

## PRACTICING WITH EMOTIONS—Disciplined Use of Attention

Trungpa Rinpoche once said, “Emotions are composed of energy, which can be likened to water, and a dualistic thought process, which could be likened to pigment or paint. When energy and thought are mixed together, they become vivid and colorful emotions. Concept gives the energy a particular location, a sense of relationship, which makes the emotions vivid and strong. Fundamentally, the reason emotions are discomforting, painful, frustrating is that our relationship to the emotions is not quite clear.”

STEPS	INSTRUCTIONS & GUIDING QUESTIONS
<b>1. AWARENESS</b> of emotion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Stop and pause. Sit—stay still—in the midst of the emotion.</li><li>2. Feel the emotion directly as raw energy just as is—direct experience has no residue.</li><li>3. Open to the experience of the energy—do not shut down. Do not suppress, act out, escape into story, or disconnect from the feeling. Do not label or judge the feeling as good or bad.</li></ol>
<b>2. ACKNOWLEDGE</b> the emotion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Identify the emotion: “I know that anger has arisen.”</li><li>2. Feel the emotion directly as raw energy just as is—direct experience has no residue.</li></ol>
<b>3. ACCEPT</b> the emotion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Continue to stay present to the emotion and feel it directly as as raw energy just as is —direct experience has no residue.</li><li>2. Say: “I accept that I am feeling the hot intensity of anger right now.” “I accept that I am feeling the sharp pain of sadness right now.”</li></ol>

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<b>4. REFLECT ON IMPERMANENCE</b> of the emotion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Say: “This is a temporary feeling, although I am feeling it very intensely right now.”</li> <li>2. Continue to stay present in a spacious way by using your breath. Keep connected to the emotion, feeling it directly as raw energy just as it is.</li> <li>3. Let the energy move through you.</li> <li>4. Do not get distracted by story lines or thoughts. Stabilize yourself using your breath. Drop the story. Do not identify with the emotion by conceptualizing about it.</li> </ol>
<b>5. INVESTIGATE</b> the experience after the emotion has subsided	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Did I experience the emotion as raw energy directly as it is? Is there a residue?</li> <li>2. Review the 4 steps above—how did I do?</li> <li>3. Am I able to discern between the emotion and my thoughts about the emotion?</li> <li>4. Did I escape from directly feeling the emotion? How did I escape: by story telling? by shutting down? by reactivity? or by another means?</li> <li>5. What do I believe about this emotion?</li> <li>6. What triggered this emotion? What is my story about the emotion and situation?</li> <li>7. What am I attached to? Reflect on impermanent nature of the object of attachment.</li> <li>8. Did I assign blame?</li> <li>9. Was my reaction a habitual pattern?</li> <li>10. How do I want to respond to this situation? What would be a response grounded in Dharma?</li> </ol>