

**SCRIPTS ACCOMPANYING THE AUDIO FILES  
for  
MINDFULNESS-BASED COGNITIVE THERAPY FOR OCD**

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## Script for Track 2

### ***Body Scan: Mindfulness of the Body***

Choose a quiet place where you will not be disturbed. Try to consciously and intentionally shut out any contact with the outside world, such as turning off your cell phone. When you are ready, lie down and try to find a comfortable position, preferably lying on your back. You can lie down on a bed, a rug, or a mat. Try to relax your entire body and to have complete contact with whatever surface it touches.

Keep your arms outstretched alongside your body; you can keep your legs outstretched on the surface or bend your knees so that the soles of your feet touch the surface on which you are lying. You can also choose not to use a pillow under your head so that your body is perfectly horizontal and in contact with the surface. When you feel ready, you can decide to gently close your eyes to direct your attention more easily to what you are feeling.

Take a moment to become aware of what your body is feeling and to notice the contact of your body with the surface supporting it; notice the sense of grounding and of pressure. Feel the force of gravity that keeps you anchored to the ground. Notice how your body feels as it lies calmly stretched out on a surface.

Once you have become aware of the overall sensations your body is experiencing, gently guide your attention toward your breathing: Focus on what you feel in your abdomen as you breathe in and breathe out and notice how these sensations constantly change with each breath. [pause 10 seconds] Your abdomen gently rises and expands as you breathe in, and gently lowers and deflates as you breathe out. [pause 10 seconds] Remain deeply in touch with these two phases that keep you grounded in the present, in this unique moment. Also notice the pause after you inhale and before you exhale and the pause after you exhale and before you inhale. [pause 10 seconds]

It is normal that thoughts will arise and take you away from the awareness of your sensations. When this happens, just observe what is happening and, once you have noticed those, just bring your focus back to your body. [pause 10 seconds]

During this exercise, do not worry about having to achieve any specific result or state of being. You do not have to relax or feel calmer even if this may spontaneously happen. The aim of the exercise is to simply give yourself time to become an observer and witness of the sensations in your body by observing what is there, what is taking place from moment to moment, without expecting anything to happen, but welcoming whatever experience arises in that moment. It could be a sensation, thoughts, an emotion, or sounds. Whatever happens, whatever you notice, simply try to welcome it without passing any judgment. What you feel or notice can be neither right nor wrong. Simply accept it as what is going on in the moment and, distancing yourself a little, observe it. [pause 5 seconds] Then go back to noticing what else is going on in the part of the body you are observing. In this exercise, your body is your point of reference, your center, your powerful anchor. [pause 5 seconds]

Now, breathing in slightly more deeply, imagine directing the air toward the lower part of your body, toward your feet. Move your attention and breath toward your toes, carefully observing the sensations present in each toe; try to give a name to these sensations; notice the sensations of contact between your toes, as you are channeling breath toward them. [pause 5 seconds]

From your toes, gently move your attention toward the top of your feet [pause 10

*(cont.)*

## Script for Track 2 (cont.)

seconds], then toward the soles of your feet, an area which is so rich with nerve endings that it is almost like it is connected to every part of your body. Notice if there are different sensations between one area of the soles of your feet and another [pause 10 seconds].

Now bring your awareness to your heels, noticing perhaps a sense of contact, of pressure with the surface on which you're lying. Imagine that you are observing the sensations for the first time in your life. [pause 5 seconds]

Now move your attention toward your ankles [pause 10 seconds], then toward your calves, feeling whatever sensation may be present there: tension, tingling, heat, relaxation, anything you feel. From the calves move your awareness toward your knees [pause 10 seconds], and then toward your thighs, breathing in toward them and appreciating the different sensations you are feeling in your body. [pause 10 seconds]

Move up toward your pelvic area, welcoming and feeling whatever sensation rises to your awareness in this part of the body. [pause 10 seconds] Try breathing in toward your pelvis, toward your lower back and notice the sensations of contact and pressure you may be feeling in this part of the body in contact with the surface of the bed or the mat. Then move upward through your back, noticing the difference in the sensations between one area and another. Simply tune in to any sensation without judging it, with a sense of curiosity, as if you were an explorer observing a landscape for the first time. [pause 10 seconds]

Now, direct your attention toward the front of your body, toward your abdomen. As you did before, notice how the sensations change depending on whether you are breathing in or out. Imagine that during the inbreath the air moves toward your abdomen and during the outbreath the air flows from your abdomen to your nostrils. [pause 10 seconds]

Move your attention up toward your chest and feel how the experience of inhaling and exhaling is different. Your chest expands when you take a breath and then delicately contracts when you let it out. You may imagine the route taken by the air as it enters through your nostrils and moves toward your chest, and then takes the opposite route during the outbreath, from your chest to your nostrils. [pause 5 seconds]

Allow yourself to hold your body in this gentle, curious, and nonjudgmental way. [pause 10 seconds] Now bring your awareness down your arms to your fingers, noticing the contact between your fingers and the surface supporting them, noticing the contact between your fingers and any other sensation present in each one. Direct your awareness toward the palms of your hands, and then the back of your hands, moving up to your wrists, your forearms, your elbows and upper arms, breathing through each of these parts. [Dedicate at least 10 seconds to each of these parts; pause 10 seconds]

Move your attention toward your shoulders and notice any feelings, perhaps tension or stiffness, or perhaps your shoulders feel loose and relaxed, or feel a tingling sensation. [pause 10 seconds]

Then bring all your attention toward your neck and feel the sensations on your skin. Notice the air moving up and down inside your throat, giving you energy and life in each moment. Move your awareness toward the sensations on the back of your neck, which is now perhaps resting delicately on the floor or pillow, and notice the sensations of contact and pressure there. [pause 10 seconds]

Now slowly expand this awareness to your entire skull and scalp [pause 10 seconds], up to the top of your head and then to your face. Explore the sensations on your forehead [pause 10 seconds], and from your forehead move your attention toward your eyes, starting

from the eyelids, this skin that faithfully protects your eyes. Then observe the sensations in your eyeballs, the inner part of your eyes. [pause 10 seconds] From your eyes move toward your cheeks, and cheekbones, [pause 10 seconds] and then toward your nose, noticing the sensations on your skin and also those created by the flow of air, as it enters full of oxygen through your nostrils and then exits. [pause 10 seconds] Move your attention now toward your mouth, starting from your lips, [pause 5 seconds] your jaw, [pause 5 seconds] jawbone, [pause 5 seconds] the skin inside your mouth, [pause 5 seconds] your tongue, and your palate. [Dedicate at least 10 seconds to each of these parts.] Move your attention to your ears and carefully notice the sensations coming from this extraordinary organ, which allows you to perceive sounds. [pause 10 seconds]

Now that you have “traveled” through your entire body, exploring the sensations in each of its parts, try to bring a sense of global awareness to your body as a whole. From the soles of your feet to the crown of your head, be aware of your body as a whole and, at the same time, also notice your breath; try to create harmony between your breath and your body, a breath that now breathes everywhere, throughout your entire body. During the inbreath feel how the air flows to every part of your body and enters each cell in your body, and, at a certain point, perhaps feel your whole body breathing. [pause 10 seconds]

Be gentle with yourself, accepting any sensations, feelings, or thoughts that may arise, moment by moment. You may wish to direct a feeling of deep gratitude to each part of your body that you have observed during this exploration. Each part is indispensable to your life, regardless of its form or external appearance, and because without any of these parts your life would not be the same. [pause 10 seconds] Think of all the aspects of the outside world you have been able to discover and recognize thanks to all your extraordinary organs. None of this is to be taken for granted. [pause 10 seconds]

As this exercise moves toward its natural conclusion, you may wish to take a moment to congratulate yourself for taking the time to nourish yourself in this way. Perhaps this exercise can help you develop a strong intention to keep practicing regularly over the days and months to come. [pause 5 seconds] The awareness developed in this exercise can be transferred outside of the time constraints of the Body Scan. It is always available: You can access it again at any moment in your life. [pause 5 seconds]

Lie still and quiet for a few more moments, allowing things to simply be as they are, moment by moment, as you remain fully awake, fully alive, in touch with your breath.

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Based on Kabat-Zinn (1990) and Segal et al. (2013).

## *Mindfulness of the Breath*

Choose a position that allows you to feel present, grounded, and in touch with everything that is supporting your body. Focus for a while on how your body feels in contact with whatever you are sitting or lying on and feel the force of gravity keeping you grounded, moment by moment.

During this exercise, as in any experience of mindfulness, there is no state to achieve, no goal to reach. Simply allow yourself to welcome any experience you become aware of, moment by moment, with an attitude of acceptance, kindness, and gentle curiosity. Once you have settled, you can decide to bring your attention to your breathing, so that your breath becomes your center, your main reference, your anchor. [pause 30 seconds]

You don't have to breathe in any specific way, just let the breath breathe itself, as indeed it always does, and has done, from the very first moment of your life. Simply listen to your breath, whether it is slow or fast, as the breath continues to breathe. [pause 30 seconds]

Thoughts may appear that will tend to move your attention away from your awareness of your breath and body in this moment. When this happens, simply notice it happening, notice that thoughts are passing, welcome them, but try as soon as possible to return your attention to your body and your breath, observing your thoughts as they pass. No matter how many times your mind wanders elsewhere, each time return to the here and now by focusing on your breath. [pause 30 seconds]

To bring greater awareness to your breath, it may be useful to carefully notice the feelings breathing creates in your abdomen, noticing how it moves depending on whether you are breathing in or breathing out. [pause 30 seconds]

When you inhale, your abdomen rises and expands; when you exhale, it deflates and relaxes. You may also notice the short pauses between an inbreath and the following outbreath, and between each outbreath and the following inbreath. Listen deeply to this continuous flow of life, endless, unstoppable. [pause 1 minute]

Breathing can truly become your anchor because breathing is the most real, concrete, and present thing you have. It is always present, moment by moment, always available, you do not have to look for it, you do not have to ask anybody for it. You just become aware of your breath and be with it, in a welcoming, kind way. Become a witness of your breathing. [pause 1 minute]

You can also imagine seeing or actually feeling the air full of oxygen as it enters through your nostrils or mouth and flows down to the lower part of your abdomen, and then during the outbreath as it takes the opposite journey from your abdomen to your nostrils or mouth. As the air enters and exits, continuously observe whatever comes up in your mind and body without judging it or getting caught up in it, welcoming and allowing it, whatever it is. If it is easier for you, you may also choose to observe breathing your chest, noticing how your chest expands gently as you breathe in and then gently contracts as you breathe out. Or you may choose to focus awareness on your nostrils and carefully notice the feelings that the air creates as it enters through your nostrils full of oxygen and then exits free of oxygen. [pause 1 minute]

Now try to expand your awareness to include a sense of your body taken as a whole. From the soles of your feet to the crown of your head, become aware of this feeling of total unity, noticing how your breath flows throughout your entire body, feeling each part of your body fill with energy and life at every breath, feeling now as if your whole body is breathing.

Based on Segal, Williams, and Teasdale (2013).

## Script for Track 4

### ***Sitting Meditation: Mindfulness of the Breath and Body***

Sit in a comfortable position with your back straight but not stiff, your shoulders and your chest relaxed, your head aligned with your back, your hands comfortably resting on your knees, or with the palm of your left hand gently welcoming the back of your right hand with the tips of the thumbs touching each other. If you choose to sit on a chair, try not to lean against its back. Keep your feet parallel to one another, flat on the floor. Rest your hands comfortably on the armrests or in your lap. You can also choose to sit on the floor, but place a thick cushion under your pelvis to raise your body about a quarter to half an inch (8-10 cm) from the floor. If you have a meditation bench, you can use that as well.

Choose a position that allows you to feel present, grounded, and in touch with everything that supports you. Choose a posture that gives you a sense of calm and tranquility, a feeling of being present with yourself, a position that gives you a profound sense of dignity. Focus for a while on how your body feels where it is in contact with whatever you are sitting on; feel the force of gravity keeping you grounded, moment by moment.

As in any mindfulness practice, there is no state to achieve, no goal to pursue, just simply allow yourself to welcome any experience you become aware of, moment by moment, with a sense of acceptance, compassion, and gentle curiosity. Once you have become aware of your posture and are settled, you can decide to bring your attention to your breathing, so that your breath becomes your center, your main reference, your anchor. [pause 30 seconds]

You don't have to breathe in any specific way, just let the breath breathe itself, as it always does, and has done, from your very first day of life. Simply listen to your breath, whether it is slow or fast, as the breath continues to breathe. [pause 30 seconds]

At any time, thoughts may appear that draw your attention away from your breath and body. When this happens, simply notice it happening, notice that thoughts are passing, observe them as they pass, and welcome them, but as soon as possible try to bring your attention back to your body and your breath. No matter how many times your mind wanders, each time come back to the here and now with your breath. [pause 1 minute]

You may also notice the short pauses between an inbreath and the following outbreath, and between each outbreath and the following inbreath. Listen deeply to this flow of life, endless, unstoppable.

Breathing can become your anchor because it is the most real, tangible, and present thing you have. It is always present, moment by moment, always available. You do not have to look for it; you do not have to ask anybody for it. Just become aware of your breath and be with it, in a welcoming, kind way. Become a witness to your breathing.

Feel the air full of oxygen as it enters through your nostrils and flows down to the lower part of the abdomen, and then takes the opposite journey from your abdomen to your nostrils during the outbreath. Air enters and air exits. [pause 1 minute]

Welcome any feeling or experience you observe. If it is easier, you may also choose to observe your breathing in your chest, noticing how your chest expands gently as you breathe in and then gently contracts as you breathe out.

Or you may choose to focus your awareness on your nostrils and carefully notice the feelings that the air creates as it enters through your nostrils, full of oxygen, and then exits free of oxygen. [pause 1 minute]

Without completely losing touch with your breathing, try to move your awareness to your body, toward the sensations that are present in your body in this moment. Try to direct your attention toward a particular sensation that is present in this moment, noticing where you are feeling it and where it feels most intense.

Try to guide your attention with kind curiosity, welcoming whatever feeling may arise. Try to bring a sense of deep acceptance to unpleasant sensations you may feel. Imagine you are directing the air toward the part of your body where a sensation is most intense. The inbreath is like pointing a powerful light on that part of your body; then breathe out the intense sensation, letting it go.

You can now direct your attention to another part of your body, to another sensation present in this moment, breathing toward the sensation, into that part of your body. [pause 1 minute]

Try to welcome any feeling that may arise. Even if it is unpleasant, try to stay with it, try to see how long you can stay with it before deciding to do something that will get rid of the unpleasant feeling. Try to simply observe what is happening, moment by moment, instead of reacting to what is happening, to what you do not like.

Try to free your experience from any judgment: There are no right or wrong sensations. What you feel is simply what is happening in this moment. What you feel may be pleasant or unpleasant. It is what life is: a mix of pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral events. Welcome any event with the same level of awareness and acceptance, trying to welcome it, not reacting to it. [pause 1 minute]

Now try to expand your awareness to include a sense of your body as a whole. From the soles of your feet to the crown of your head, become aware of this feeling of total unity, noticing how your breath flows throughout your entire body, feeling each part of your body fill with energy and life at every breath, feeling now as if your whole body is breathing.

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Based on Segal, Williams, and Teasdale (2013).

## ***Breathing Space***

During this short exercise, first choose a position that allows you to feel awake and present. You can stand with your back straight, feeling a clear sense of contact with the ground, with the floor. Otherwise you can sit, keeping your back upright and straight, but not stiff, and trying not to lean against the back of the chair. Or you can lie on a bed, or a rug, or a mat.

Once you have chosen a position, you can decide whether to keep your eyes open or closed—whatever makes you feel more comfortable. At this point, slowly enter into the first step of this exercise, the *awareness* phase.

### **STEP 1: AWARENESS**

Let go of your autopilot mode and focus on the present, the here and now. Then begin to direct your attention to the physical sensations in your body. Try to notice if there is a specific sensation in any part of your body and direct all your attention there. Notice where this feeling is located, where it is most intense, trying to slightly distance yourself from the feeling without judging it, simply accepting it within your experience. [pause 10 seconds]

In the same way, bring your attention to the emotion you are feeling right now in this moment. Try to name the mood you're in right now. There are no right or wrong emotions. Whatever emotion is present, welcome it, listen to it. [pause 10 seconds]

Now bring the same kind of attention to your thoughts. Try to observe what thoughts, if any, are going through your mind at this very moment; watch them move in front of you as if they were birds flying by or white clouds floating by in a blue sky. Welcome each thought as a mere mental fact: harmless, transient, and fleeting. [pause 10 seconds]

### **STEP 2: FOCUS**

Once you have become aware of your physical sensations, emotions, and thoughts, move your attention to your own breathing. Focus completely on your breathing, noticing the sensations created in you by your breathing, such as your abdomen rising and falling as you breathe in and breathe out. [pause 10 seconds]

Now your breath is your center, your anchor; everything revolves around your breath, as if your breath is the sun and your emotions, thoughts, and sensations are planets. No planet can turn off or weaken the sunlight that reaches it, just as no thought or feeling can extinguish your breath. Stay deeply focused on your breath. [pause 10 seconds]

### **STEP 3: EXPANSION**

Now, open up the field of your awareness from your breath to include your body as a whole, from the soles of your feet to the crown of your head. Become aware of your body and your breath, together, breath flowing throughout your body. [pause 5 seconds]

In each in-breath feel the air flowing freely throughout your body, bringing life and energy. [pause 5 seconds] As you are opening your awareness to your whole mind-body, you are opening to life as it is, preparing yourself for whatever is to come in your day with a sense of balance, presence, and completeness.

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## Script for Track 6

### ***Sitting Meditation: Mindfulness of the Breath, Body, Sounds, Emotions, and Thoughts***

- Practice the Sitting Meditation: Mindfulness of the Breath and Body exercise, [Track 4] until you feel at ease. [pause 10 seconds]
- Now move your awareness from the sensations in your body to your sense of hearing. Gently direct your awareness toward the sounds that you hear, moment to moment, suspending any judgment about them. [pause 10 seconds]
- Do your best to notice every sound without naming its origin or source, but recognizing and describing its physical features: close sounds, distant sounds, sounds that come from a certain direction, loud sounds and soft sounds, high-pitched sounds and deep sounds, continuous sounds and discontinuous sounds. Open yourself up to all the variety of sounds around you. Become aware of the more evident and clearer sounds and the more subtle ones as well, [pause 10 seconds] aware of the space between sounds, [pause 10 seconds] aware of the silences. [pause 20 seconds]
- When you realize that you are thinking about the sounds, reconnect as best you can to a direct awareness of their sensory characteristics (their pitch, their volume, their duration), avoiding judging the sounds or linking them to any memories you may have. [pause 10 seconds]
- Whenever you notice that your awareness is no longer focused on the sounds present in the moment, gently acknowledge where your mind has moved to, then turn your attention again to the sounds around you and become aware of them the moment they arise and as they change from moment to moment and then vanish.
- [Piece of music starts here.] Listen to the music in a mindful way.  
When you feel ready, let go of your awareness of the sounds and bring your attention to the emotion or emotions you are feeling at this moment. Notice your feelings and describe them by giving them a name, without reacting to them or judging them. They are neither right nor wrong; they are simply what you are experiencing at this time. [pause 30 seconds]
- After becoming aware of your emotions, do your best to open your awareness to your thoughts. [pause 10 seconds] With your auditory awareness you focused your attention on any sound occurring, noticing when it came, developed, and then disappeared. In the same way now direct your awareness to the thoughts that appear in your mind, noticing when they arise, focusing your awareness on them the moment they cross the space of your mind and then eventually disappear. [pause 10 seconds] There is no need to recall certain thoughts or to make them go away. Simply let them occur naturally, in the same way in which you related to the sounds that spontaneously came and went. [pause 10 seconds]
- When directing their awareness to thoughts, some people find it helpful to imagine they are comfortably seated in a cinema, watching their thoughts projected on the screen as if they were the end credits of a movie. Sit comfortably, looking at the screen, waiting for a thought or an image to appear. When this happens, pay attention to it as long as it is “on the screen” and then let it go as it disappears. [pause 30 seconds]

- When your thoughts are particularly intense or frequent, you may find it helpful to imagine yourself behind a waterfall, in the recesses or crevices carved in the rock, and imagine that the water from the waterfall in front of you is your thoughts: an intensive heavy mass of water thundering down toward the bottom, while you stand in a safe place, observing your thoughts as they inexorably rush on. [pause 30 seconds]
- And now, at the end of this inner journey, try to expand your awareness to include a sense of your body as a whole. From the soles of your feet to the crown of your head, become aware of this feeling of total unity, noticing how your breath is now expanding everywhere in your body, feeling as every part of your body, every cell in your body, fills with energy and life with every breath, feeling now as if your whole body is breathing.

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## Script for Track 7

# *Mindful Walking*

If possible, try this exercise outside the first time you do it. Find a quiet place, such as a garden or park, where you can walk for 15-20 minutes without many distractions. At first, try walking as if in slow motion and choose a short walkway on which you can walk back and forth. [pause 10 seconds]

## POSTURE

Start by checking your posture, which you can think of as a meditation in itself. Standing upright, you assume the Mountain Posture [see Box 9.5 in Chapter 9]. Keep your back straight but not stiff, and your shoulders and chest relaxed. Keep your head aligned with your spine, place your feet shoulder-width apart about 5-10 inches, and let your knees be relaxed, not locked. You may notice that when you slightly bend your knees, you feel more stable and become aware of the force of gravity keeping you in touch with the earth, moment by moment. [pause 10 seconds] Let your arms rest next to the sides of your body, or clasp your hands either in front of you or behind you. [pause 10 seconds]

## STANDING BODY AWARENESS

Awareness of your body is the first *foundation of mindfulness*, so as you stand, focus all your attention on the feelings in your body, especially the sensations in your feet. Become aware of your weight being supported by the soles of your feet, and notice that there are different degrees of pressure in different parts of your soles as they come into contact with the ground. [pause 10 seconds]

You may also notice the slight movements you make with your feet, legs, and other parts of your body in order to stay erect. [pause 10 seconds]

Notice these constant adjustments you make to maintain balance; ordinarily we take this ability (like many others) for granted. Once you pay more attention, you will understand why it took about 1 year to learn to stand on your own when you were little. [pause 10 seconds]

Direct your gaze toward the ground a short distance ahead of you. Notice the moment when you feel ready to initiate taking a step. [pause 30 seconds]

## WALKING

Begin to walk by slowly lifting the heel of one foot from the ground. As you initiate this movement, notice how the weight of your body begins to shift to your other leg. When your foot is completely off the ground, notice that the entire weight of your body is on the opposite foot and leg. Become aware of what you feel when your foot is raised and moves forward. Continue this first step until your foot gently reaches the ground, your heel softly landing first, followed by the rest of your foot. At the same time, bring your awareness to the other foot as it begins to lift from the ground to begin the second step. [pause 10 seconds]

(cont.)

### Script for Track 7 (cont.)

Also notice any other sensations in your body and any emotion you may be feeling, be it pleasure, calmness, boredom, curiosity, or whatever, moment by moment. [pause 1 minute]

During this meditation, you may notice particular moments, such as just when your foot leaves the ground, the phase when your foot moves through the air, and the moment when your foot settles on the ground once again. [pause 10 seconds] To focus your attention on these three phases, you might say to yourself the words “lifting,” “moving,” and “resting.” When you reach the end of your path, slowly turn around and become aware of the different sensations that occur while your body turns in the opposite direction. [pause 10 seconds]

Once you’ve turned around, stop and take a mindful breath and resume walking, being aware of the various sensations you are feeling. See if you can approach Mindful Walking with gentle curiosity, as if you were a child taking your first steps. Every step is an achievement, a new experience. [pause 1 minute]

You can vary your pace and rhythm during the meditation to observe how these increase or decrease your awareness. For example, what do you notice if you go from a very slow mindful walk to a mindful run? [pause 30 seconds]

Or you can choose to take some steps with your eyes closed or partially closed, and notice how your sense of balance changes. [pause 30 seconds]

You may also try to bring a smile to your face as you walk, and notice how what it feels like to walk with a smile. [pause 10 seconds] A smile can bring a sense of calmness and remind you that you are walking simply for the pleasure of walking aimlessly, without a goal or purpose. [pause 1 minute]

As with the other practices, if your mind wanders, simply notice it and, as soon as you can, do your best to gently bring it back to the present and to all the physical sensations created by walking, step by step. [pause 10 seconds] *Experience* the sensations instead of *thinking* about them (e.g., “My shoulders are tight, but they should feel relaxed”). Allow yourself to set aside judgments and negative mental states such as anxiety, boredom, shame, or sadness. [pause 10 seconds] Experiencing a feeling, such as the feeling of the weight of your body in the soles of your feet or an emotion, simply means observing it, being aware of it in the present moment and perceiving it without giving any meaning to it. [pause 10 seconds] Just as mindful breathing connects your body and your mind so that your attention is not lost in a haze of worries about the future or regrets about the past, in the same way Mindful Walking creates an integration of body and mind in the present moment, as you simply notice what is happening and nothing else. [pause 1 minute]

When you finish walking, stand still for a few moments and observe whether the physical sensations and emotions you felt at the beginning of the meditation are similar or different.

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Based on Bien and Didonna (2009).

## Script for Track 8

### *Mindful Movements and Stretching*

This exercise consists of a set of gentle stretching movements, performed slowly as you pay attention to your breath and the sensations in your body. One of the purposes of this practice is to learn to pay attention to your body's messages, to respect them, and to develop a deep sense of acceptance toward them. Another aim is to develop a sense of your body's integrity and to be present with your body. This is the first step toward taking care of it, whether you are in a state of suffering or well-being. Furthermore, this meditative experience allows you to cultivate unity of mind and body through a disciplined practice. You will become aware of your limits with a curious and gentle approach, without ever exceeding or violating them.

During this practice you will learn to become aware of your bodily experience. More specifically, you will direct your attention to your body's movements and the change in sensation that occurs as you gently tense and relax parts of your body.

These are not workout exercises. You should not try to exert effort or strain in practicing them. The goal is simply to become an aware observer of the changes you feel in your body, moment by moment, as your body moves, contracts, and relaxes. This is a form of meditation in motion.

If you find any movements difficult, tiring, or painful, simply stop the movement and proceed to the next exercise.

Always remember that there is no right or wrong way to do the exercise. Do it however you can and that will be fine. There is no result to be achieved, no performance in which you must excel.

### **MOUNTAIN POSTURE**

As in all meditative practices, posture plays an important role in this exercise, because the way you position your body from moment to moment has a significant effect on your mental and emotional states. Maintaining a posture that conveys a sense of presence, calm, stability, grounding, and deep dignity is, in itself, a form of meditation. [pause 10 seconds] Take on the standing position known as the *Mountain Posture*, in which you keep your back straight but not stiff, your feet parallel and about 8 inches/20 centimeters apart, your shoulders and chest relaxed, your neck and head aligned with your spine, your knees relaxed and slightly bent, and your arms along your sides with your palms open and loose. [pause 10 seconds] Now try to close your eyes and notice the sensations of contact between the soles of your feet and the ground, becoming aware that there are varying levels of pressure in different areas of your soles, simply because most feet are not perfectly flat. [pause 10 seconds]

Focusing with greater attention, you may also notice the micro-movements of shifting that your body carries out to maintain an upright position, helping you realize that the standing posture is not something that "just happens," but rather must be actively maintained and constantly monitored by your body—something that took more than a year of your life to learn in your pretoddler days. If you bend your knees slightly more, you will perhaps feel more contact through a greater sense of pressure on the ground. [pause 10 seconds]

(cont.)

### Script for Track 8 (cont.)

As in all meditative experiences, during this practice thoughts may appear, and your mind will tend to wander elsewhere, moving you away from the awareness of your bodily sensations. When this happens, simply notice it happening, make yourself aware of where your mind is wandering, which thoughts are going through your mind at that moment, and then, each time, as soon as possible, intentionally bring your attention back to the sensations in your body and to the movement you are making in the present moment. Even if your mind wanders a thousand times, a thousand times bring your attention back to your body, your feelings, back to the present moment. [pause 10 seconds]

### ARM MOVEMENT

When you feel ready, open your eyes and look in front of you, and, as you breathe in, slowly try lifting your arms 90°, parallel to the floor. [pause 5 seconds]



After a short pause, notice the tension in your arms, and as you breathe out, slowly bring your arms back to your side and stay in this position for a few seconds. [pause 5 seconds]

Now breathe in deeply and lift your arms again; keep them stretched out for a while as you hold your breath, as if you were “spreading your wings ready to take off,” . . . [pause 5 seconds] and then bring your arms gently back along your sides as you breathe out. [pause 5 seconds]

Repeat this movement once more, for the third time, breathing in when you open and stretch out your arms, and breathing out as you gently bring them back down to your sides. [pause 10 seconds]

### HANDS ON SHOULDERS, ARMS OPENING

Now place your hands on your shoulders, elbows and upper arms open. As you deeply breathe in, open your arms sideways with palms upward, holding your breath for a few seconds. [pause 5 seconds] Then slowly, as you breathe out, without rushing, let your arms and hands drift back to your shoulders. [pause 5 seconds]



Remember to direct your attention to the change in sensations between the phase of tension and the phase of relaxation.

Repeat this movement once again, opening your arms outwards as you breathe in, as if you were opening up like a beautiful flower, . . . [pause 5 seconds] and then closing them gently as you breathe out, bringing your hands back to your shoulders. [pause 5 seconds]

Try this movement again for the third time, carefully noticing how the feelings change moment by moment. [pause 10 seconds]

### LEFT FOOT, ARM, AND HAND MOVEMENT

Now move your left foot a little more forward than the right one in an oblique position, distancing your feet about 8 inches/20 centimeter; gently rest your left hand on your left thigh, while your right hand is stretched out along your right side. When you are ready, start to lift your left hand very slowly, closed loosely in a fist with your index finger extended, as if pointing. While lifting your arm, keep your eyes on the tip of your index finger, noticing how the sensations in your arm change as you lift it upward. [pause 5 seconds]



Remember that the movement is so slow that seen from by observers, the arm should almost seem motionless. [pause 5 seconds] Lift your arm as high as you can, with index finger pointing upward, stretching it as far as it can go without making any extra effort, as if you were trying to touch imaginary clouds in the sky above you. [pause 5 seconds] When you become aware of a feeling of tension or discomfort, you can decide to slowly bring your arm back down, just as slowly as you raised it, keeping your visual attention focused on the

*(cont.)*

### Script for Track 8 (cont.)

tip of your index finger and the sensations you are feeling in your arm as you gently bring it back down. [pause 5 seconds]

Bring your left foot back and stay in the Mountain Pose for a few seconds, focusing on the sensations in your body. [pause 10 seconds]

### RIGHT FOOT, ARM, HAND MOVEMENT

When you feel ready, repeat the same exercise but this time bring your right foot forward at an angle, rest your right hand on your right thigh, and hold your left hand stretched along your left side. When you want to, begin to slowly raise your right hand, closed loosely in a fist, with the index finger extended, as if pointing, and keep your eyes on the tip of your index finger while lifting it, noticing how the sensations change in your right arm as you move it upward. [pause 5 seconds] Lift your arm and hand as high as you can, stretching your arm upward as far as it goes without excessive effort, and stay with this sense of tension for a few seconds. [pause 10 seconds]

When you feel ready, slowly bring your arm down at the same speed you raised it, keeping your eyes on the tip of your index finger and your attention on the sensations you feel in your arm as you gently bring it back down. [pause 10 seconds]

Stand still and for a few seconds observe what you are feeling in your body in this moment. [pause 10 seconds]

### LIFTING ARMS, BALANCE ON LEFT LEG

Now stand with your feet together and keep a firm and stable balance which shifting your weight to your left leg. Keep your left knee slightly bent and the sole of your foot firmly rooted on the ground and slowly open your arms sideways and keep them stretched out at a 90° angle; at the same time, stretch your right leg sideways, lifting your right foot a few inches off the floor as you breathe in. [pause 5 seconds]



Hold your breath for a while, then as you breathe out, slowly bring your right foot back to the floor and bring it back toward your left foot while you slowly lower your arms and bring them back to your sides. [pause 5 seconds]

Now, once again, open your arms sideways as you breathe in and, at the same time,



when you feel stable, lift your right foot a few inches off the ground, placing all your weight on your left leg. Keeping this position of tension, hold your breath for a while and then let your breath out as you slowly lower your right foot to the ground. [pause 5 seconds]

### **LIFTING ARMS, BALANCE ON RIGHT LEG**

Now try to repeat this exercise, keeping your balance on your right leg: extend your arms sideways as you breathe in and, at the same time, lift your left foot off the ground, holding your left leg slightly sideways. [pause 5 seconds]

Then when you feel ready, as you breathe out, slowly bring your left foot back to the floor and your right foot while you slowly lower your arms and bring them back to your sides. [pause 10 seconds]

The following exercise allows you to observe your sense of balance in this moment, but also to develop it over time through practice.

### **TREE POSTURE: BALANCE ON RIGHT LEG, SLIDE LEFT FOOT TO KNEE**

Stand in a stable, well-grounded position, with your back straight, hands on the side or on hips, knees relaxed and feet close to each other; keep your gaze on a point on the floor about 3 yards/meters in front of you. When you feel ready, try to hold your balance standing only on your right leg, keeping the sole of your right foot firmly on the ground while you slowly raise your left foot from the ground and slide it along your right leg until it reaches your right knee.

Stay in this position as long as you can and, if you feel you can easily keep your balance, you can choose to move your hands from your side or hips, lift them outwards and over your head, clasping your hands together and stretching upward as much as possible. Try to keep this position, as if you were a tree, with your right foot keeping your roots in the earth, and your hands and arms stretched upward like leaves and branches toward the sky.



If you can, try to stay for a few seconds in this position, breathing deeply along with your tree pose, [pause 10 seconds] and, when you are ready, separate your hands, letting

*(cont.)*

### Script for Track 8 (cont.)

your arms and hands drift back to your sides, and slowly slide your left foot gently to the ground. Stand still for a few seconds and observe what you are feeling in your body in this moment. [pause 10 seconds]

### **TREE POSTURE: BALANCE ON LEFT LEG, SLIDE RIGHT FOOT TO KNEE**

Repeat the exercise, this time trying to keep your balance on your left leg and sliding your right foot up your calf until it touches your left knee. When you feel ready, lift your hands from your side or hips upward, above your head, interweaving your fingers like branches of a tree and stretching gently upward.

Hold this position as long as you can, focusing your attention on your breath, your feelings, and your posture, [pause 5 seconds] and, when you are ready, bring your arms and hands back to your sides or hips and slowly slide your right foot back to the ground.

Stand still for a few seconds, just observing what is happening in your body in the present, moment by moment, breath by breath. [pause 10 seconds]

### **SUNBIRD POSE**

Position yourself as if you were about to crawl, with your hands and knees resting on a carpet or mat and keeping your back perfectly straight, parallel to the floor. Lift your head and focus your gaze forward; when you feel ready, while you slowly breathe in, extend your right arm in front of you with index finger pointing forward, and, at the same time, lift and stretch out your left leg behind you, keeping your eyes focused on the tip of the outstretched index finger of your right hand.



Stay in this position for a few seconds, holding your breath, without creating any discomfort to yourself, and then slowly breathe out while you bring back your right arm and left leg back to the floor. [pause 5 seconds]

Repeat this movement once again with your right arm and hand and left leg, gently, without too much effort, and link the inbreath phase with extending your limbs and the outbreath phase with bringing them back to their original position. As you are doing this, observe how the feelings change in these two phases. Repeat this movement again for a third time, consciously breathing in and out. [pause 10 seconds]

Now try the same movement but this time stretching out your left arm and right leg as you breathe in [pause 5 seconds] and gently relaxing them as you breathe out. [pause 5 seconds] Repeat this movement again, breathing in while you stretch out your limbs [pause

5 seconds] and breathing out while you relax them. [pause 5 seconds] Then one last time, gently stretch your arm and leg out while breathing in [pause 5 seconds], and relax them while breathing out. [pause 5 seconds]

## LYING DOWN

Finally, lie down on your back on the mat or carpet with your legs extended, the tips of your toes outward, and the palms of your hands facing up.



If this does not create any discomfort to you, allow your eyes to gently close, and pay careful attention to the sensations in your body following the previous movements. [pause 5 seconds] Notice what your body is telling you now, moment by moment. [pause 10 seconds]

During this resting phase, different thoughts may appear that will tend to move you away from the awareness of your sensations in the present moment. When this happens, simply notice that your mind is wandering elsewhere and decide to return as soon as possible to the sensations in your body, moment by moment. [Pause 10 seconds]

Give yourself permission to be with yourself in this nonjudgmental observing mode, in which there is nothing you need to do, nothing you need to achieve; simply be with yourself, accepting any experience occurring inside and outside of you, moment by moment.

## Script for Track 9

### *The Observing Mind Meditation*

Sit in a comfortable position, on the floor or on a chair, making sure you keep your back straight but not stiff, your shoulders and chest relaxed. When you feel ready, you may close your eyes if this makes you feel at ease. Do your best to steady your posture and hold your body erect and calm. Notice the sensations of contact between your body and the surface welcoming it. Feel the way your body is rooted to the ground and to all that is now supporting it. Remember that at any time, calming the body is the first step to calming the mind. [pause 10 seconds]

When you feel you have grounded your posture sufficiently, draw your attention to your breathing. [pause 5 seconds] Simply bring your attention to the sensations that breathing creates in your abdomen as you breathe in and breathe out. [pause 5 seconds] Notice how the abdomen gently expands when air enters and delicately deflates when air flows out. [pause 5 seconds] Use awareness of your breathing and posture as an anchor that keeps you rooted to the present moment and that can allow you to observe any internal or external events without being disturbed or taken away by any of them. [pause 10 seconds]

Now, remaining anchored to your breath, kindly direct your awareness to the **flow of thoughts** that spontaneously appear in your mind from moment to moment: the products of the *Thinking Mind*. [pause 5 seconds] Do not try to think about any particular thoughts. Let thoughts arise spontaneously. [pause 30 seconds]

Now shift your attention to the part of the mind that observes and ask yourself: “How am I observing the flow of my thoughts and my emotions? [pause 5 seconds] What kind of observer am I? [pause 5 seconds] Can I manage to be neutral and nonjudgmental toward my thoughts, or do I tend to enter into a relationship with these thoughts? [pause 5 seconds] Do I give them a meaning? [pause 5 seconds] Do I treat them as if they were facts or reality?” [pause 5 seconds]

Try to recognize what attitudes, expectations, judgments, or prejudices you have toward those thoughts or what goals you have given yourself in relation to them. [pause 30 seconds] Then gently bring your attention back to your breath by noticing the sensations it creates as you breathe in and breathe out. [pause 15 seconds]

Once again, direct your awareness to the flow of thoughts that spontaneously arise in your mind and start **counting the thoughts** that occur, assigning a progressive number to each of them. For example, an image appears, thought No. 1; a sentence or a judgment appears, thought No. 2; then a scene or a memory, thought No. 3; a doubt or concern, thought No. 4. If the same thought reappears several times, give it a new number each time it appears and keep on counting. [pause 15 seconds]

When you do this, you can begin to recognize the *observing part of your mind*, the one counting the thoughts, and the *thinking part*, the one producing those thoughts. [pause 5 seconds] Notice how neutral and insubstantial your thoughts are when they are simply numbered, without judging or preference. [pause 5 seconds] Recognize what harmless and transient events they are. [pause 30 seconds]

Now imagine, as vividly as you can, that you are comfortably sitting on the grassy **bank of a stream**. The stream represents your Thinking Mind. [pause 10 seconds] At some point, imagine you can see your thoughts flowing along this stream, floating on leaves, or if you prefer, paper boats, relentlessly carried by the current. [pause 5 seconds] Do your best to

suspend any judgment of or reaction to these floating thoughts. [pause 5 seconds] Some thoughts may stay for some time, as if they are temporarily blocked by some rocks in the stream, but then you realize that even those thoughts, at some point, will inevitably start to follow the flow of the current again, until they disappear from your field of vision. [pause 5 seconds] We do not know exactly when this will happen, but we are certain it will happen. [pause 30 seconds]

You can stop for a while to observe the moment in which a thought arises, how long it stays in your mind, and the moment it disappears. [pause 5 seconds] All thoughts follow this cycle, if we do nothing to them. [pause 15 seconds]

As you observe, you may also recognize the shape of the thoughts (e.g., words, sentences, images or scenes, sounds) and their content (e.g., the sentence “Did I lock the door?” an image of something or an event, a memory of a past experience). [pause 10 seconds] Then you may make the profound realization that regardless of the shape and content of the thoughts that appear in your mind, all of them are just intangible, transient, and harmless mental events. [pause 30 seconds]

Sometimes in your life you may feel as if you were in the middle of the stream, at the mercy of the current, carried away by disturbing thoughts, rather than sitting on the bank. [pause 5 seconds] This could happen even during this practice. [pause 5 seconds] If this happens, try to realize as soon as possible that a thought made you fall in the stream and is carrying you away, and each time do your best to get back to the shore and *sit back down on the bank of the stream* [pause 30 seconds]

As you continue to observe, you can start asking yourself if the thoughts that are appearing from time to time are useful or not. *Useful thoughts* are consistent with your values, intentions, and reality; help you to reach your healthy goals and meet your healthy needs; or just create a sense of well-being that makes you feel the way you want to feel. The *not useful* thoughts are simply all the others; those which you do not need to achieve your goals or which feed you with uncomfortable emotions. [pause 5 seconds] Do your best to be objective, honest, and realistic as you try to determine which thoughts are useful and which are not, keeping in mind that most of the thoughts you observe are not useful. [pause 5 seconds] If they are useful, then you can decide to cultivate those thoughts to achieve some benefit or pleasure; if, however, they are not useful, simply leave them where they are, without doing anything to them, and then let them go when they want to leave. This is the power of the *Observing Mind*. [pause 30 seconds]

At some point change the scene and imagine you are sitting comfortably at a table in an open-air coffee bar facing a street. You are drinking your favorite drink and watching the traffic passing by on the road. [pause 10 seconds]

Begin to become aware that the road looks a lot like your mind: Sometimes it is very busy with thoughts, and other times it can be deserted. Regardless of the number of vehicles on the road, or what kind of vehicles they are, you understand that the function of the road is to allow vehicles to move. In the same way, your Thinking Mind allows thoughts to move, no matter how many there are or what those thoughts are. If you simply observe them with your Observing Mind, without doing anything, the content or frequency of the thoughts does not matter. [pause 10 seconds]

Now imagine that there is a lot of traffic. What could happen if you, your Observing Mind, decides to get up from the coffee bar chair and suddenly throw you in the middle of the road? Your sudden appearance in the middle of the busy road would probably create

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## Script for Track 9 (cont.)

incredible chaos with vehicles blocking or crashing into one another—sometimes this is the type of confusion in your head. [pause 5 seconds] Even worse, a vehicle might crash into you and carry you away. [pause 5 seconds] Isn't this what happens when you are carried away in the flow of disturbing thoughts? [pause 10 seconds]

You can also imagine then that at some point, you can mindfully move to the curb and flag down a taxi to take you to your chosen destination. [pause 5 seconds] This is what happens when you recognize and choose to follow useful thoughts, which will lead you toward your important goals. [pause 15 seconds]

At some point, once again imagine being comfortably seated on the bank of the stream (or if you prefer the coffee bar, you can stay there). When you feel ready, you can intentionally bring to mind one of your disturbing thoughts. [pause 10 seconds] Try to have it clear in your head, and, from the start, do your best to treat it as a harmless, transient event. [pause 5 seconds] Imagine it floating on a leaf down the stream (or as a vehicle passing on the road). [pause 10 seconds] Use the Observing Mind to distance yourself from that thought. [pause 5 seconds] To do this, it might help to say the following sentences with conviction and kindness: "This thought is just a thought, not a fact"; "It is a harmless and transient mental event"; "This thought is not reality, but just the expression of my fears and worries"; "It's just a symptom of my OCD"; and/or "Thoughts, in themselves, have no power, if I decide not to give it to them." [pause 30 seconds]

It can be also very helpful to follow the next four steps (which follow the acronym "ORAL") as you relate to your disturbing thought:

**O**bserve: Just focus your attention to the particular thought [pause 10 seconds] and then . . .

**R**ecognize: Be aware of the content and form of the thought. Is it a word or sentence? Is it an image or a scene? [pause 20 seconds]

**A**llow: Gently decide to give the thought the permission to temporarily stay in your mind, without reacting or judging it in any way, just letting it be. [pause 20 seconds]

**L**et it go: After letting the thought be, you may just let it go when it naturally has to disappear, without getting caught up in it, judging it, avoiding it or fighting it. [pause 20 seconds]

Do your best to always be **friendly and welcoming** to all thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations that appear from time to time. [pause 5 seconds]

Remember that you are always a mere observer of the flow of thoughts and not what thoughts say you are. [pause 5 seconds] You do not have to react to them each time they appear, just as we do not react to all the sounds we hear, and we do not think we are those sounds only because we have heard them. [pause 10 seconds]

Finally, you can return fully to your breath, now expanding your awareness with your breath throughout your body as a whole. [pause 5 seconds] Your breathing is now a global experience. The air enters your entire body during the inbreath, nourishing every cell in your body, and then allows you to let go your thoughts with a sense of freedom during the outbreath. Your breath is certainty in your life, beyond any thoughts.

## Script for Track 10

# ***R.E.A.L. Acceptance Practice*** ***Four Steps toward Acceptance***

Each time you notice strong emotional discomfort, physical pain, or distressful thoughts in your everyday life, you can take the following steps to cultivate a deep, liberating sense of acceptance.

First, stop and tune into the present moment. Find a comfortable and stable posture, either sitting or lying down. [pause 15 seconds] Then focus your attention on your breath, noticing how your abdomen feels rising and falling, or how the air feels in your nostrils during the inbreath and the outbreath. [pause 15 seconds]

When you are ready and you feel sufficiently grounded in your breath, do your best to keep in touch with the disturbing experience, whether it is a thought, an emotion, or a physical sensation. If it is not present now, try to recall it as vividly as possible and then you can begin to direct a gentle and deep attention to your inner experience by taking the following steps:

### **STEP 1. RECOGNIZING**

- Keeping your breath as an anchor, become aware of the discomfort or pain. Describe it precisely. Is it caused by a thought, an emotion, a physical sensation? A sound? A smell? Do not judge it in any way. It is neither terrible nor unfair; it is simply your experience in this moment. Ask yourself with gentle curiosity, “What exactly is happening inside of me in this moment?”; “What do I consider uncomfortable in myself right now?”; “What hurts?” [pause 10 seconds]
- Bear in mind that you are not trying to get in touch with a negative event in your life, but rather with the inner states that may be activated by that event. [pause 10 seconds]
- If it is an emotion, try to give it a name. Is it anxiety, anger, sadness, disgust, shame? What name can you give it? [pause 10 seconds] If it is a physical sensation, describe its physical quality. Do you feel tension, pain, cold? [pause 10 seconds] If it is a thought creating discomfort, try to describe its *content* (e.g., “I’m thinking I didn’t do enough this morning”; or “Someone is criticizing me”). [pause 10 seconds] Also describe the thought’s *form*; is it words or statements, images or scenes? [pause 30 seconds]

### **STEP 2. EXPLORING EXPERIENCE**

- Gradually open and expand your awareness around of what is disturbing you. [pause 5 seconds] Ask yourself some questions to further clarify what is happening within you: “Where in my body do I feel this discomfort?” [pause 5 seconds] “What physical sensations am I feeling now?” [pause 5 seconds] Direct your attention to the part of your body where the discomfort is manifesting itself. [pause 10 seconds]
- As you breathe in, imagine the air flowing into that part of your body. [pause 3 seconds] Observe the sensations with a sense of gentle openness and welcoming. [pause 3 seconds] Use your breath to anchor yourself in the moment. [pause 5 seconds]

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### Script for Track 10 (cont.)

- Keeping this attitude of curious attention, you can now ask yourself: “What emotions, sensations, or memories are connected to this experience?” [pause 5 seconds] For example, did this thought activate anxiety, disgust, or tension in the stomach? [pause 5 seconds] You might notice particular patterns of thought that frequently repeat themselves, judgments or feelings of fear, or guilt or shame connected to memories. [pause 10 seconds] Sometimes repetitive thoughts serve to help us avoid a sense of emptiness, loneliness, unsatisfied needs, hidden fears, mistrust, or parts of yourself you do not accept, such as difficult past events. [pause 10 seconds] These repetitive thoughts often try to reassure you that everything is all right or under control; or, they judge you severely and discourage you. [pause 10 seconds]
- *Exploring* means allowing yourself to get to know and understand the truth and the reality of your inner experience. Doing so sometimes sheds light on experiences that are beyond your awareness. For example, if you are feeling anxious, afraid, or hurt, you might ask yourself, “What do I notice right now?” Perhaps you might notice that memories of past failures or feelings of mistrust have been triggered. Consciously giving a name to what you think or feel can reduce its pressure. [pause 10 seconds]
- If you feel lost in disturbing thoughts at times, remember to ask yourself, “What is my body feeling now?” This question can help you take a step back from doubts, judgments, or negative predictions—the *territory of the thinking mind*. [pause 10 seconds]
- Make direct contact with your vulnerability and the wounds communicated by your body. This could lead to the memories of feeling rejected or excluded, and then to feelings of shame, pain, or loneliness. [pause 10 seconds]
- The pain of your expectations not being met [pause 5 seconds], or the pain or fear of losing someone you love, or the pain of seeing someone you love suffering [pause 5 seconds] and knowing there is nothing you can do about it. [pause 5 seconds]
- Becoming *aware* of these parts of your experience means beginning to step out of the control they have on your life and their ability to make you feel inadequate and constantly threatened. [pause 10 seconds]
- Offer a gentle welcome and be open to whatever is emerging, to ensure that this exploration is a source of liberation. [pause 5 seconds]
- As you open up to this space within you, you might begin to realize that this kind of suffering is not only your suffering, it is everyone’s suffering. It is part of the human condition and a normal part of life. [pause 15 seconds]

### STEP 3. ACCEPTING

- Once you have explored the experience of discomfort, allow yourself to accept it fully. *Accepting* means letting thoughts, emotions, and sensations arise in your experience, allowing them to happen and giving them hospitality within yourself in a gentle way. [pause 5 seconds]
- Acceptance is an active intention to allow your present experience to be what it is, without reacting to it, avoiding it, or fighting against it. It is simply a willingness to see things as they *really* are. [pause 5 seconds]



- By staying with the experience without reacting to it, you will notice that in life everything is impermanent, everything flows. You can observe this continuous process of change in all your internal states, thoughts, emotions, and sensations. [pause 10 seconds]
- It may be useful at times to mentally whisper a sentence or a word of encouragement to yourself to strengthen your willingness to accept your discomfort right now. For example, you may feel anxiety and whisper, “Let it be, it doesn’t hurt.” You may notice a disturbing thought and say to yourself, “It is just a thought. I allow it to be there, but I will not engage it.” [pause 5 seconds] You may experience deep pain or a sense of emptiness and whisper, “It is OK. Whatever I am feeling is OK; it is only a harmless experience in this moment. It will not last long.” [pause 5 seconds] In this way, you will learn to soften your defenses and feel a liberating sense of openness to the continuous flow of experiences. [pause 10 seconds]
- Notice if you have any resistance to accepting your discomfort in this moment. [pause 10 seconds] Sometimes, the very idea of allowing and accepting causes strong resistance. You might say to yourself, “How can I accept such terrible thoughts?” or “How can I say to myself that it’s OK when I keep feeling anxiety, disgust, or shame?” Acceptance is not a question of liking what you are feeling. It is simply allowing yourself to feel the present experience and avoid spending energy trying to change something that, in this particular moment, cannot be changed. It saves your energy for changing what is instead possible and useful to change. [pause 10 seconds]
- Often a single attempt at acceptance is not enough. It may be necessary to repeatedly allow and accept, and to try to recognize the more subtle ways in which you resist fear and pain. [pause 10 seconds]

#### **STEP 4. LETTING GO**

- Focusing on your breath, do your best to create a distance between yourself and the uncomfortable experience, recognize that you are not this experience, and reassert that this experience is impermanent and will disappear sooner or later. [pause 5 seconds]
- Become aware that you are not what you think, feel, or perceive. [pause 5 seconds]
- Avoid any resistance or reaction toward the uncomfortable experience; just simply leave it as it is and notice how it changes over time, just by doing nothing. [pause 5 seconds]
- When you have “disturbing” thoughts, welcome and accept them in a kind way, without reacting to them, regardless of their content, without judging them and without judging yourself for thinking them. [pause 3 seconds] Recognize that they are simply harmless, passing, and transient mental events. [pause 3 seconds] If they are useful, use them to your advantage; but if they are not useful, simply let them go. [pause 10 seconds]
- Breathe with them and accompany them with a sense of softening, opening, allowing. [pause 10 seconds]
- Allow yourself to gently breathe into all of this [pause 5 seconds], letting it be there. [pause 10 seconds]
- Let go of all attempts to change anything; [pause 3 seconds] let go of fighting and resisting. [pause 5 seconds]

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### Script for Track 10 (cont.)

- Let yourself relax in what emerges in each moment, with each breath. [pause 5 seconds]
- As you allow yourself to feel all of this more and more deeply, you may begin to feel a space inside of you expanding until it includes all the hurt and disappointments, all the loneliness and losses, even the traumas and tragedies. [pause 10 seconds]
- Relax as this great space opens inside, receiving whatever each moment brings to you. [pause 5 seconds]
- Let go, without changing anything, letting it all be there just as it is. In this letting go, allow yourself to be as you are. You can allow things to be the way they are. And as you relax, you may begin to feel a sense of freedom in letting be and letting go, in not trying to change things, yourself, or someone else. This freedom comes from accepting pain, fear, and disappointment as part of life, without having to change anything. [pause 5 seconds]
- In this letting go, you may perhaps feel peace and silence and relaxation expanding in the peace and silence. [pause 30 seconds]

Now, slowly allow yourself to come back to your body and breath, feeling your body lying down or sitting, and taking some deep and mindful breaths, cultivating a deep feeling of letting go. Lastly expand your awareness to your whole body and to the space surrounding you, and in this openness you can remind yourself that you are much more than this pain and discomfort. [pause 5 seconds] Finally, you may direct a sense of sincere **gratitude** toward yourself for granting yourself this time and this space of deep healing contact with yourself and your suffering.

## ***Mindful Exposure***

1. **Find a position** (standing or sitting) that allows you to feel present and grounded and conveys a sense of stability and security. [pause 5 seconds]
2. **Clarify your motivation** in doing what you are about to do; the mindful exposure strategy can be a powerful tool for learning to stay in touch with difficult situations. It is helpful in extinguishing rituals and safety behaviors and increasing feelings of trust, safety, and an appropriate sense of reality. [pause 5 seconds]
3. Before and during the exposure, try to always have the therapeutic **goal** clear in your mind; understand the real, useful purpose of the behavior you are about to carry out (e.g., normalizing, decentering, and developing acceptance of your thoughts and feelings; doing something in a normal way, like washing your hands quickly or preventing checking behaviors). When you feel the desire to resort to your rituals, always reconnect to this purpose. Notice when the action you are carrying out is not useful or is unnecessary or even harmful. [pause 5 seconds]
4. If your ritual is the *time* you spend doing something—for example, washing your hands for 20 minutes or taking a shower for 1-2 hours—**define the time limits** you need to respect from the start. In order to do so, place an alarm clock in front of you so you can observe it during the exposure. For example, decide to give yourself a time limit of 2 or 3 minutes to wash your hands or 10-15 minutes to take a shower. Before starting the exposure, check the time and check it during the exposure every now and then to see how long you are taking. [pause 5 seconds]
5. Before starting the exposure procedure, **practice a mindfulness exercise** that will help you to enter a state of mind that is stable, balanced, and focused on the present (e.g., Sitting Meditation, Mindfulness of the Breath, the Breathing Space exercise). Completely open up your mindful attention and your senses. Concentrate on your breath, using it as an anchor with which to dedicate yourself to the exposure, staying focused on the reality of the here and now during the exposure, and not on distressing thoughts. [pause 10 seconds]
6. After the mindfulness practice, intentionally **decide to begin the exposure** exercise, taking a mindful attitude toward what you are about to do.
7. Start **entering into contact with the situation, object, or stimulus that triggers** distress or obsessive symptoms. If it is not physically possible to create this contact where you are in this moment, imagine the feared situation or object in the most vivid and realistic way possible. To remain centered in the present moment, remember to direct your attention to an anchor such as your body posture, sensations created by your breathing, or what your senses are telling you. Observe any internal and external events from your anchor in the here and now. [pause 10 seconds]
8. **Notice the level of distress** present in this moment using the scaling of 0-100. [pause 5 seconds]

(cont.)

**Script for Track 11** *(cont.)*

9. Do your best to **stay in contact with the disturbing situation or stimulus** or to carry out the action that is creating distress in the most natural and normal way possible, as a friend or a relative might do. [pause 15 seconds]
10. Try to **become aware of any thought, sensation, or emotion** that occurs. [pause 5 seconds] Observe and actively describe these inner states as if you were an external witness, without judging them or assigning meaning to them. For example, you could describe anxiety as a set of harmless thoughts and physical sensations, and even if they increase, they cannot lead to dangerous consequences for you or others. [pause 20 seconds]
11. **Pay attention to what you feel in your body** and how it may change from moment to moment. [pause 20 seconds]
12. **Actively listen to and trust all your senses.** Try asking yourself: “What do I really see in this moment?” [pause 10 seconds] “What can I really feel by touching the object?” [pause 10 seconds] “What can I smell?” [pause 10 seconds] Do not ever judge your senses. [pause 20 seconds]
13. Always **remember that thoughts are only harmless and transient mental events.** [pause 5 seconds] Do your best to not react to them. [pause 5 seconds] Never do what the thoughts tell you to do just because they have occurred. [pause 5 seconds] These thoughts are only an expression of your OCD; they are not orders you must obey. [pause 10 seconds]
14. Remember to **observe your breath** as often as possible as a way of staying in touch with the present moment. [pause 5 seconds] Use your breath as an anchor. [pause 10 seconds]
15. **Cultivate acceptance.** [pause 5 seconds] Welcome, allow, and let any inner state be whatever it is. [pause 5 seconds] This is the most effective way to ensure that it will eventually disappear. [pause 5 seconds] You could whisper to yourself, “Let it be,” [pause 5 seconds] or say to yourself, “I allow it to be present, but I will not engage it,” [pause 5 seconds] or “It’s OK, whatever I feel; it is OK. It is only my experience in this moment. It will not last long.” [pause 10 seconds]
16. **Notice** what your **level of distress** is in this moment on a scale of 0-100. [pause 10 seconds]
17. It may be useful to **mentally repeat sentences or quotations** used during the group sessions of the program. For example, “Thoughts are only harmless mental events, not facts,” [pause 5 seconds] “Thoughts and emotions are transient and impermanent events,” [pause 5 seconds] or “Thoughts have no power over us if we do not give it to them.” [pause 10 seconds]
18. You can observe thoughts passing through your mind without judging them. [pause 5 seconds] You can also **use images or metaphors** to help you to distance yourself from them, as if you were looking at them from the outside: for example, imagine thoughts

as white clouds in the blue sky that pass by and disappear. [pause 10 seconds] Thoughts can come and go, like the scrolling end credits of a film, [pause 10 seconds] or as if they were flowing by in a stream. [pause 10 seconds] Never confuse your thoughts with facts. Facts are what your senses are communicating to you. [pause 5 seconds] **Listen to and trust your senses;** do not listen to your thoughts. [pause 10 seconds]

19. Carefully **notice how your distress level changes** during the exposure. [pause 5 seconds] As you remain in touch with the distressful situation, you may notice that anxiety might reach a high level and then tends to progressively decrease. [pause 10 seconds]
20. **During the exposure and afterward, do not engage in any ritual,** [pause 5 seconds] whether physical (e.g., washing, checking) or mental (e.g., saying sentences, counting). [pause 5 seconds] Try your best to avoid or let go of the ritual, and direct your attention once again to your physical or sensory experience in the present moment. [pause 5 seconds]
21. **Notice your level of distress** (on a scale of 0-100). Notice how distress expresses itself through physical sensations, and where they are located in your body. [pause 5 seconds] The exposure can end when you feel able to stay in touch with a distressful object or situation with only a slight level of distress (0-30). [pause 10 seconds]
22. **End this procedure with a mindfulness exercise** (e.g., the Breathing Space), which will help you to regain a sense of balance, stability, and presence. Refocus on your posture and breath. [pause 30 seconds]
23. After the exercise, **notice how you are feeling in this moment.** [pause 10 seconds] Recognize and be aware of what *really* happens following the exposure. You may want to congratulate yourself on allowing yourself to have faced a difficult and distressful event in a completely new and liberating way.

Script for Track 12

## ***Walking Meditation with Verbal Stabilizers***

This exercise brings together walking meditation with the use of words or phrases (also called *stabilizers*) that can help you to calm and steady your mind, and make you feel deeply grounded, relaxed and centered in the present moment. It is not just about repeating a word or a sentence. Create, as much as you can, a deep harmony between the action (the step), the elements represented by the words, and the breath. While you walk, do your best to synchronize one step and the inbreath with the first part of the following sentences, and the next step and the outbreath with the second part. At first it might seem difficult to synchronize all three elements, but after a few minutes you should be able to enter into an extraordinary harmony of your breathing, your walking and the words that stabilize you.

To begin, find a standing posture where you feel grounded and focus on your breath. [pause 10 seconds] When you feel ready, start to walk, silently saying the stabilizers as suggested below.

Inbreath

2 steps if your pace is normal,  
1 step if it is slow

1. As I walk . . .
2. With each sound . . .
3. With each breath . . .
4. With each step . . .

Outbreath

2 steps if your pace is  
normal, 1 step if it is slow

- the mind wanders.
- the mind returns.
- the heart opens.
- I touch the ground.

Continue to repeat the sentences over and over again, without any pause, synchronizing them with the breath and with the steps.

If you find it difficult to remember an entire line or sentence, it may be easier and simpler to remember one or two key words from each line, words that will remind you of the rest of the line:

. . . <i>walk</i>	. . . <i>wander</i>
. . . <i>sound</i>	. . . <i>return</i>
. . . <i>breath</i>	. . . <i>opening</i>
. . . <i>step</i>	. . . <i>ground</i>

Mentally repeat these words while you walk.

Repeat this cycle of *stabilizers* throughout the whole duration of your walk.

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Inspired by Thich Nhat Hanh.

## Script for Track 13

### *Self-Compassion Practice*

Find a comfortable sitting position, a posture that conveys a sense of stability and grounding, the sensation of being fully in this place, in this moment. [pause 5 seconds] Try to keep your back straight but not stiff, your shoulders and chest relaxed, your hands resting still, and if you are sitting on a chair feel your feet touching the ground. [pause 5 seconds] If it does not create discomfort, allow your eyes to close gently, and allow a calm to establish itself within you. Feel the contact between your body and the surface welcoming it. This contact tells you that you are in the here and now, in this moment. [pause 15 seconds]

After getting comfortable and after stabilizing your position, direct your attention to your breathing for a while. [pause 10 seconds] Do your best to breathe in a regular and calm way, noticing how the sensations change in your abdomen during each inbreath and outbreath. [pause 10 seconds] If you can, as much as possible try to make the inbreath last the same as the outbreath, perhaps counting 3 seconds for the inbreath, 1 second for the pause, and then 3 seconds for the outbreath. Calming your body, calming your breathing, and so calming your mind. [pause 10 seconds] You may notice the sensation of nourishment and energy each inbreath gives you as it takes oxygen into your body, and also the sensation of liberation with each outbreath, as the air exits through your nostrils or your mouth. [pause 15 seconds]

There are very few certainties in life. One is suffering, but another is breathing, something that has been with you from your first moment in this world and that will be with you until your last. The ability to stay with your breathing is the most powerful tool you have to overcome suffering. [pause 15 seconds]

Do your best to be aware of what you are experiencing and feeling, suspending any judgment about what is happening inside or outside of you. [pause 10 seconds] In this practice you will develop a quality called *self-compassion*, compassion toward yourself. Self-compassion is a feeling as well as a way of being that can liberate you from many difficult emotions and help you to develop a healthy relationship with your body and your mind, and a better connection with the world and the people around you. [pause 5 seconds]

To develop self-compassion, it is important to cultivate the following qualities with regularity and conviction over time.

The first quality is **wisdom**. Wisdom is awareness of the nature of things and understanding of the causes of suffering and the facts that lead to well-being. [pause 5 seconds] Wisdom is an ability that can be developed. It originates from the personal experiences you have had in life, the lessons you have drawn from them, and the ways in which you use them to grow as a person. [pause 5 seconds] It allows us to see reality as it is, freeing ourselves from our mental habits and conditionings. We are all the result of our own history, especially our early life experiences—a history we did not choose but that has shaped our minds and the way we react to events. [pause 5 seconds] We have become accustomed to having a mind that at times is full of worries and difficult emotions. We also know that, at other times, the mind can become calm and offer us joy and pleasure. Wisdom comes from a deep understanding and acceptance of our human nature, and it can be cultivated over time. As you sit here, in this calm and stable position, as you come to understand and accept all of this, you develop wisdom, moment by moment, day after day. [pause 15 seconds]

(cont.)

### Script for Track 13 (cont.)

The second quality of self-compassion is **acceptance**. Acceptance is the willingness to allow disturbing thoughts, emotions, and sensations to be with us, acknowledging that painful experiences are a normal and unavoidable part of human life. *Acceptance* means we stop fighting and resisting the things that we do not like. It also means accepting ourselves, just as we are, with all of our limitations, and being willing to suspend all judgment and criticism toward ourselves and our internal experience, recognizing that judging and criticizing ourselves are generally useless and self-destructive. [pause 5 seconds] We are trying to cultivate this willingness to stay in touch with our inner experience, as it is, just allowing thoughts, emotions, and sensations to come and go. [pause 15 seconds]

The third quality of self-compassion is **trust**. *Trust* is the willingness to open up to our internal and external experiences, understanding that by doing so, we might encounter different forms of suffering, but knowing that the suffering is not permanent and that we have the tools needed to find relief from it. [pause 5 seconds] Often we encounter things in life that might actually be useful for us but that we avoid because of our fears and mistrust. Do your best now to sit with a sense of dignity and pride. Slightly push your chest outward, pull your shoulders back slightly, and feel your body firmly grounded, anchored to the ground. [pause 5 seconds] You can feel the sensations of contact in your pelvis, buttocks, legs, your feet on the ground, feeling the ground or the chair supporting you. [pause 10 seconds] You are sitting in a position of openness. [pause 5 seconds] Now try to feel a space of calmness and tranquility within your body, an area or a point inside you that feels calm. [pause 10 seconds] This area of calmness can gradually expand to your whole body as you cultivate compassion toward yourself. [pause 15 seconds]

The fourth quality of self-compassion is a sense of **warmth** and **kindness** in relating to the external world, but first and foremost to ourselves. [pause 5 seconds] This means directing warmth and kindness toward our emotions, thoughts, and physical sensations, and to everything we feel within, to what is happening inside us, moment by moment. [pause 5 seconds] It means caring for our difficult feelings the way a parent cares for his or her frightened child, with a warm hug. [pause 5 seconds] Now imagine hugging your feelings and fears in the same warm way. [pause 15 seconds]

The fifth quality useful for developing self-compassion is **commitment**. *Commitment* is the clear intention and concrete willingness to do our best to alleviate and care for our suffering in the ways we are learning to do. [pause 5 seconds] It entails a desire to help ourselves and to make changes by suspending any habit, attitude, or behavior that continuously activates, feeds, and maintains our suffering. [pause 10 seconds] Within each of us there is a part that wants to be happy and also wants others to be happy. Concentrate now on this deep commitment; [pause 10 seconds] feel it and deeply cultivate it inside of yourself. [pause 15 seconds]

And now, staying deeply in contact with your breath and with your posture, which are always with you in the background, try to direct your mind toward someone you are deeply fond of, someone for whom you feel deep affection. [pause 15 seconds] If you have difficulty in finding someone in your life toward whom you feel this way, you can think of an animal you are very fond of, and think of the moments of suffering this person or animal may have experienced or may even be experiencing now. [pause 5 seconds] Do your best to get in touch with this suffering and a certain moment you may desire to express a sincere wish inside you, with your heart and not with your mind, toward this person or animal.



[pause 5 seconds] For example, during the inbreath you can think the sentence “**May you be happy**” and during the outbreath “**May you live in peace and free from suffering.**” [pause 15 seconds] You can also use other words that you feel are more sincere or spontaneous. [pause 5 seconds] What is important is to direct this intention, this feeling, and this wish toward that person or animal and toward his or her suffering. [pause 10 seconds] What matters is to do this only if you deeply feel this wish. [pause 10 seconds] You can repeat your statement(s) as many times as you want, as if your words could alleviate his or her suffering, a suffering that is surely present in all human beings and in all animals. [pause 10 seconds]

And once you have experienced this compassionate feeling and directed these compassionate wishes to a beloved person or animal, for a while try to imagine having a person beside you who represents and embodies compassion, altruism, and the ability to stay with and feel the suffering in others. [pause 10 seconds] It may be a person you have met in your life, or it can also be a religious or historical figure, or even a fictitious character from a novel or film. [pause 5 seconds] Imagine you have this person by your side. [pause 5 seconds] Imagine seeing the kind look on his or her face and feel the compassion this person exudes. [pause 10 seconds] You might feel as if you are “infected” by the feeling that this person is able to communicate and express. [pause 10 seconds] And when you feel in touch with this feeling, you can place both of your hands on the center of your chest, where your heart is, and very gently press your hands lightly against your chest [pause 5 seconds] (some prefer to rest their hands on their abdomen or their cheeks). When you are ready, do your best to become this person, directing a compassionate feeling toward yourself and toward your suffering, [pause 5 seconds] with the idea of taking care of your suffering, welcoming it within you, [pause 5 seconds] accepting it as a condition that is present now but is not eternal. It is impermanent, as everything is. [pause 5 seconds] Express the **intention to suspend**, as best as you can, all the **attitudes, behaviors, and habits** that tend to feed this suffering. [pause 10 seconds] Try to do these things only if you deeply feel them, not as a task to be carried out, but as a real, genuine, sincere intention. [pause 10 seconds] **Imagine seeing your face reflected in a mirror** (better still would be to actually look at yourself in a mirror), [pause 5 seconds] and, when you are ready, you may decide to direct toward yourself the sentences that you directed toward your beloved person or animal, perhaps saying to yourself during the inbreath “**May I be happy**” and during the outbreath “**May I live in peace and free from suffering.**” [pause 15 seconds] Say these words calmly, as something you deeply feel in your heart. [pause 10 seconds] Do your best to use the most compassionate tone you can also **creating a friendly, kind, soft facial expression** as you repeat these words in your head and in your heart. [pause 15 seconds] Focus on this strongly felt desire that all this can happen, on how wonderful it would be if you could find peace and happiness. [pause 10 seconds]

Each time you focus on this desire, this wish, gently notice what happens within you. [pause 5 seconds] What emotions do you feel? [pause 5 seconds] What thoughts occur in this moment? [pause 5 seconds] Is there any resistance? Remember that you are trying to do this in a mindful way, so if at times your mind wanders elsewhere, just gently bring it back each time. [pause 10 seconds] For about a minute, continue to mentally repeat to yourself “**May I be happy**” during the inbreath, and “**May I live in peace and free from suffering**” during outbreath. [pause 10 seconds] Do your best to feel these sentences with your heart more than with your head [pause 5 seconds] as you look at yourself in the mirror or imagine your face in front of you. [pause 45 seconds]

(cont.)

**Script for Track 13** *(cont.)*

Each time you realize there are thoughts that lead you elsewhere, gently bring your attention back to the compassionate sentences that you are sincerely and kindly directing toward yourself. [pause 20 seconds]

And now gradually let the image of yourself vanish and gently escort your awareness toward your breathing, breathing that now merges with a perception of your entire body, feeling it as a unity, as a whole, from the tips of your toes to the crown of your head. [pause 5 seconds] Feel your whole body, and at the same time feel your breath bringing oxygen to your body, to all the cells in your body. [pause 10 seconds] Feel your breath bringing energy and life inside you. [pause 10 seconds] And at the end of this practice you may wish to **congratulate yourself** on having cultivated this feeling of compassion and kindness toward yourself, a feeling for which you have a great need every day, every hour of each day, and perhaps commit to repeating this practice with dedication and regularity each day in this relatively brief but precious life.

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Based on Gilbert (2010).

## Script for Track 14

### *Self-Forgiveness Practice*

Find a place where you can be calm and undisturbed for a while, and then find a comfortable position, sitting on a cushion on the floor or on a chair, making sure that your back is straight but not stiff, in a posture that makes you feel stable and grounded and conveys a feeling of deep dignity and pride. [pause 10 seconds] At a certain point, after stabilizing your position, direct your attention to your breathing for a while. [pause 10 seconds] Try to make it regular and calm, noticing how the sensations change at the level of your abdomen during each inbreath and outbreath. [pause 20 seconds] When you feel comfortable, take some time to remember, sincerely and honestly, all the ways you realize you have caused pain and suffering to yourself. [pause 5 seconds] The ways in which you have damaged or hurt yourself, consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, through thoughts, words, or actions. [pause 30 seconds] Feel within yourself how much it has cost you. [pause 20 seconds] Feel the ways in which you judge yourself for what you have done to yourself. [pause 10 seconds] Visualize those ways and remember them; [pause 10 seconds] feel the pain they have caused you. [pause 10 seconds] Perhaps often these thoughts, words, or actions were meant to prevent harm or to make you feel safer, but now you can deeply recognize that the only real effect they have had was to hurt you, and perhaps other people as well. [pause 20 seconds]

These things you're calling to mind are like weights, dragging you down and sapping your energy, limiting your life in many ways. [pause 15 seconds] When you are ready, you might choose to let go of these useless weights, and you may decide to forgive yourself for each of them, one by one. [pause 10 seconds]

Now, if you wish to do so and if it feels comfortable doing so, bring one or both hands to your chest, where your heart is, or if you prefer, place them on your belly or on your cheeks. [pause 10 seconds] You may also wish to imagine seeing your face reflected in a mirror (better still would be to actually look at yourself in a mirror). [pause 10 seconds]

When you feel ready, you may gently silently repeat the following sentences to yourself, taking some time to feel each of them, pronouncing them slowly, one by one, but only to the extent that you are able to feel them with your heart and not only understand them with your mind. [pause 5 seconds] These are not prayers, but a clear and sincere expression of intents, principles, and ways of feeling that you know are essential for the well-being of your present and future life. [pause 5 seconds]

*As a human being, I have damaged and hurt myself in many ways.* [pause 5 seconds]

*I have betrayed and offended myself several times with thoughts, words, and actions, either voluntarily or involuntarily.* [pause 15 seconds]

*I grant myself full, heartfelt forgiveness for the ways in which I have hurt myself with the things I did or did not do out of fear, pain, or confusion.* [pause 10 seconds]

*I forgive myself.* [pause 30 seconds]

*I accept myself with my imperfections, limits, and weaknesses, recognizing that being human means being imperfect.* [pause 10 seconds]

*I accept myself as I am.* [pause 30 seconds]

*I want to welcome the experiences I live day after day for what they are, [pause 10 seconds] without continuously trying to change, fight, fix, or avoid them. [pause 15 seconds]*

*I forgive myself for the mistakes that as a human being I inevitably have made and will make. [pause 15 seconds]*

*I am aware that, without having to continuously try to prevent harm, I always do my best to do no harm to myself or others. [pause 15 seconds]*

*I take responsibility for what I do, [pause 5 seconds] and I do not worry about what I have not done and have no intention of doing. [pause 10 seconds]*

*I accept my condition as a human being. [pause 30 seconds]*

You may repeat these words until you truly feel these messages and intentions are yours and feel relief inside, as you continue to breathe gently and calmly. [pause 30 seconds]

Finally, gently escort your attention to your breath and posture once again, tuning into the here and now and perhaps now feeling greater freedom and openness to life and a greater connection toward everything that surrounds you.

## Script for Track 15

### *The Bus Driver Exercise*

Find a comfortable sitting position. In this practice it can be useful to sit on a chair, but you can also sit on a mat; try to keep your back straight but not stiff, your hands resting loosely in your lap. When you feel ready, close your eyes and begin to focus on your breath, trying to gradually stabilize it and to stabilize yourself in your breathing. [pause 20 seconds]

A metaphor is used in this imagery exercise: the metaphor of the bus driver. Several things will happen in this story, in which you are invited to face what you truly want from your life, such as your healthy goals and needs, values, ideals, and the paths you wish to take in your life journey. [pause 10 seconds]

Imagine now that you are a bus driver, and the bus you are going to drive is your life. [pause 5 seconds] What do you want this bus to look like? [pause 5 seconds] What color should it be, [pause 5 seconds] its shape, [pause 5 seconds] its size, [pause 5 seconds] the condition it's in? [pause 5 seconds] Are there ads or other things on the sides and back of the bus? [pause 5 seconds] Once you've imagined what the bus looks like, get on the bus and sit in the driver's seat. [pause 5 seconds] Before setting off, try to think of everything you want to happen in your life, everything you truly wish from your life; [pause 10 seconds] for example, spending more time with yourself, [pause 5 seconds] taking better care of yourself, [pause 5 seconds] cultivating your relationship with your children or other family members, [pause 5 seconds] giving more room to friendship, [pause 5 seconds] starting a new business or a new professional project, [pause 5 seconds]—anything that may be important to you. [pause 30 seconds]

How important is each one of these goals? How would you prioritize them? [pause 20 seconds] Think about this, and when all of this is clear, start the engine, put it into gear, and start moving. [pause 5 seconds] Decide to head in the direction you want your life to go. [pause 5 seconds] Move toward what is important for you now. [pause 5 seconds] Look with awareness and clarity at whom and what you wish to meet during this journey. [pause 30 seconds]

Go in this direction and, at some point, stop the bus; open the doors to let passengers on your bus. [pause 5 seconds] Immediately, you realize that these passengers are unpleasant and annoying. [pause 5 seconds] They represent all the thoughts, images, memories, messages, judgments, self-criticisms, and feelings that often make your life difficult. [pause 10 seconds] For example, there might be worries about the outcomes of your actions, [pause 5 seconds] or there might be memories of being judged for your physical appearance or your character, [pause 5 seconds] or for things you did or did not do. [pause 5 seconds] There could be the thought that nobody likes you, or no one really cares about you, [pause 5 seconds] thoughts telling you that you will not be able to go in the direction you want to [pause 5 seconds] or that you should not go in that direction, that it is wrong or unfair. [pause 5 seconds] These judgments might tell you that you are incompetent or weak. [pause 5 seconds] Imagine that these passengers are shouting at you, telling you that you absolutely have to drive in another direction. [pause 5 seconds] But an important thing to bear in mind is that these passengers have no weapons; they do not have anything dangerous that can actually harm or threaten you; they simply use harmless words, shouting at you to turn the other way or to stop. [pause 5 seconds]

*(cont.)*

### Script for Track 15 (cont.)

So, at some point, you stop the bus and tell these passengers that they are wrong and have to stop shouting, but they are not convinced. You cannot persuade them to stop. [pause 5 seconds] You try to keep going in the direction you were originally headed in, but they keep saying: “No, you have to turn around; you can’t continue on this road.” [pause 5 seconds] They try to verbally force you to change direction, but they have no weapons, they cannot do anything violent or dangerous; they can only use insubstantial and impermanent words, they only continue to shout. [pause 5 seconds] When you feel exasperated, you stop the bus again, grab one of the passengers and throw him or her out the window. Then you throw another one out the door. [pause 5 seconds] Then you try to throw another one out the window, but you realize that he or she is too heavy, and as you try to push this passenger out of the window, you see the one you had already thrown out coming back in through the door. [pause 5 seconds] You keep on trying to push them out, but they keep on getting back on. [pause 5 seconds]

What you need to understand in this moment is that these disturbing passengers (i.e., your memories, thoughts, sensations, commands, judgments, feelings) cannot really touch you or sabotage the mechanics that move your bus. [pause 5 seconds] You are the driver, and they are passengers. [pause 5 seconds] They can say, “You will fail,” “You are dangerous,” “You are not good enough,” or “You are stupid,” but they cannot actually stop or redirect the bus. [pause 5 seconds] After all, they have no weapons—no knives or guns; they only have their voices, their words. They are totally harmless if you decide to **not** listen to them or believe what they are saying to you, because to do so would only give them power. [pause 5 seconds]

At a certain point you decide to stop the bus and take a deep mindful breath. [pause 10 seconds] Then, with a trustful smile on your face, you begin to understand that perhaps it is better to let these passengers stay on the bus instead of trying to kick them off. [pause 5 seconds] At the same time, you also decide not to do what they tell you to do and not to believe what they say. [pause 5 seconds] In other words, you decide to no longer feed them. [pause 10 seconds] You switch the engine back on and resume driving in the direction in which you were going before all the passenger interruptions. You might want these passengers to go away, but they won’t. But it doesn’t matter because you know that you can keep on driving in the direction you have chosen in your life, even in the presence of these disturbing passengers. [pause 5 seconds] For a while they keep on shouting that you are not going to make it, that you can be dangerous, that you have to change direction, and that you are not going in the right direction. [pause 5 seconds] Gradually, however, you hear the intensity of their voices fading away [pause 5 seconds] until at some point, there is only a background buzz. [pause 5 seconds] Eventually you notice, with pleasure, that they are tired of shouting and only a peaceful silence remains. [pause 15 seconds] At this point, more confident and determined, you continue to drive in the direction you have chosen to follow in this unique and relatively brief life. [pause 15 seconds]

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Based on Hayes, Strosahl, and Wilson (2012).