

INTERNAL AWARENESS PRACTICES

How am I? (3-4 minutes)

A few notes about this practice:

At ZERO TO THREE, we often share a quote by Jeree Pawl, “How you are is as important as what you do.” This quote conveys the understanding that the quality of our presence with others is important. The quote also recognizes that how we are doing internally impacts our ability to be open and present with others. In order to effectively work with others, it’s helpful to have a clear sense of how we are doing in the moment. This practice helps us tune in to ourselves.

- Sitting or standing, take an intentional posture that is relaxed and upright. Allow your posture to express a sense of being present, at ease and awake. Soften your gaze or close your eyes if that’s more comfortable.
- Take a few deep breaths and slowly exhale.
- Focusing your attention on physical sensations in your body, what do you notice? Are there any areas of tension or discomfort? What parts of your body feel relaxed and at ease? Can you sense areas that feel alive with energy or areas that feel dull or numb? Over the next several moments, notice how these sensations may change as you give them your attention.
- Now, bringing your attention to your mind, notice how active or settled your mind is right now. Can you notice thoughts as they pass through? Is your mind holding on to any particular thoughts or is it calm and quiet? Thoughts will always arise—that is natural. See if you can observe these thoughts come and go without getting attached or caught up in them.
- Now bringing your awareness to your emotions, notice the predominant feeling you have in this moment. Can you label that emotion? What other emotions are present? Are these feelings positive, negative or neutral? Try to notice your emotions without judging or analyzing them. Can you just be present to what you are feeling right now?
- Notice for a moment how all these factors that make up your physical, mental and emotional states are working together right now, influencing each other, and creating how you are in this moment. As best you can, bring a sense of acceptance and kindness to how you are doing right now without judging yourself.