



# MindfulLiving™ Module 5

## Pain-Free Living

### Chapter 12 - Resources: Reading

## Inner Listening

Adapted by Shery Clein, MindfulLiving™ Coach  
*Cultivating Awareness Intelligence*

In Module 5, **Pain-Free Living**, we explore the counterintuitive approach of turning toward rather than away from emotional and physical discomfort. One of the most sophisticated methods for this approach is Inner Relationship Focus, as taught by Ann Weiser Cornell.

**Note:** Becoming proficient with Focusing requires significant practice, which goes beyond the scope of the MindfulLiving™ course. However, introductory materials are available here, and additional resources can be found on Ann's website, Focusing Resources. Ann also offers a free 5-day online course, *Get Bigger Than What's Bugging You*, an excellent introduction to Focusing.

When you experience a jittery feeling, tightness, or a choking sensation, it's common to try to eliminate it quickly. You might question why the feeling arises at an inconvenient time or criticise yourself for not handling it better. Instead of attempting to eliminate it or distracting yourself with deep breathing, drinks, or cigarettes, consider listening to the feeling.

Allowing yourself to be open to these sensations invites a deeper connection with your whole self. This openness can help the sensation relax and release, enabling you to continue your activities with greater clarity and centeredness. You may even find surprising and positive changes in this aspect of your life.

**Focusing** is listening gently and acceptingly to your body's messages, honouring the wisdom within you, and becoming aware of subtle levels of knowing that communicate through your body.

### Being a Good Listener to Yourself

Reflect on a time when someone truly listened to you. Remember how it felt to be heard, how it helped you understand yourself better and clarify your thoughts and feelings.

**“A LIFE SPENT  
MAKING MISTAKES  
IS NOT ONLY MORE  
HONORABLE, BUT  
MORE USEFUL  
THAN A LIFE SPENT  
DOING NOTHING.”**



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In contrast, recall moments when you wanted to express yourself but were met with criticism or unsolicited advice. Instead of feeling understood, you might have felt more confused or frustrated.

**Focusing** is akin to being a good listener to your inner self. This practice involves:

❖ **A Welcoming Presence:**

Embracing each feeling without judgment or criticism. No matter how unpleasant, each feeling has a purpose and deserves space to evolve and transform.

❖ **Holding the Space:**

Maintaining awareness of your inner world and staying present. It's like saying to your inner self, "I'm here and staying with you."

❖ **Hearing the Essence:**

Listening for the core message of the feeling. Although initial messages might be unclear, continued attention will make the message more apparent.

❖ **Staying in Present Time:**

Focus on your current bodily sensations without being distracted by past experiences or future concerns. Regularly ask yourself, "How am I feeling in my body right now?"

## **Being a Friend to Your Felt Sense**

**Focusing** is about forming a positive, supportive relationship with yourself. True friendship involves acknowledging, allowing, being patient, curious, respectful, warm, empathetic, compassionate, and loving. If you find it challenging to be this friendly to yourself immediately, start with simple steps, such as saying hello to your feelings. When you notice a feeling, greet it: "Hello. I know you're there." This simple acknowledgement can bring significant relief. Often, we ignore or struggle with our feelings instead of acknowledging them directly.

For example, if you experience a tightness in your chest, acknowledging it can lead to a noticeable release. As Rebecca discovered, simply saying hello to her constricted feeling led to an immediate easing.

## **Closing Thoughts**

### **Nikki (New Jersey):**

"There is a voice. It speaks to me in patterns and rhythms. When I am not listening, it ties my belly into knots and spins my mind. It screams, without a sound, loud enough to make my heart race. And it pushes me to stop and listen. When I do, I find it has all the answers."

### **Becky (Idaho):**

"If you hear the whispers, you won't have to listen to the screams." – Cherokee proverb.

### **Jan (South Dakota):**

"Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma – which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your inner voice. And most important, dare to follow your heart and intuition." – Steve Jobs.

### **Dave:**

"This is not an answering machine. This is a questioning machine. 'Who are you, and what do you want?' If you think these are trivial questions, most people go through life without answering either one." – Peter Russell

Thank you for your dedication and participation. We aim to guide you in transforming discomfort into a space of clarity and growth. If you are facing challenges or need support related to the content of this module, please don't hesitate to reach out. I am here to assist you on your journey. Enjoy the process, stay centred, and remember that support is always available. Blessings and best wishes for your continued well-being ♥

Warm regards,  
Shery Clein



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