

The FAST Pathways® Academy – Out of Your Body



Each feeling has its own particular way of showing up in your body, which is how you can tell the difference between your emotions. You never get confused about whether you're feeling guilty or excited about something, because you experience them differently in your body.

When we're feeling bad about something, most people will try to address it by changing what's causing the feeling. Which can work – but it's got two big drawbacks:

There might be nothing you can do to change the situation, or what you could do (for example, avoiding it) has really big side effects that you're not prepared to live with.

And sometimes, we get to feeling yuck without really knowing what's causing it. This technique is really useful for getting back on top of things in both these situations, because you don't need to be able to label the feeling (what emotion it is), or know where it's coming from, for this to work.

I first learned this technique for getting rid of a headache, or any kind of pain which is serving no purpose in protecting the body from damage. And if you're experiencing physical discomfort, that's a really important distinction – this is not a substitute for medical advice, because some forms of pain are your body's way of telling you that something needs sorting. Please take that professional advice where appropriate.

My Mum suffers from severe arthritis, and struggles to sleep because of the pain. She really wanted to learn to switch the pain off, but some of the pain is her body's way of alerting her to its limits, without which she might push herself too far and do even further damage. So I taught her how to take the most severe pain out of her body and place it beside her at night. While she stays still (so she's not risking damaging anything), it stays outside her. When she moves, it goes back inside. That compromise has helped her to improve her sleep, risk-free.

Over the years, I've found the skill just as effective for getting rid of other unwanted sensations – anxiety, guilt, embarrassment and even 'stuck'. Putting it into a bowl is only one of the ways you can get that feeling outside your body, and gone. You can imagine putting it on a little raft, and watching it float off down a wide, meandering river; to become lost in the depth of the ocean.

Or tying it to a big, shiny helium balloon, and letting it go. Watching as it glides effortlessly up and up, carried away on the breeze, getting smaller and smaller, until the tiniest dot is lost over the horizon. Or you can set aside a little time to simply relax, and ask your mind what will be the most effective way for you to get rid of that unpleasant feeling.

It's also an effective approach for worries or insecurities, where there are a lot of little, similar thoughts all making their own contribution to the over all unpleasant experience.