

CONFUSION RESOURCES

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The renowned psychiatrist and psychotherapist, Milton H. Erickson, M.D., innovated an empowering idea: The reason confusion is useful in getting inner work accomplished during times of increased anxiety (a frequent experience during stress and overwhelm) is that people are more teachable.

The unpleasant feelings associated with confusion incline us to want to avoid it, escape it, and/or hurry to find ways to end it.

In MINDFULNESS BASED COGNITIVE THERAPY we use awareness to observe confusion and anxiety and the inclination to escape, thus rendering these phenomena into signals towards practicing more skillful action and creating a more self-regarding and compassionate self-relationship.

This practice can be learned gradually. As steps within the practice are gracefully encountered, the meditator hears their own rhythm, voices their own emotional presence, and sees habits and conditionings as less solid and more transparent. Choices emerge and the strengths that the person has applied in the world now can be applied with the self.

If the impetus to inquire within is strongest when we are confused, it may be time to allow for the possibility that by “being with” confusion rather than fighting it or running from or rushing through it, this may allow the confusion to signal that we are approaching needed information. The patience and acceptance needed to work with confusion are waiting to be learned with each occurrence. Meditation practice can provide the vehicle for that learning.

We do this at a kind and generous pace. The breath is our guide and confusion our sometimes subtle resource.