

Compassionate Me

Week 3 - Compassion for Strangers

Mindful Listening



Have you ever been introduced to someone only to realise a few minutes later that you don't remember their name! It used to happen to me all the time. My partner used to say that I "skim listened". He was right – I skim listened, skim read, skim watched TV programmes – I was never fully present in anything I did.

I have a friend who is so busy, working, looking after two children, constantly worrying about what next that when I speak to her she always sounds distracted – even over the phone I know she is distracted doing something else.

I always put the phone down feeling frustrated - I have not been able to give her and our conversation the attention it deserves. By one of us not being fully present we are unable to give each other and each of our feelings the acknowledgement that we should have.

Listening is a skill. It's a skill that we can all be good at – and all it takes is some practise.

Listening Meditation - Hearing Sounds

- Be receptive to sounds around you. Don't go looking for them – just be open to them.
- Be aware of the whole soundscape around you. Soft, loud, far, near, natural, man-made. Are the sounds in the room with you or outside?
- But try not to label or identify them necessarily. Just enjoy them as sounds you can hear. Listen without effort – just let it happen.
- If you find your mind wandering – bring your attention back gently.
- Now, when listening to the sounds consider - How do they make you feel? Do they evoke any kind of emotion in you?
- Do this Listening Meditation for as long as you like.
- When you finish, take a moment to reflect on what you have just heard – and write this in your Daily Diary.

