Acceptance of Understanding Exercise

Begin by getting comfortable with where you are sitting, settling into a position that supports your feeling solid and grounded. Slowly close your eyes or gaze softly in front of you, whichever is most comfortable for you…Taking a deeper than normal breath and slowly breathing out, allowing yourself to relax a little as you exhale…breathing in…breathing out….relaxing…bit by bit….as you breathe….*(Pause)*

**Start by Arriving at this moment**… Bringing awareness to being here in this room…the sounds…feeling your body where it touches your seat… maybe being aware that there is nobody on earth that fully knows how it feels to sit where you sit, with the experiences you are having in this moment. *(Pause)*

**Slowly shift into Gathering…** Focusing on your breath…breathing in… breathing out...noticing the different sensations in your chest and belly between the in-breath and the out-breath…breathing in….breathing out….feeling the air fill your lungs, slowly expanding…feeling the air leaving as you exhale…in…out…focusing only on the breath…*(Pause)*

And now **Expanding**. Allowing yourself to become aware of your body as a whole. The sensations you might become aware of…your heart beat, your abdominal organs, the feel of your face…briefly scanning for any signs of tension…releasing these areas…noticing your whole body…continuing to notice your breathing….

Now, reflecting upon what brought you into Counseling and taking a moment to gently invite this experience into your awareness…acknowledge it for the painful experience it is and, like a curious scientist, allowing yourself to study your experience as it enters into your awareness…imagining that unwanted experience as being present with you… just being present in your awareness as you observe it. *(Pause)*

While holding it in your awareness, picturing it in your mind’s eye and thinking about the following questions: If you were to locate the experience **within your body,** where would it reside? *(Pause)* How does it feel to have this experience as a **physical sensation**? Would you describe it as big or small? Heavy or light? Moving or still? Smooth or rough? *(Pause)* What color would it have? Does it have sharp edges or is it more diffuse and fuzzy…? *(Pause)* What does this experience say about what’s **important to you**, about your life, about yourself? Maybe something that is missing from your life? (Pause)

Now taking a moment to feel gratitude for the information this painful experience gave to you, gently allow it to recede. Letting it go from your mind’s eye and being your attention back to your body, your heart beat, the feeling of your lungs breathing in and out…in and out…Taking another breath…deeper than normal, breathing in…and, slowly exhaling, becoming more in touch with the room, the sounds around you, and slowly opening your eyes and reacquainting yourself with being here. *(Pause)*