

Mindfully Attending to Your Anger

1. Find a comfortable and quiet place where you can sit or lie down.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Focus on your breathing. Notice what it feels like to breathe in and breathe out. Notice which parts of your body move as you breathe in and out.
4. Think about a recent time when you felt anger at a moderate level of intensity. Try to focus on a time when your anger was around 4 or 5 on a scale from 0-10, where 0 equals no emotion and 10 equals the most intense emotion possible. Focus on this experience and try to get a clear picture of it in your mind.
5. Bring your attention to your body and notice where in your body you feel the emotion. Scan your body from head to toe, paying attention to any sensation in your head, neck, shoulders, back, chest, abdomen, arms, hands, legs, and feet. Spend about ten seconds on each area of your body, stepping back in your mind and just paying attention to and noticing the sensations.
6. Once you have finished scanning your body, bring your attention to the parts of your body where you feel anger. Zero in on these sensations. Watch them rise and fall in your mind's eye as you would watch a wave do so on the ocean.
7. If you begin to label or judge these sensations, notice that evaluation or judgement, and then bring your attention back to noticing the sensations as just sensations.
8. Bring your attention to any thoughts that are present, focusing on just noticing these thoughts as thoughts without attaching to them. If you find yourself getting caught up in your thoughts or judging yourself for having them, notice that and then bring your attention back to just noticing the thoughts that are present.
9. See if you can bring your attention to any action urges you are experiencing. Focus on just noticing these urges as they rise and fall, bringing attention to the ways they change or stay the same.
10. Keep focusing on the different components of your emotion without escaping or avoiding them. Continue to just notice your thoughts, sensations, and action urges without trying to push them away or change them. Do this for about 5-10 minutes, or until the emotion subsides and you no longer feel angry.

Book: The Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills for Anger by: Alexander L. Chapman, PHD, RPsych & Kim L. Gratz, PHD Foreword by Marsha M. Linehan, PHD, ABPP

Worksheet by: Janay Bailey