

Bear Meditation

Date / Time

So far today, have you brought kind awareness to your:

Thoughts? Heart? Body? None of the Above

In the film *The Big Lebowski*, there is a scene where the Stranger says to the Jeff Bridges' character the Dude, the following words: "Sometimes you eat the bear, and sometimes, well, he eats you."

The bear can be any difficult, unresolved situation in your life—like the pain you must endure. The interesting thing about bears is this: Your attitude toward the bear can make all the difference in the world! If you provoke the bear and try to get it to leave, it may attack you and try to make a meal of you. You might try to have patience for the bear, try to outlast it and maybe it will move on. You could even try to befriend the bear, so you and the bear can co-exist. Another approach might be to just be present with compassion for both you and the bear—to “bear witness” so to speak.

So, which approach would you choose?

Instructions:

Follow the steps below to help you get help for dealing with the bear. Use this *Bear Meditation* not so much to find a solution, but more to acknowledge your willingness to be open to hearing a new perspective in dealing with it.

1. Find a quiet place where you can sit in silence as long as you need. Before starting, set the following intention: “May my higher power listen with love and compassion. May my higher power not judge me. May it point me toward a wise path filled with deeper awareness, meaning, and self-compassion.”
2. Have a heart-to-heart with the higher power in your life about your pain. Spend a few moments to think about this higher power. A higher power can be anything from a belief in God to the wise, nurturing self within, or anything in between—even a wise and kind being like Mother Teresa, St. Francis, the Buddha, or any other admired individual. If you want, you can visualize your higher power seated opposite you.

State how the *bear* is affecting your life. Let your higher power know about your fears, worries, emotions, and concerns. As you tell your story, know that your higher power is listening intently. In addition, know that your higher power instantly came to be by your side to you right now because he or she cares deeply about your well-being.

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3. Let your higher power know that this difficulty is something that you can't easily handle on your own, and that you have come to ask for help. Visualize your higher power as fully understanding and appreciating the wisdom you have in seeking assistance. Take a few moments to feel how nice it is not to carry the heavy weight and burden of dealing with the *bear* all by yourself. Feel the lightness of this.
4. Ask the higher power for courage to just 'sit' with the *bear*. Do this without expectations just so you might understand the bear better. The higher power may help you here, to just give you another viewpoint, a wise way of being with this. Surrender to whatever happens. If there is sadness, give that to the higher power to hold. Whatever happens, know that the higher power is there with you, supporting you, and sending you love and compassion each moment. Sit for as long as you need.
5. You are not yet done. For now, you will do something you may have thought to be impossible. You will switch seats and positions with your higher power. This doesn't mean that you *are* this higher power, but that you can view yourself with care, and compassion, and love through the eyes of the higher power. From that vantage point, see what it's like to look at you. See your courage, appreciate your strength, witness your wisdom. You only need to do this for a few seconds. Now, return your presence to your body.
6. Lastly, say a blessing of gratitude and thanks for how your higher self made itself available to you—and how it will continue to do so anytime that you need assistance in the future or whenever you want to do another meditation.

Reflections: How did the *Bear Meditation* change your approach to the bear? What did you learn about it or yourself?

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What is it like to know that you can tap into your higher power when needed? How do you think this can be of use?

thank you for your mindfulness practice

May I continue to look deeply into
my mind, my heart and body.

May I see things and meet things
AS THEY ARE

and may this clear and sustained knowing free me
**FOR THE SAKE OF
ALL BEINGS.**

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