

Week Six

“Stress is inevitable, suffering is optional.”

OVERVIEW:

- Maintaining your center in interpersonal relationships.
- Noticing when interactions are stressful.
- Stressful communications; knowing your feelings; expressing your feelings accurately, developing a greater awareness of interpersonal communication patterns.

FORMAL PRACTICE TO DO AT HOME THIS WEEK:

- Choiceless Awareness, guided, alternating with a body practice (Body Scan, Lying Down Yoga, Standing Yoga)
- Bring awareness to moments of communication and interpersonal relating. What are you learning from personal practice that can be included in the interpersonal sphere?

INFORMAL MINDFULNESS PRACTICE:

- Explore the practice of mindful breathing in varied situations, both pleasurable and bothersome situations.
- Become more mindful of what you put into your body, especially through your eyes and ears. Notice the effects of that.
- Pay attention to what you take in: physically in the form of food and drink, but also what you take in through the senses: media, tv, internet, etc. In all these arenas notice the effects of what you take in—and consider the result. Is it what you want? Apply what you’re learning through practice to one of these “inputs” and notice what happens.
- Practice STOP.
- Practice mindful eating at least on the first 3 bites.

Formal Practice Log - Sitting Meditation Choiceless Awareness - Week 6

Each time you practice the Sitting Meditation write just a few words to remind you of your feelings, sensations, and impressions of that particular experience. Things such as how you felt, what came up, what you noticed in terms of physical sensations, thoughts, etc. Try to write your impressions right after the practice.

Date / Day of the week	Formal practice comments (Sitting Meditation Choiceless Awareness)

Formal Practice Log - The Body Practice - The Body Scan, the Standing Yoga, and Lying Down Yoga

Week 6

Each time you practice any body practice, the Body Scan, the Standing Yoga, and the Lying Down Yoga write just a few words to remind you of your feelings, sensations, and impressions of that particular experience.

Date / Day of the week	Formal practice comments (Body practice - Body Scan, Standing Yoga, and Lying Down Yoga)

What is your habitual thinking style?

(Adapted from A Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Workbook by Stahl and Goldstein)

As humans, we naturally have many ways of looking at things, and for the most part, it's not wrong or right. However, it may define our temperament, or our general outlook, our attitude, and a question to ask yourself is, "would I benefit from an attitude adjustment?" Read through each section and pause to reflect, are there times that this thinking pattern may have been unhelpful for yourself or a situation?

Catastrophizing:

Makes anxiety bigger. If it's raining hard when catastrophizing one might say, "Yes, and it seems like it will never stop. We are going to lose all our crops."

Exaggerating the negative and discounting the positive: "I'm doing better at work, but I keep having issues with getting things done on time." To start with replace "but" with "and" as an experiment. Count your "buts"!

Mind reading:

Means convincing yourself that you know what other people are thinking and why they act the way they do without actual evidence.

Being the expert:

Necessitates being constantly on guard as if you are on trial and need to defend your opinions and actions. Who puts us on a pedestal anyway? Watch for solving, fixing, planning as version of this pattern.

Should-ing:

Means having a long list or any list of unbreakable rules for yourself or others. If others break the rules this leads to anger. If you break the rules it leads to guilt.

Blaming:

Means holding yourself, or other people, or outside circumstances (example: job, medical condition) responsible for your pain or for the problems of others. With blaming ourselves or holding ourselves responsible the circle of guilt and blame goes on and on and on. When blaming others, or outside circumstances, the cause of your suffering is always outside of yourself which leads to disempowerment.

The Orange
By Wendy Cope

At lunchtime I bought a huge orange
The size of it made us all laugh.
I peeled it and shared it with Robert and Dave—
They got quarters and I had a half.
And that orange it made me so happy,
As ordinary things often do
Just lately. The shopping. A walk in the park
This is peace and contentment. It's new.
The rest of the day was quite easy.
I did all my jobs on my list
And enjoyed them and had some time over.
I love you. I'm glad I exist.