Mindful Movement with Self-Compassion

Please find below the mindful movements, poems and reading we used in our Sangha yesterday evening.

All these movements can be carried out from sitting, lying or standing choose whichever posture is comfortable for you. You may find the body is easier to release in the back and within the breath, your mindfulness will deepen when you are able to give your body weight fully to gravity. Please use cushions, a mat, a chair and blanket to create a comfortable environment.

This extract from Rumi’s poem explains the Opening Hands movements:

‘Your deepest presence is in every small contracting and expanding, the two as beautifully balanced and coordinated as bird wings’.

Movement One Opening Hands

Rest the backs of your hands lightly on the thighs. Let the natural breath mirror and lead the expanding and contracting of open and closed hand. Repeat with the opposite hand and finally hands together.

The Hugging Arms movement has been associated with releasing the hormone oxytocin and calms cortisol (the stress hormone) with the possibility for lowering blood pressure and improving sleep patterns. Oxytocin is being studied further by scientist as the pain blocking nature of the hormone works so well, they are wanting to create it in the lab! (Pichardo, 27/05/2021).

Movement Two Hugging Arms

Inhale while drawing up the arms so they are parallel with the floor and palms facing forward. Exhale and bring both arms across the chest. Continue opening and closing using alternate arms on the top.

Movement Three Peeling off a Top

Using the natural breath wait for the inhale and raise the arms parallel with the floor, palms facing down. Exhale and cross both arms across the chest. Inhale and imagine you are peeling off a top raising both arms over the head. Exhaling when floating the arms back to the start position.

Pema Chodron, Start Where You Are

When you begin to touch your heart or let your heart be touched, you begin to discover that it's bottomless, that it doesn't have any resolution, that this heart is huge, vast, and limitless. You begin to discover how much warmth and a gentleness is there, as well as how much space.

Reading

Kirstin Neff, PhD. Self-Compassion, Chapter 3 Being Kind to Ourselves.

Danna Faulds, Believe

this is what I have to say to you.

you know all that you need to know.

You already are all that you need to be.

It remains only for you to recognise and acknowledge who you are,

what you know, and the powerful presence that is awake within you.

You think of yourself as fragile, but you are, in fact, strong.

You sometimes feel alone, but you are, in truth, connected through spirit to all beings.

Believe in this connection.

Believe in yourself.

That is all you need to do, for all is well.