

THE RAIN OF SELF-COMPASSION

AWAKE

Before practicing the R.A.I.N. meditation below, we invite you to breathe deeply as guided in this short [meditation](#).

The R.A.I.N. Technique *by Tara Brach*

Buddhist teacher Tara Brach, herself a victim of an incurable genetic disease, teaches self-compassion during times of confusion and stress using four steps of mindfulness:

R—Recognize. Take time to notice the thoughts and emotions you are experiencing. If you are overwhelmed by anxiety, take a moment to turn toward the anxiety and sit with it. What does the anxiety feel like in your body? What shape does it take?

A—Allow. Allow the experience to be there just as it is. Our tendency is to try to control, numb or repress difficult feelings. Can you allow the feelings to be there without trying to change or control them?

I—Investigate. What is the narrative that you tell yourself about these thoughts or emotions? Are they true? What does this part of you need during this time?

N—Nurture. Nurture yourself with compassion and kindness. Recognize that anxiety, fear, uncertainty and anger are all parts of the human experience. Can you take care of yourself in the midst of it?

AWARE

Daily breathing exercises quiet the mind for us to: Recognize what is happening; Allow life to be as it is; Investigate with kindness; Nurture balance and perspective on our feelings. For example, after recognizing, allowing and investigating the anxiety or confusion we discern, instead of saying “I am anxious” or “I am confused,” we can more truthfully tell ourselves, “I feel anxiety or confusion, but am not defined by my feelings.” We don’t deny, we just don’t over-identify. We are much more than the thoughts or feelings that pass, like clouds, through the sky of our experience.



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ALIVE

We suggest that you use the R.A.I.N. exercise daily, or several times a day, to instill a more natural and realistic way to view your thoughts and emotions, especially during this extremely stressful and confusing time. As you get better at not equating your experience with your spirit, soul or true self, take time to journal what you are observing. If the mood strikes you, create a poem or story to express this experience more vividly or with more compassion.

ABIDE

In the New Testament we are encouraged, “*let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.*” (Colossians 3:15) Without a doubt, finding peace isn’t easy after we glance at a newsfeed and feel heavy with the pain of a world in which we share our suffering and uncertainty. Our Lord was known as a man of sorrows, so we are assured that Christ abides with what troubles us most. And yet the strength of Christ, made perfect in weakness, ends with God’s word for a time such as now: “*Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.*” (John 14:1)

ARISE

Today the wisdom of Buddhist mindfulness and the peace of Christ known through the example of Jesus coalesce into a message of hope that we are not captive to our thoughts and feelings, although they have urgent need to be recognized and understood. Arise and...

- Practice the R.A.I.N. exercise daily.
- Check in with your partner or virtual group.
- Continue to make contributions to your journal.

Write your reflections here

