

Preparation Tips

As previously mentioned, it takes courage to enter into the unknown, and you have made the empowering—and conscious—choice to do so. There are several techniques, that when implemented, enhance your efforts. The following suggestions are invaluable when preparing for shadow work.

1. **Stay in the Present Moment.** Maintaining presence is one of the most challenging actions for people today. Life is filled with countless distractions and people vying for our attention, and, at times, can feel insurmountable. Several key elements can play an integral part in supporting you. Some of them are:
 - a) **Breathing Techniques.*** Focus on your breath as you breathe deeply in, hold for a second or two, and then exhale, relaxing as you do. Repeat for two to three minutes.
 - b) **Meditation.*** Focus on your breath. Notice what you **see** around you. Next, note the sounds you **hear**. Then **feel** the temperature (warm, cold, etc.) and your clothing's texture against your skin. **Smell** any fragrances in the air. **Taste** what is in your mouth. Come back and focus on the breath. Create a mantra such as, "*All is well.*"
 - c) **Mindfulness.*** *Stroke Your Hands 1-Minute Exercise:* Take the index finger of your right hand and starting with the inside of your left wrist, slowly move it up and down on the outside of your fingers as if you were tracing them. Repeat on the other side.
2. **Journaling.** Journaling is one of the best tools to use with shadow work as it allows you to visit past traumatic experiences and confront other shadow aspects safely. Hidden clues can be found by answering the "W" questions:
 - Why do I feel this way?
 - When did I first notice it?
 - Where was I?
 - What was I doing?
 - Who was with me?

Prompts will be provided to help you sift through the rubble to unearth the precious gems that comprise your gifts and talents. Please have a journal or notebook and a pen for this course.

3. Practice Self-Compassion. As you dig deeper into your inner world, you'll uncover things that you may be ashamed of or feel guilty about. You may feel fear or are resentful and tell yourself it's not worth it. It is worth it. Practicing self-compassion allows you to hold space for yourself without judging or criticizing. You want to treat yourself the same way you would treat someone you care deeply for—gently and with compassion.

4. Yoga. Even if you've never practiced, you can always start with simple poses or asanas. Just focusing on your breath, coming to the present moment, is yoga. When you are in "the now," you give space for your subconscious to let go of the things you've repressed or denied. Emotions are released, and with them, gems that were hidden are uncovered. Look for the links on the Free Resources download to view the videos with beginner poses, as well as other ideas for how you can prepare.

One important note: Before you start the process of shadow work, set aside some time for reflection and quiet your mind. The fewer distractions you have, the deeper you'll be able to dive into your inner world.

When you take some time to investigate one or more of these practices before continuing with the next lesson, you'll find yourself in a more secure place to do the work. I look forward to guiding you on your journey.

This lecture is complete. Please download the Free Resources file for the links to help prepare you. Remember to take some time to ground your center before the next lesson.