
RAIN

Meeting a difficult feeling

A way of meeting a difficult feeling, rather than pushing it away or being swept along by it. Four steps, and a few minutes.

THE EXAMPLE

An email from your manager late in the day: "Can we talk tomorrow?"

R Recognise

What's happening right now?

Name the feeling simply: anxious, hurt, angry, ashamed. Notice where it sits in your body.

FOR EXAMPLE

Anxious. A tight chest, and a sinking feeling in my stomach.

A Allow

Can I let this be here, just for now?

You don't have to like it or agree with it. If allowing is hard, allow that: "I'm struggling to allow this, and that's okay."

FOR EXAMPLE

Okay, anxiety is here. I don't have to sort it out tonight.

I Investigate, kindly

What does this feeling need me to know?

Ask with curiosity rather than to analyse. What am I believing? What do I most need right now?

FOR EXAMPLE

I'm believing I've done something wrong. What I need is some reassurance, and not to be on my own with it.

N Nurture

What would help, right now?

Offer yourself some kindness: a hand on your heart, or words such as "It's okay to feel this way", "I'm doing my best", "I'm not alone in feeling this".

FOR EXAMPLE

A hand on my chest. "Of course this stirs you up. You're doing your best."

Afterwards

Pause, and notice how you are now. Nothing has to have changed. If something has eased, even a little, let yourself notice that.

FOR EXAMPLE

Still a bit anxious, but steadier. I could ask what it's about.

Less is more

A few minutes is enough, with a feeling that's here now or one from earlier in the day. If a feeling is too big to stay with, use Coming back to here first, and return to RAIN another time.

RAIN was first taught by the meditation teacher Michele McDonald, and developed by Tara Brach, whose version ends with Nurture.