

## Introductory practices

### First steps:

- Join the FB group if you are on FB

We can share poems, art, stories, challenges, and successes there. Introduce yourself and share your intention for the course if you want to.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/859632314518562/?ref=bookmarks>

- Order oils if you want to, let me know if you want me to order them for you.
- Create a space
- Make a time commitment for yourself and show up for the time you have set aside for yourself
- Write down your intention for this course
- Look over these introductory practices and choose a few.

***These practices are optional.** Look over this sheet and find the ones that interest you. Don't do them all. This course is about creating awareness with compassion. Go as slowly as you need to. By committing to this course, you are initiating a huge transformational process. Assist it by taking time to tune in and notice. These practices can move you along but they are just suggestions. Transformation takes place on a deep level, below conscious thought, so what is important is to open to the possibility and to be with the process, not to force it with lots of doing. Some of us benefit from having specific tasks, and specific ways to focus our mind, so these suggestions are here for you to use.*

*Use this first week to set yourself up, your space, your commitment, ordering the oils, reviewing the information, and showing up for the times that you have committed to. When you show up, show up with self-compassion and tune in to what you most need, including doing some of these practices. There is no wrong way to do this course.*

- Review the Elements Blessing and Challenges

Get a sense of which elements are more highly charged for you. With the framework of the 5 Element system, start to notice issues and concerns that are alive in you as being connected to one element more than another. When you watch a show or read a story, start to categorize people and their patterns, reactions, and personalities according to which element you think they are demonstrating. This practice will help you develop that witness inside, so that you can feel the same compassionate non-judgmental awareness as you notice your own thoughts, feelings, and reactions. Awareness gives us more capacity to shift.

- Create a Gratitude Journal

Consciously cultivating a practice of gratitude is one of the powerful things that we can do to shift our inner state. Write down things that you feel especially grateful for, small things, and be sure to include somethings about yourself that you appreciate. You can add to this regularly, keep these writings in a special book.

- Find a Special Place Outdoors

Create a cairn or collection of natural items and make your special place personal to you and connected to your inner world. Visit it when you can and find connection and support there. Notice changes in the natural world over time.

- Create a Ritual of Becoming Present

Anoint yourself with an oil and experience the assistance of our plant allies, choose something that is uplifting. Say a few words about your intention to be present to what is. Scan your body and note places of tension or pain without judgement. Experience your feet on the ground and imagine sending roots deep into the earth. Feel the crown of your head open. Allow yourself to imagine the sensation of golden light pouring down upon you and flowing down into your being, down, down, down, all the way down into the earth through your imaginary roots. Feel earth energy pulling up like a fountain, filling you. Sit with this upward and downward flow and feel yourself relaxed and energized. Scan your body again and note if anything has changed.

- Create your playlist

Music uplifts the spirits like nothing else. Tone, chant, make sounds, the vibration of sound moves stuck energy. Music playing in the background can energize and calm. I often choose quiet and the chance to hear the birds sing, but if my energy lags or I lose motivation, I turn to music. If you feel resistance to showing up to do this work, consider associating it with a song you love or a genre that stirs you, and it may inspire you to be present.

- Relish

Give yourself lots of appreciation for giving yourself this experience. This is for you. Make it yours. Use your time and enjoy the spaciousness of the time you have set aside. Bring that same feeling of spaciousness into everything. By canceling get-aways, get-togethers, outings, and errands, we can slow down and appreciate what we are doing. Eat slowly and taste each mouthful. Move your body and delight in your capacities. Spend time communicating and appreciate the openhearted connect. Clean, sort, clear your space and feel gratitude for the time and opportunity.

- Admit your patterns kindly and compassionately.

We all have old patterns. They may have served us well, keeping us safe. Soften a bit in your commitment to your patterns and breath some life into the possibility of transforming those things that don't serve you well now. Imagine life without your limitations. Imagine more choice, more openness, less reactivity, less clenching, less fear. Take the time to write down your top (?) three patterns that you would like to shift, even if just a bit. Add this to your written intention for the course.

Put one hand on your heart and one hand on the crown of your head, CV17 and GV20, as you imagine cultivating new ways of being. Breathe deep into the possibility of change. In gaining awareness about what we would like to shift and opening to that option, we are going to make huge strides.

As we progress through the week we will work with visualizations, acupuncture routines, affirmations, and so much more which will assist the process. Share your progress with others if you want to, as your specific concerns will no doubt resonate with others and your needs inform the direction and material of the course.

Practice EFT or tapping on an issue, notice any shifts.

- Recognize Obstacles

As you move through the week and do the work on this course, notice the obstacles and challenges to showing up, things that get in the way of your keeping your commitment to yourself about this course. Add to your written plan as you strategize the best way to acknowledge these challenges without letting them stop you.

- Use your Creative Outlets

This course will be mainly inward work- guided visualizations, tapping, journaling, etc. as well as movement and breathwork. You will want to have a creative outlet- gardening, writing, singing, dancing or something where you feel in the flow without any thought. You will need time to integrate on a deep level. Let things bubble and simmer as you allow creativity to move through you. Even spending time reading or listening to music, while not actively creative, can bring you into the flow of the moment, still your inner voices, and help you relax and integrate.

- Take as much Time as you can in Nature.

Turn your focus to the natural world and notice what is going on around you. Don't pay as much attention to your thoughts as you do to the beauty around you in the world. Notice the light, the movement, the colors, the sounds, the new growth, the diversity. If you are not surrounded by nature or cannot get out, practice the same thing in your imagination.

- Create a homing thought

Surfers have been known to dig their hands down in the sand and "hold on" so that the waves above them do not overtake them. In the same way a homing thought can help ground, support, protect from stress and other negative energies, and help create a positive thymus outlook. A homing thought is something that makes you feel alive, safe, grounded, or supported. This could be a thought or picture of yourself in "flow" of an activity that energizes you or it could be yourself in a landscape that makes you feel the most alive. It also could be a life purpose statement.

Holding CV17 and GV20, with one hand on the center of the breast bone and one hand on the crown of the head, center yourself while thinking your homing thought.

Create a picture, symbol, description, or something else that will bring this thought to mind and put it in your space to remind you of this resource.

- Create a vision board.

Using clips of pictures and words from magazines pasted onto a poster board, you can create a visual reminder of the things you intend to manifest, be they feelings, an inner state, or an outward circumstance. You can take as much or as little time as you want with this. You can spread it out over the whole week or you can do it in one sitting: gathering the materials

together, cutting and clipping, pasting things into a collage. This is optional, if it seems like too much. You can just put up a picture of something that makes you feel good and reminds you of your homing thought

- Write your life story

Write or record yourself speaking the story of your life. Write it as if it were, because it is, the story of a hero or heroine, facing challenges, cultivating inner qualities, doing everything she could and overcoming obstacles to create a life which inspires others. Remember to include evidence of the qualities that you admire: kindness, generosity, thoughtfulness, caring, etc. include small achievements that demonstrate great love. Create this story so that you appreciate and admire the person who the story is about, you.

- Write your empowerment story

Choose one event or one series of events where you faced a fear or did something that was really difficult for you. Write about it or record yourself speaking about it. Tell the story so that when you read it or listen to it, you realize what you are capable of. Honor your magnificent capacity to do nearly impossible things. Be sure to acknowledge some of your qualities that made this possible.