

OBOSS

Overview

Whenever you feel triggered, off balance emotionally, hooked, or overwhelmed, try this exercise. OBOSS is a way to tend and befriend difficult feelings on-the-spot. It's a way for you to safely turn toward any discomforting bodily sensations of emotions and gain familiarity with them while soothing them. This method allows you to first go to your body's nuanced sensations and neural networks instead of distracting or disconnecting yourself from the physical discomfort with the inner narrator of your mind.

Directions:

Remember feelings are just neurochemical reactions and some will shift in our bodies within 5 seconds while others can move in 90 seconds. Don't try to rush anything, just give your full attention to the felt-sense in your body and befriend those bodily sensations.

Bring to mind some small difficulty and slightly challenging emotion that you've been carrying with you. Nothing too big. Select a scenario where you felt irritated, annoyed, or a little frustrated. Now briefly focus on the slightly charged up energy of that scenario and feeling. Later, you can select moderate to big emotions once you grow the OBOSS muscle.

Move through the following steps.

- **Ouch:** When you sense a charge of discomfort, notify yourself to gain your attention.
 - Inwardly you may think or say: "This is painful." "Whoa Seabiscuit." "OUCH."
 - This helps you notice when you are triggered, hooked, activated.
 - Noting it immediately will help you gain a toehold in your ventral vagal floor.
- **Breathe:** After the "Ouch" moment, gently breathe in and out, extending your exhalation a bit more than your inhalation.
 - The most important thing is to remember to breathe. We tend to hold our breath when we are anxious, scared, emotionally overwhelmed.
 - Breathing allows us to get some space around the body's uncomfortable sensation.
 - Breathing gives way to clearer thinking and observing (using our prefrontal cortex).
- **Observe:** Check in with your body and locate the sensation of the feeling without any storyline or judgment.
 - Find the sensation and note it. What's its weight, movement, pressure, temperature, texture, sharpness, color?
 - You can name the feeling but it's more important to just feel it. Stay in the body.
 - Turn toward the feeling and if it seems too intense, just hang out on the edge of it.
- **Soften and Space:** Offer softness and space around the feeling in your body.
 - Visualize visceral space around every direction of the feeling, the whole sphere.
 - Give softness to the feeling and if the center is too intense, bring your attention to the edges of the feeling.
 - Be steadfast. Gently hold the experience of the feeling. No storyline, no judgment.
 - Just "be with" the feeling. Observe and hold lightly.

- **Soothe:** Offer yourself care and kindness just as you would a dear friend or a child who is experiencing pain.
 - Rest your hand on the feeling (e.g., chest, stomach, neck, shoulders) using a caring touch.
 - Gently soothe the sensation through a mantra of self-compassion or the simple words, "It's OK. I'm here with you." Be sure to use a kind, nurturing tone.
 - Gently soothe the sensation without any judgment or storyline.

Remember you are not trying to get rid of this feeling you are just giving it present moment awareness, attention, and curiosity to observe it in your body. Feelings are a part of us that just want to be seen, heard, understood, accepted, and embraced. When we do this, we update our neural tracts into new pathways.

When we are able to ride the wave of these somatic feelings with our body and brain, we then allow more wholeness to our entire being. Go gently.

"You heal a system by connecting more of it to itself."
~ Paul Hawken