

The Need Beneath the Need

This is an advanced form of mindful need guessing because it requires lingering longer with each need and inquiring as to what may be deeper. It also can be applied as a separate meditation or as a tool in your regular meditation practice. It uses some of the tools of the Compassionate Embrace.

As in the others, find a comfortable posture in a quiet place where you will be uninterrupted for 20-30 minutes. Close your eyes and bring your awareness to your breath or to your body until you feel a sense of stillness. Then watch your thoughts. If a persistent thought emerges, linger with the thought. Don't try to change it. Then ask yourself what need is that thought trying to meet.

If there isn't a persistent thought, try to recall a return situation where you felt like your needs were obvious, either because they did not get met or they did get met. Linger with this memory. Then linger with the need most present.

Many times the first need that may resonate with us when we need guess may also turn out to be a strategy to meet a deeper need. In this meditation, after you identify the need and linger with it awhile, you then ask a second question, "If I meet this need, then what need will be met?" Or you might say, "What deeper need is this need trying to meet?" Or "what deeper need is this need leading to."

With each need that comes up beneath the prior need, linger with it for a few breaths. Feel how it feels in your body. Try to connect to its importance in your life. Then ask yourself again "What deeper need is this need trying to meet?" You may also change the language to, "What longing is this need trying to meet?"

Eventually through this form of inquiry you may uncover some deep longings that have possibly persisted since childhood. Embrace these deep longings. If they have not been met, mourn the fact that they have not been met for a very long time and celebrate that you have finally brought them into the light. If they have been met and are still very alive in you, celebrate this. In all cases try to connect to the felt sense of these needs; the energy behind the needs. When you feel ready, open your eyes.