

Practicing Reverence

Reverence is defined as having deep respect and appreciation for someone or something. To get an idea of how the practice of reverence might affect your mood, consider some antonyms for the word reverence like contempt, despise, disrespect, insult, to scoff at..... ugh! How do those words make you feel?

Here's a simple reverence practice you can try to help you feel more contentment and well-being, right now:

1. Choose a place that is familiar to you. Perhaps your home, a work space, or a park that you visit frequently.
2. Take a deep breath, making your exhale slightly longer than your inhale, emptying your torso of as much air as possible on the exhale, and noticing the split second between this exhale and your next inhale. This mindful breathing exercise will activate your parasympathetic nervous system and help reduce your stress load. Practice three complete rounds, ending with an exhale.
3. Begin to walk around your chosen location. Walk slowly and mindfully enough so that you can feel the weight shifting from your left foot, to your right foot, and back again.
4. Begin to look around you. Where does your eye naturally go? To the dust on a bookshelf? To a broken park bench? To a flower bed that needs weeding? To a pile of papers that need sorting? Know that this tendency to look for what is missing, what is out of place, is a natural human adaptation. We are wired to have an awareness of what might cause harm or be dangerous. This is a muscle your ancestors have been flexing for generations.... or chances are you wouldn't be here reading this worksheet!
5. Consciously shift your state of displeasure at what seems "dangerous" or "off" to a state of reverence toward your surroundings. This shift toward reverence might cause you to notice a much-loved photo you pass every day but haven't really stopped to look at for quite some time. Perhaps you will notice a sofa and blanket that give you great comfort, or a flower in full bloom in the middle of a flower bed that still needs weeding. Maybe you will notice a neighbor lovingly walking with an elderly relative through the park.
6. Notice how this shift from disdain to reverence affects your mood and your level of stress. Try to practice reverence for the familiar every day for the next week. Toward the end of the week, try expanding your reverence practice to include familiar people in your life.

For more information on mindfulness, visit mindfulhub.com.

We wish you twenty minutes of mindfulness every day!

