

Practices for Field Guide to What Really Matters:

SURRENDER

Your Life Map:

Study your “Life Journey Map” and review especially the detours of your life.

Are there some that you are attached to - that you still wish you could go back in time and change? Circle those events. EXAMPLE: I would change my memories of medical school and see more of the positive events that took place

Bridge Meditation

The Bridge Meditation is a practice to remind you to let go of your efforts to control things and accept the flow of life. If you live near water, such as a stream or river, you can do this practice in nature to help you experience the energy of flowing water. But you can also just visualize this entire exercise with your eyes closed.

1. Stand on a bridge that crosses the water and face downstream, so you can see the water flow away from you (or imagine that you are standing on a bridge over water.)
2. Take 3 deep breaths.
3. Imagine releasing all of the things you can no longer control or that no longer serve you into the water. Watch them flow away from you until you feel lighter inside.
4. Then turn to the other side of the bridge and face upstream.
5. Imagine that the water flowing toward you is washing you clean and bringing you new and unexpected blessings to replace what you have released.

Serenity Practice

"Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference."

1. Make a list of everything you can think of in your daily life that currently bothers or upsets you. What issues constantly come to mind and cause you to feel annoyed? List them in a vertical column on a piece of paper. (Spend some time at this and really think about it.)
2. Next, review each item on your list and indicate whether or not it is something you can change. If you believe you can change the situation (for example: your haircut, a coworker who constantly interrupts you at work, your diet) write CAN next to the item.

3. If you feel you are not able to do anything to change that issue (for example: the weather, the color of your eyes, your height) write CANNOT next to the item.
4. Review your list a few times and really think about each item you feel you cannot change. Is it totally accurate that it cannot be changed – even if you had unlimited resources or time? Re-label some items if you decide that they were initially marked incorrectly.
5. Next, focus on the items that CAN be changed and circle them only if you truly WANT to change them and would be willing to put forth time and effort to make the changes.
6. Choose a few of those circled items and prioritize them – use this list to remind yourself to work on productive change in your life.
7. With all of the remaining items on your list, that you either CANNOT change or don't care enough to change, imagine yourself stepping away from that list and withdrawing your energy from those issues. Draw further and further away until the list appears very small and you sense yourself and your energy to be very large.
8. Take several deep breaths as you allow this vision to remain. Feel serenity and calmness surrounding you and filling you as you let go of each of these annoyances in your life.
9. To end the exercise you can either tear up or burn the list or fold it up and put it away somewhere for later reference. Carry with you a sense of completion and resolution.

Breathwork: Shoreline Breath

Inhale for a count of 4 and imagine standing on a beach while a gentle wave washes up over your feet. Exhale for a count of 6 as the wave recedes and takes with it your resistance and fear. Bring your hands to your chest in a spiral motion and say: I am part of the great flow. I trust where life is carrying me.

Observation: Emerging Hope

From your observation spot notice something that tells you that life goes on or that there is always hope.

What reminds you of the flow of life?

What feels out of balance?

What makes you feel you can trust life?

Journaling Prompts:

What heavy story or worry are you tightly holding onto right now?

How would it feel to imagine placing that worry onto a pink petal, dropping it into a vast current, and trusting the universe to recycle it into something beautiful for someone else?