Practice

Angela 2 — Week 5, Day 5, Session 5 — 7 minutes

Summary: Russell describes the second resource practice: a memory, or an amalgam, of mild challenge met with presence or groundedness. A partner leads a short drop-in. Eyes closed, the speaker sets the scene, then stays with felt sense, gathering a few sensations, an image, and a word. About ten minutes, then a pause; the listener does not give words back.

The memory

I'd like to describe the practice to you.

So, the practice will go like this. The second resource practice, connected to finding a memory now of something in your past, something in your life where you encountered something that had at least a mild challenge to it.

I say it that way cause I don't want you to think it has to be some really big thing.

Your nervous system can model on — as long as it has a quality that you felt. Oh, this is a challenging situation in which I was able to find a quality of presence and a sense of inner — you might call groundedness, or centered and centeredness, any of those.

You might not have all of those. That might not be your language, but in that direction.

And there's some memory of you having that. I'm not saying you were conscious of it at the time, or that you were saying to yourself, wow, I'm — no. But that it comes to you as you look back, as if you were watching a movie of your life.

Say, oh, in that situation, I had that.

And if it doesn't come to you as a particular moment, but there were a number of times when you were with a particular person that you had that experience. It wasn't one moment that stands out, but it was, gee, they really were challenging in this way and that way, but I somehow had myself in their presence often.

So you could create an amalgam of a moment like that, out of that.

So what we're looking for is to give your brain a sensory-rich experience of being in a moment like —

It might be historically precisely accurate, or it could have been, because you're combining a number.

Dropping in

And so you'll spend time with your partner. I want to invite the partner to lead you in.

There's a short lead-in. You drop in.

If you have your memory already, you go to that memory. You invite it into your body.

If you don't have it yet, ask for it as you go in.

So you have some specific situation that you're gonna cultivate.

Setting the scene

Now the first couple of minutes, you're describing the scene that you're in.

So it's not telling a story to your partner. I really recommend having your eyes closed, otherwise it'll become conversational. It's not that.

The first part is giving food for your inner life to cultivate a felt experience. So the sensory richness helps.

You know, I'm sitting, wood around me. There are lots of people out here. I can see two doors and there are windows.

Sitting here, and there's a sense. I might describe what the situation is that I'm in.

But I'm cultivating — where am I? Who am I with? What's going on?

The whole purpose of speaking right now, of setting the scene, it's like you're a screenwriter, writing the screenplay, and you're giving the scene.

The whole purpose of this part is to activate in your body a felt sense, a feeling of being in that situation.

And so you spend maybe the first two minutes. You don't spend a long time describing the stories about it. You're in that situation.

And then you're spending the bulk of your time with how it feels to be you, in your feeling language, in your sensing language, in your felt sensing together.

What to come away with

And what you want to end up with — this will be about a 10-minute process. It's not going to be a long process, about 10 minutes.

What you want to end up with are one or two, at most three, key sensations that live in you when you have this experience of what you would call grounded presence, center.

And so you're looking for sensations. And if there's a key image, like a snapshot, it might be of yourself in that moment, or it might be of the room you're in, that you can have it linked to some sort of visual image, some sort of sensations in your body, and some feeling words.

Like, oh, it might be just, oh, that's grounded.

Or for you, it might be — the feeling might be, oh, it's big. There might be a gesture with it, feeling like this — big. Maybe big is your word.

But see what word comes for you that helps you encapsulate briefly this. It's almost like creating a file for your brain.

You know, it could be big, arms open. That picture in your mind gives you this — that's me in a moment like that.

Okay? Got the idea?

Yeah, this should be familiar — or not should be. I'm guessing is familiar to you by now.

We keep going a little further with this.

Timing

Okay, anything else needed to start?

Okay, yeah, thank you.

So, time yourself. Approximately 10 minutes.

If it looks like the person really needs a few more minutes than that, maybe at about eight minutes, tell them there's about two minutes to go. And then if they're in the process, you can take a few more minutes than that, but it wouldn't be a lot.

Yeah, then we're gonna pause for just a minute or two, stretch, kind of shift. Enjoy the sensations.

Also, the listener, you will receive something in this atmosphere. Let that in your body. If it feels good, let it in.

And then a minute or two, you'll shift over.

Okay?

Right, yeah, you're not gonna give them back the words, right.

No, individual.

You're timing yourself.