

Bringing Compassion and Equanimity into Therapy

Dr. Susan Pollak

Equanimity

- “All beings are the owners of their deeds. Their happiness and unhappiness depend on their actions, not on my wishes for them.”

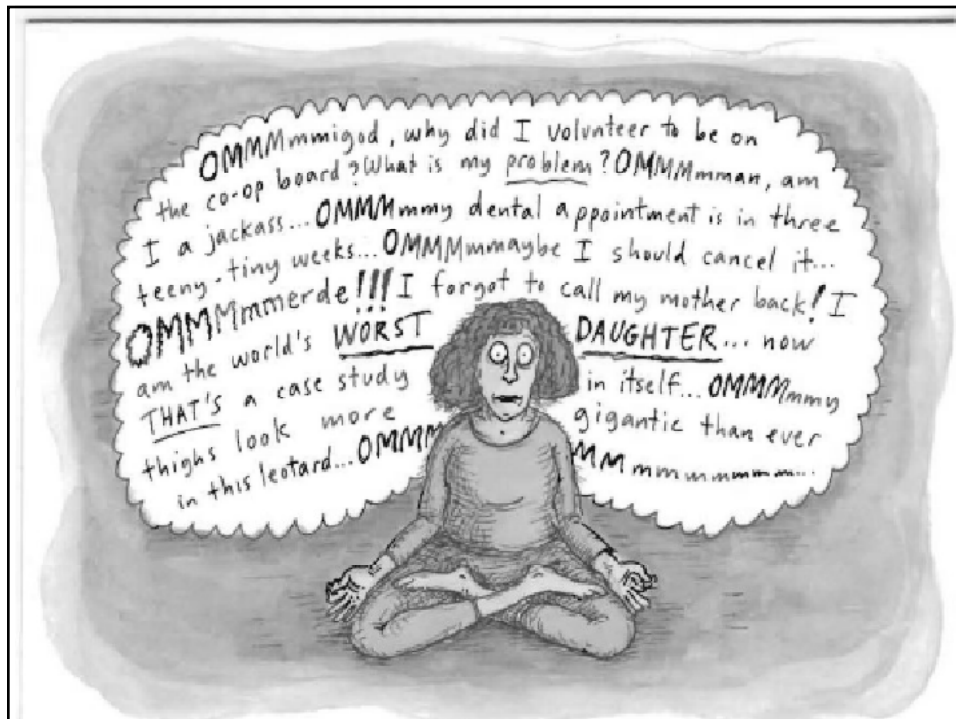
- Just this moment, nothing more.
- Just this, nothing more

- "Come, come, whoever you are. Wanderer, worshipper, lover of leaving. It doesn't matter. Ours is not a caravan of despair. Come, even if you have broken your vows a thousand times. Come, yet again, come, come."

-Jelaluddin Rumi

Equanimity Meditation

- Visualize a boat on a rough sea with high winds and rough waves.
- Visualize an anchor that keeps the boat steady, in spite of the storm, feel the weight and solidity.
- Reflect on what keeps you anchored in your life, what keeps you steady.
- Feel your own anchor, find it in your body.
- Imagine that you can go below the storm-tossed waves to find a place that is absolutely still and tranquil.
- Drop down to the bottom of the ocean.
- Let yourself rest in this calm, let it suffuse every cell in your body.
- When you are the ocean, you are not afraid of waves



“I have found that the greatest degree of inner tranquility comes from the development of love and compassion. Cultivating a close, warmhearted feeling for others automatically puts the mind at ease. It is the ultimate source of success in life.”

Dalai Lama

Loving-Kindness Phrases

- May I be safe
- May I be happy
- May I be healthy
- May I live with ease

More metta phrases

- May I be free from danger
- May I have mental happiness
- May I have physical happiness
- May I have ease of well-being
- May I love myself completely,
just as I am

Variations

- May I be safe and protected
from inner and outer harm.

Invocation

We evoke your name, Avalokiteshvara. We aspire to learn your way of listening in order to help relieve the suffering in this world. You know how to listen to understand. We evoke your name in order to practice listening with all our attention and open-heartedness. We will sit and listen without any prejudice. We will sit and listen without judging or reacting. We will sit and listen in order to understand. We will sit and listen so attentively that we will be able to hear what is being said as well as what is being left unsaid. For we know that just by listening deeply we already alleviate a great deal of pain and suffering.

Listening meditation

- Start by listening to the sound of your breath, then move to the sounds in the room and then expand to the sounds outside the room.
- Imagine that your entire body can become a huge ear.
- Listen from every cell and from 360 degrees—above, below, in front, behind, from sides.
- Notice that all sounds have a beginning, a middle and an end.
- Allow yourself to listen to annoying sounds and try to be receptive without shutting them out.
- Reflect on ways that you don't fully listen to your clients (and family and friends).
- Allow yourself to rest and relax in the sounds as they are.



The Wild Iris

At the end of my suffering
there was a door.
Hear me out: that which you call death
I remember.
Overhead, noises, branches of the pine shifting.
Then nothing. The weak sun
flickered over the dry surface.
It is terrible to survive
as consciousness
buried in the dark earth.
Then it was over: that which you fear, being
a soul and unable
to speak, ending abruptly, the stiff earth
bending a little. And what I took to be
Birds darting in low shrubs.
You who do not remember
passage from the other world
I tell you I could speak again: whatever
Returns from oblivion returns
to find a voice:
from the center of my life came
a great fountain, deep blue
Shadows on azure sea water.
Louise Gluck