’s just an experience, a moment in time, not good or bad.
5. In fact, while this experience is neither good nor bad, you can start to appreciate it for what it is, without the thoughts. Just seeing it as a fresh experience, maybe even appreciating the beauty of the moment. Maybe even loving the moment just as it is.

Obviously some of these might take some practice. But it's worth it, because while you might not be able to get rid of tiredness (some rest would help there), you can let go of the thoughts about the tiredness that are causing you to be unhappy. You might not be able to get rid of the loneliness, but you can let go of the downward spiral of thoughts and emotions that make the situation worse.

And just maybe, you can find some incredible love for your experience in this moment. Yes, you feel tired, but you can love the tiredness, and everything else in this moment, without needing anything to change.