



Cheltenham Zen 6-week course

Meditation for beginners

Session 2: Emotions and the body

In this session we looked at working with the difficult experiences in our lives, using mindfulness to create space around those experiences, and how embodied awareness can help us work with emotions on a more accessible level.

This week we have introduced the following ideas:

- **The key to working with emotional pain is awareness and acceptance, gently and patiently.** We can only deal with emotions as they arise here and now, not in the abstract. Our acceptance must be genuine - we can't fake it!
- **The principal barrier to acceptance** is an unwillingness to see things for what they are, the habitual turning away from difficulty.
- **Emotions are felt in the body as well as the mind.** Turning toward the body sensations of an emotion, rather than the mental component, helps us to stay with the experience without being carried away by it.
- **We can learn to inhabit our body more fully.** Meditation can help us to strengthen the mind-body connection and be more present in our body. Staying grounded in the body is a powerful antidote to stress.
- **The intention we bring to our meditation practice influences the outcomes** we experience. It's important to know why you're meditating!

Suggested home practice

This week's practice is the body scan. I suggest using the guided audio for this one so you don't have to remember the order.

Also, take some time to think of people who have wronged you and offer them forgiveness. What happens in the body when you do this?

Guided audio

Two body scans, one 10 minutes, the other 25, are available at my website, <https://www.cheltenhamzen.co.uk/audio.html>.