

Welcoming Parts Meditation

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Krause:

Hi everyone. We're going to do a little bit of a different kind of meditation now, in that I'm going to do a reading and have you just sit with your own experience of that after I've read it. This is a reading from Elizabeth Gilbert's book *Eat, Pray, Love*. People always want to know where this is. It's near the end of the book. What I love about this particular reading are a couple of things.

First I think it really describes what happens in the process of IFS so beautifully. Even though Elizabeth Gilbert comes at it from a somewhat different perspective, it really speaks so beautifully to parts and self-connecting with one another. And then the second thing I really like about this is, at one point she really experiences some very intense parts that hold a lot of shame about what they've had to do. I think especially as we were just discussing our own reaction to intense destructive firefighters not only in us, but in our clients. I think that this can be a helpful thing for you all to ponder a little bit as you continue your own internal journey.

So I'm just going to read this excerpt, and when I finish you can just stop the tape and sit as long as you like. 2 minutes, 5 minutes, 10 minutes, or longer. Just listening to your own reaction to this reading. And then if you like, if it makes sense to you, you can take some notes, or journal, or whatever feels right for you. So let's just start by everybody just getting comfortable in whatever way feels right for you. You can sit down, you can lay down, you can close your eyes, you can keep your eyes open. Some people even like to walk. Do a moving meditation while they're listening to this. So whatever works for you, just go ahead and do that. And then I'll read you her very beautiful words.

On my ninth day of silence, I went into meditation one evening on the beach as the sun was going down, and I didn't stand up again until after midnight. I remember thinking, "This is it, Liz." I said to my mind. "This is your chance. Show me everything that is causing you sorrow. Let me see all of it. Don't hold anything back." One by one the thoughts and memories of sadness raised their hands, stood up to identify themselves. I looked at each thought, at each unit of sorrow, and I acknowledged its existence, and felt, without trying to protect myself from it, its horrible pain.

And then I would tell that sorrow, "It's okay. I love you. I accept you. Come into my heart now. It's over." I would actually feel the sorrow, as if it were a living thing. Enter my heart, as if it were an actual room. And then I would say, "Next." And the next bit of grief would surface. I would regard it, experience it, bless it, and invite it into my heart too. I did this with every sorrowful thought I'd ever had, reaching back into years of memory until nothing was left.

Then I said to my mind, "Show me your anger now." One by one my life's every incident of anger rose, and made itself known. Every injustice, every betrayal, every loss, every rage. I saw them all one by one, and I acknowledged their existence. I felt each piece of anger completely as if it were happening for the first time. And then I would say, "Come into my heart

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now. You can rest there. It's safe now. It's over. I love you." This went on for hours. And I swung between these mighty poles of opposite feelings, experienced the anger thoroughly for one bone-rattling moment, and then experienced a total coolness, as the anger entered my heart, as if through a door, laid itself down, curled up against its brothers, and gave up fighting.

Then came the most difficult part. "Show me your shame." I asked my mind. Dear God, the horrors I saw then. A pitiful parade of all my failings. My lies, my selfishness, jealousy, arrogance. I didn't blink from any of it, though. "Show me your worst." I said. When I tried to invite these units of shame into my heart, they hesitated at the door saying, "No. You don't want me in there. Don't you know what I did?" And I would say, "I do want you. Even you, I do. Even you are welcome here. It's okay. You are forgiven. You're a part of me, and you can rest now. It's over."

When all this was finished I was empty. Nothing was fighting in my mind anymore. I looked into my heart, at my own goodness and I saw its capacity. I saw that my heart was not even nearly full. Not even after having taken in and tended to all those calamitous urchins of sorrow, and anger, and shame. My heart could easily have received and forgiven even more. Its love was infinite.