

Audio Track 9: Supportive Touch

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Try this: Supportive touch.

As human beings, we are wired to be comforted and soothed by touch. And as it turns out, it's not just touch from others that can comfort and soothe us, but we can activate our own physiology. So, let's try that now.

Let's start by placing a hand on the heart. It might be helpful to close your eyes and feel into what happens in your body and what happens mentally and emotionally when you place your hand there. Take a moment to notice perhaps, the gentle pressure of the hand, and the sensation of warmth. What happens in your body when you place your hand there?

Now leaving your hand there and placing the other hand on your belly. Take some time to notice what it feels like when you have your hands in this position. Then perhaps moving both hands to the belly. What does it feel like here? Or you can place the hands on the cheeks cupping one or both cheeks with your hands. Perhaps try gently stroking your forearm with the opposite hand. Or stroking one or both thighs. Or you might place the hands back on the heart and try rubbing or tapping the heart area.

One nice posture for to feel strong compassion is making a fist and placing the fist over the heart area and the other hand can gently hold the fist or the arm. You might try crossing your arms and

giving yourself a gentle squeeze. Call this a surreptitious self-hug. Or perhaps putting one hand inside the other and holding your own hand. Take some time now to see where on your body, you feel support and reassurance when you place your hand. It could be one of these places or another, like over the throat.

Take some time and see where it is for you.

If you found a place that feels really good and supportive, comforting, reassuring, keep practicing that. The more you activate your own physiology with kind touch, the stronger and more effective the touch will grow. If you found a place that it's just kind of neutral, you don't feel much there, you can keep practicing with that, too. Often it does grow into a place of comfort and reassurance. But if you found a place that was painful, that was uncomfortable, that was difficult, no need to keep practicing this. Not everybody feels supported by touch.

So, whatever your experience with this practice, please take a moment and thank yourself for showing up and trying.

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