1. ***Attending***

This exercise focuses on the paying attention to the bodily, felt sense of an emotion. You are not thinking about it but simply being with it. The goal is to develop awareness of what you are experiencing while you are experiencing it, allowing, acknowledging, and accepting that this is what’s happening.

1. Sit quietly, two feet connected to the earth, gently close your eyes or soft focus on the floor. Tune into the sensation of your breath, the gentle in-flow and out-flow of air, the rise and fall of your chest and belly. Come into a sense of presence, knowing you are here, in your body, in your mind, in this moment, in this place.
2. Notice whatever comes to the forefront of your conscious awareness for the next five minutes -and things spontaneously will. Whatever body sensation, feeling or thought comes up, simply notice it, acknowledge that this has shown up on your radar, allow it to be there, and accept that it is there. At this point you’re not wondering about it or trying to figure it out, just attending to it enough to register the experience in your awareness. Notice if it is a tinggling, warm, tight or contracted. Is it ok to stay with or brings discomfort?

This exercise can deepen your capacity to become present to and consciously aware of your own experience without needing to leave or push away that experience to maintain your emotional equilibrium.

1. At this stage in the exercise, you have come to a choice point.
   1. You can let go of attending to the experience of the moment and to any subsequent experience that arises in your awareness, refocus your attention on the quiet, background, spacious awareness that allows you to be aware -the ‘home ground’ of your well-being: or
   2. You can attune to the felt sense of experience to decipher its message

***When you’re ready, gently open your eyes and come back into this space***

***If you like, note down any sensations or feelings that arose for you***

1. ***Attuning***

Invite you to come back to your breath again and gently close or soft focus your eyes.

This exercise entails discerning the particular flavour of an emotion. Attuning allows you to label complex, subtly nuanced emotions, such as those of feeling lonely or suspicious. This labelling is part of the capacity of emotional literacy, your capacity to read your emotional experience, and attune to and read the emotional experience of others aswell.

Often you can sense a disturbance in the force field -a gut reaction to something, a sudden shift in the balance of your nervous system, before you have any clear idea of what you are experiencing or what to call it. You simply notice there is something to notice.

1. When you notice a disturbance,(give non triggering samples) focus on and drop into the felt sense of the experience in your body. Begin to label the felt sense-shaky, tight, churning, bubbling, contracting, expanding. Try not to create a story about it. Just feel it and name it. From previous experience, you might already have a word for this particular feeling.
2. Sometimes it’s a challenge to put your finger on the exact nuance or flavour of the message. Try to find a “good enough” label for your emotions for now: maybe “This is contentment”, “this is aggravation” or “this is despair”.

Whatever feeling you are attuning to, and however you choose to label it, this feeling is what it is. All you have to know at this point is that you can know what it is and label it in a way that is useful to you. (If you can name it, you can tame it.) You can trust in your ability to know and label a feeling even if you change your mind about what it is.

1. ***Making Sense***
2. Tune into your breath, the gentle in flow and out flow of air, the rise and fall. Anchor in your own emotional equilibrium as much as possible, and sit quietly with whatever emotion you have been attending to and attuning to.
3. Let yourself acknowledge that whatever emotion you are sitting with, and whatever further emotions you might be feeling about feeling this emotion, given the circumstances and your previous conditioning around coping resiliently (or not), of course you are feeling exactly what you are feeling; it makes perfect sense.
4. We begin by engaging your prefontal cortex, this is the meaning making structure at the front of your brain. This doesn’t involve thinking per se, just opening your mind to any learning from previous experiences that would make sense of your current experience. When have you experienced anything like this before? What did it mean then? How did you respond then? Did that response work? Have you ever mis-judged or misinterpreted this feeling? Have you made any mistakes because of how you responded before?
5. This form of inquiry may trigger deeper feelings that are more difficult to manage. If this is occurring right now-just observe the emotion without judgement or getting hooked in and breathe in-noticing the cool air coming in through your nose and warm air coming back out. Breathe into that emotion allowing it’s sensation to dissipate for now if it is too overwhelming. Tuning in to the sensation of your feet connected to the floor and your body being supported by the chair.

***.Meeting your Compassionate Friend***

This guided visualisation creates a feeling of being listened to, heard, and cared about, which can become a resource for the mind and heart. Whatever upset or distress we are experiencing, we can also experience the tenderness of care.

1. Allow yourself to lie down comfortably, coming into a sense of presence- being aware of bring in your own body, in this moment, focusing your awareness on the gentle rhythm of your breathing, coming into a sense of relaxation and peacefulness. Then, when you’re ready, imagine that you are in your own safe place, a comfortable place where you can feel protected, at ease and content. This maybe a room in your own home, a favourite bench in a park or on a hill overlooking the beach, or in a café with a friend. Let yourself settle into the security and comfort of being in your safe place
2. Then, let yourself know that you are going to a receive a visitor, someone older, wiser, and stronger, someone who knows you well and cares about you a great deal. This figure may be someone you already know, it maybe someone completely imaginary. It could simply be a sense of warm, loving presence. However, this works for you, this figure wants you to be happy and they want to visit with you for a little while.
3. As you imagine the compassionate friend coming to visit you in your safe place, imagine in detail what they look like, how they are dressed, and how they move. Imagine what it feels like for you to be their presence, in their energy field.
4. Imagine how you meet and greet this figure; do you stand up and shake their hand, do you hug, do you bow?
5. Then imagine how you will have a conversation with this compassionate friend sitting face to face, sitting side by side, going for a walk.
6. Begin to share with this compassionate friend some current worry, some upset, or some distress. Imagine what it feels like to share this concern with your compassionate friend. Does your energy shift or change in any way as you begin to share it?
7. Imagine your friend listening receptively, openly, understandingly. Imagine how you feel being listened to and understood and accepted by this compassionate friend.
8. Imagine any words of acceptance or encouragement or support your compassionate friend might have to offer. If you could hear whatever you need to hear right now, what would those words be? As you imagine listening, sense what you feel as you hear these words.
9. When the conversation is complete and it’s time for your friend to depart, imagine how you say good-bye, knowing that you can visit with this compassionate friend again any time you wish to.
10. When you are in your safe place by yourself again, take a moment to pause, notice, and reflect on your experience. Reflect on any shifts in your experience of yourself or the upset you were working with, knowing that you have tapped into your own deep, intuitive wisdom.

As you evoke your compassionate friend, you are activating your own caregiving system, which calms your nervous system and restores your physiological and emotional equilibrium. As evoking your compassionate friend becomes a reliable habit in your brain, you deepen your sense that you are not alone, which can be very nurturing to your resilience.

***6.Hand on Heart***

This tool is powerful enough to calm down a panic attack in less than a minute

1. Place your hand on your heart. Breathe gently, softly, and deeply into the ares of your heart. If you wish, breathe in a sense of ease or safety or goodness into this heart centre.
2. Remember one moment, just one moment, when you felt safe, loved and cherished by another human being. Don’t try to recall the entire relationship, just one moment. This could be a partner, a child, a friend, a therapist, or a teacher, it could be a spiritual figure. (Remembering a loving moment with a pet can work very well too.)
3. As you remember this moment of feeling safe, loved and cherished, let yourself experience the feelings of that moment. Let the sensations wash through your body. Let yourself stay with these feelings for twenty to thirty seconds. Notice any deepening in a visceral sense of ease and safety.
4. Repeat this practice many times a day at first, to strengthen the neural circuitry that remembers this pattern. Then you can repeat it any time you need to, any time at all.

Remembering a moment of feeling safe, loved and cherished by another person or pet activates the social vagus, reassuring you that indeed you are safe, you belong, and you are welcomed. Your blood pressure decreases, and your heart rate stabilises. You return to the sense of safety that comes from a feeling of connection and belonging with safe others, even when you are alone.

Of course, you can experience this bonding and belonging, this ‘calm and connect’ feeling, whenever you are with people you trust and feel safe with. You can also activate the release of oxytocin whenever you experience the first signal of a startle or upset. With practice, it will enable you to back out of emotional reaction before it hijacks you. At a minimum, practice it five times a day for a full week to train your brain in this new response to any difficult moment. It’s a portable equilibrium.

***7.Energise your Heart Centre***

1. In groups of two, sit with a partner you are comfortable with.
2. Place your hand on your heart. As you do so, ask the other person to gently place their hand on the middle of your back, on a level with your hand on the front of your body. You can also experience the energy shift of this exercise by remembering the feeling of connection with another as you lean your back into a cushion while sitting on a firm couch or chair.
3. Breathe gently in and out. Feel the sense of stable energy in the centre of your torso. Relax into the ease and comfort of an active social engagement system.
4. After a minute or two, you can switch roles with you partner if you wish.

The social engagement system works non-verbally. The warm, safe touch communicates, safety, returning the nervous system to calm, even without words.

***8. FIVE, FOUR, THREE TWO ONE EXERCISE*  (Alice)**