

Discomfort & Joy

Thriving in the Presence of Anxiety, Stress & Unwanted Challenge

Definitions

Effort:	the energy needed to survive & to complete tasks
Discomfort:	unpleasant or unwanted physical or emotional sensation
Struggle:	putting energy into resisting or avoiding the way things are
Ease:	the experience of life without struggle
Practice:	wherever we put our attention & energy

Being Human

Effort is required
Discomfort is inevitable
Struggle is added
Everything is practice

2 Nervous Systems

Sympathetic:
Short term survival
Parasympathetic:
Long term growth

How to Thrive

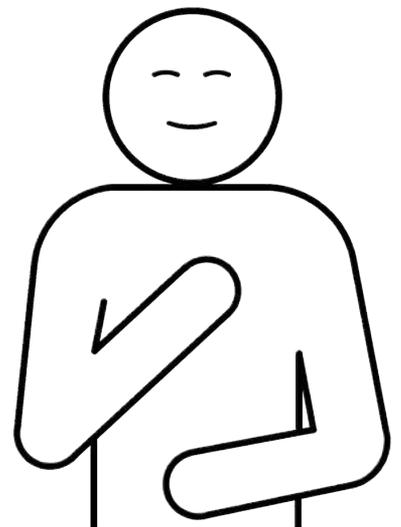
Work with what shows up
Focus on what matters most
Practice what we seek
Be of service

Practice

As far as your brain is concerned, everything you do is practice. You will get better at whatever you do repeatedly -- whether you want to or not. So, be careful what you practice.

The Practice of Unstruggling

Lift & open posture
Relax shoulders, hands & jaw
Close eyes & smile gently
Rest open palms on chest & stomach
Breathe into a relaxed belly
Locate sensations of discomfort
"Of course I feel this way"
Find the thought supporting discomfort
"This is thought, not reality"



Why does unstruggling work?

Resisting external events & discomfort (struggling) takes energy away from valued goals, commitments & relationships.
Opening the body & breathing into the belly sends messages of safety & capability along the vagus nerve to the brain. This activates the parasympathetic nervous system & creates a more resourceful perspective of the situation we are working with.
Self-compassion improves performance, resilience, creativity & accountability.
Consciously bringing attention to internal experience calms the sympathetic nervous system.
Disidentifying from thoughts diminishes their power to trigger discomfort & struggle.

Mindful Communication

Building healthy culture & connection in the presence of disagreement

Relationship

Disagreement is inevitable
Understanding does not require agreement
Resistance is normal
Being universally liked is impossible

Components of Connecting

Assume different realities
Approach resistance
Listen for values
Check understanding

Attention

Attention wanders
Thoughts & impulses just show up
Returning attention is a skill

Helpful, not right

Assess whether you are trying to support or win. This distinction is critical to relationships & culture.

Clarity of purpose & outcome

It is important to have answers for: Why are we having this conversation? Why am I giving feedback? Why are we having this meeting? How will we/did we come to a decision? At the end of a meeting/conversation always ask: What have we decided? Who needs to know? When do they need to know? Who will tell them? (What Who When Who)

Useful Language

Tell me more
Why is that important to you?
I get it, and...
I know this is challenging & I have faith in you
This is what this role requires
Is this a help you or hear you conversation?

Let me see if I get this
Help me understand
Can you tell me what you heard?
Of course & you are up to it
I have a concern
How can I support you?

Why Does Mindful Communication Matter?

Culture and growth are a function of the conversations we have and the ones we don't. Safety, belonging, mattering are fundamental human needs. Gossip is one way that people meet these needs. When we listen deeply to another and check for understanding before offering our perspective, we meet these needs for the other person.

It is much more efficient to spend time approaching resistance & checking for understanding than it is doing the clean up & managing underground unrest.

Affiliation, accountability & transparency build trust & engagement.

Giving feedback directly & kindly is critical to positive growth & culture.