

Foundational Freedom- Providence Top 10 Practices

Our responses to stress play a vital role in our daily lives. The ways in which we cope affect our behaviors, beliefs, and relationships with ourselves and others. Here are our top 10 Emotional Wellness practices for building foundational freedom from coping skills that do not serve or support our desired outcome when faced with daily stressors.

Foundational wellness starts with prioritizing some often overlooked daily essentials. These include clean water, whole food nutrition, proper sleep hygiene, movement, and sunlight. For a deeper dive into these basics, check out our Soapbox on Foundational Freedom basics.

Breathe | Breathing is something we do every day without thinking. Conscious, regulated breathing has a calming physiological effect on the body. Regular mindful breathing can improve our window of stress tolerance and help us adapt to stressful situations. Try breathing in slowly through your nose, hold it for a moment, and then slowly exhale for longer than you inhaled.

Curiosity | Curiosity is a skill that allows us to find out more about our behaviors, beliefs, and what motivates us. When we practice curiosity, we are not focused on strictly avoiding or hiding a particular behavior, belief, or feeling. Rather, we get interested in where this belief comes from, why this feeling is unbearable, or what payoff we get from engaging in this behavior. This grows our self-awareness and enables us to relate more effectively with ourselves and others. We develop a spirit of curiosity when we practice turning inwards.

Self-compassion | Self-compassion is essential when it comes to Emotional Wellness. When we meet ourselves with judgment or hostility, we respond the same way a stranger or friend would if we were to judge them harshly. Curiosity about our coping skills and beliefs about ourselves and the world can bring to the surface of our awareness things in ourselves that we aren't happy with. Responding to these conditioned behaviors and beliefs with self-compassion allows us to create safety and connection with ourselves first and foremost. This opens the door to lasting positive change, because we realize and accept that we are on our side. Practicing self-compassion allows us to meet the things in ourselves we wish to change with gentleness and kindness rather than judgment and avoidance. Be nice to yourself. You are doing the best you can.

Mindfulness | Mindfulness is a meditative practice that helps us focus on the present. When we slow down and consciously focus on our thoughts, feelings, and environment, we gain valuable insight into ourselves. With this insight, we are then able to make different choices for ourselves that align with the principles we prefer to live our lives by, rather than old beliefs and mental processes that no longer serve us. The key to mindfulness is to slow down and practice observing thoughts and feelings without judgment as they come in and out of our awareness. With deeper awareness and understanding of our experience comes more clarity and opportunity to practice self-acceptance and sustainable long-term growth.

Self-awareness | Self-awareness is our understanding and knowledge of our whole self. This encompasses our thoughts, feelings, beliefs, behaviors, attitudes, experiences, personality, and value system. Journaling, reflecting, and acknowledging the way in which we talk to and about ourselves are all ways we can build self-awareness. Developing awareness of ourselves takes practice and patience. Understanding and applying self-awareness helps us to make decisions that consider our full experience and align our hopes with our closely held virtues and long-term goals.

Community | Community and connection with other humans is an instinctually-driven need. Whether it's being a member of a particular group, or relating with the people that we interact with on a daily basis, social support and belonging are crucial to our Emotional Wellness. Community provides us the opportunity to be seen, known, and understood, and gives us the chance to see, know, and understand others. Co-regulation with another person produces physiological changes on a chemical level that soothes our nervous system and helps us stay calm in stressful situations. Regular social interaction, especially in the form of a reliable and safe community, is as beneficial and important as alone time in our routine.

Detoxification | Detoxification is an important element of a holistic lifestyle and contributes greatly to Emotional Wellness. We encounter tens of thousands of man-made chemicals on a daily basis, which can overburden our hardworking liver and kidneys. The chemical stress from pollutants and contaminants in our air, food, water, environment, beauty products, personal care products, cleaning agents, and from stress itself prevent our organs and systems from functioning optimally and can lead to unpleasant physical and emotional symptoms. Consider transitioning to a diverse whole food-rich diet and incorporating detox habits into your routine, such as fasting, daily movement or exercise, and organic herbs to assist your body in removing toxins and repairing itself. Most importantly, limit your body's exposure to toxins wherever possible, and eliminate inflammatory and man-made food items from your diet.

Acceptance | Acceptance of ourselves and others is easier said than done. Without realizing it, many of us are conditioned to judge our emotional experience harshly. A way to start practicing self-acceptance is to adopt the attitude that all of our physiological sensations and accompanying emotions are okay and don't need to be fixed or changed, no matter how uncomfortable they may be. Pain, shame, discomfort, anxiety, and other negative experiences all have important messages to share with us about our overall wellness. How can we learn from or integrate these feelings without first accepting them as they are? Meeting emotional states with gentle acceptance helps us shift from destructive patterns of control to welcoming and luxuriating in a rich, free, and full emotional experience. When we can accept ourselves, we can also accept others and things outside of ourselves (and outside of our control) with greater ease.

Intuition | Everyone has intuition, but we are not taught properly how to access it or use it, and yet it is the key to living a balanced, truly fulfilled life. Intuition is essentially pulling the information that exists within light and energy, reading it, and interpreting it. We have all been influenced by the world's ideas of who we should be, the impact of social media, school systems and generations of the families that came before us. What would happen if you were to strip away that programming and remember who you are at your core? Developing your intuition allows you to be ahead of the radical evolution of technology and spirituality of the planet. There is a lot of information and misinformation out there, much of which is designed to keep you disconnected from the truth, disconnected from others and disconnected from yourself. Intuition will allow you to pull out accurate information for your own unique soul and empower you to be who you are at your core.