

Audio Track 14: Touching Hands

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Try this: Touching hands.

For this practice, you'll need a partner. Please stand, or you can sit facing one another. Now both partners hold up one palm. It should be one person's left and the other person's right so that they are mirror images. And then bring your hands together so that they meet palm to palm. Okay.

Now. Let's try that again. This time, try bringing them together slowly while paying attention to the sensations in your own hand as you bring your hand slowly, closer, and eventually touch your partner's hand.

And we'll try that one more time. This time, bringing them together slowly again while focusing on your partner's hand. Then rest here with hands touching for a moment and notice what it's like to be both present and also connected in this way. Often something happens. Perhaps we get scared and withdraw.

The person with the longer first name, please quickly withdraw your hand. Take a moment to notice what it felt like to withdraw your hand, or if you were the partner, what it felt like when your partner withdrew their hand. Then bringing your hands back together again. This time, the second partner, quickly withdraw your hand. Once again taking a moment to notice what it felt like to withdraw your hand or what it felt like for your partner to withdraw their hand. This is what distancing feels like. Notice, which was a more familiar feeling -- withdrawing or being left. And also take a moment to notice what it felt like to be on the other side of what you usually do.

Now bringing the hands back together again. The person with the longer name, now straighten your arm and push your hand into your partner's hand. Once again noticing what it felt like to be

the person who pushed, or the person who was pushed. This is what it feels like when one person pursues.

Now bring the hands back together again so that the other partner can, when you're ready, push your hand into your partner's hand. Again, noticing what it felt like to be pursued or to pursue. Again, taking a moment to notice, which was a more familiar feeling, pursuing or being pursued. And also notice what it felt like to be on the other side of what you usually do.

And finally bringing the hands together one last time, see if you might move the hands around together. Kind of dancing them together. No need to keep the palms together all the time. Just noting how they relate to each other. As you freely and spontaneously, move the hands around. And taking a moment to notice any effects of this practice. If there were parts you found uncomfortable, taking a moment to give yourself what you need right now. Dropping the attention to the soles of the feet or finding a soothing, supportive touch. Or maybe some words of comfort.

And please remember to thank yourself and your partner for showing up, for practicing, for opening to learning more about you, and how you relate.

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