

Listening

We listen to our clients, and to their inner worlds, all day long. We listen with them in sessions and at times in between sessions. We travel with them to myriad states of mind and internal places: to their pain, satisfaction, boredom, stuckness, joy-- and so much more.

Who listens as closely to your inner world? You have trained and honed this capacity. Do you have a home or a place where you receive that kind of intimate listening? You can be this kind of companion for yourself in meditation.

Meditation is a unique situation where you can hold the complexity of your lived experience without so much interruption or disruption. You can feel the texture of your insides: the tone and mood, the melodies, harmonies and discordant tones. In meditation, you can learn to tolerate conflict while being touched by poignancy.

You don't interrupt your inward searching in meditation to share what arises with someone else, a therapist or a trusted friend. And you need not interrupt your experience by doing a particular meditation technique such as following the breath or scanning the body.

Being with our clients with a caring, open stance and without a predefined agenda is kind and friendly; in the language of Buddhism it is Metta. Similarly, the way that I teach meditation, Recollective Awareness Meditation, is a gentle, receptive approach. This approach teaches you how to be friendly with your inner world in meditation without a predefined agenda. Over time you develop trust in where you are led, understanding that your meditative experiences address the conditions in your life and provide what is needed for healing and integration at that time. While you discover skillful ways to move about in your meditation-- and this somewhat mysteriously enters your life and your work.

Written by Nelly Kaufer LPC, the first in a series of blogs on meditation and psychotherapy