



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Summary of day 12 session:

Creating Space (Keeping it Together)

Your mental health is the key to everything! It determines how you show up in the world; how you receive, interact with and support those around you. You have to live with that inner voice of the mind and if you are anxious, overwhelmed or sad, that inner voice can be a source of torture for you.

Interview with Ilana Greeff:

What are some of the emotions you and your family have experienced during lockdown?

- “Lockdown was a huge shock. I feel a constant sense of anxiety and I don’t know where its coming from. The sensation of tightness in my chest is difficult to explain. I am often triggered and then it grips me again, as if out of nowhere.”
- “Seeing my seven-year-old daughter, so sad and anxious, as she struggles to express the emotions she is feeling, is heartbreaking.”
- “What gives me some peace is that we are all going through this together, as a country.”

Can you tell us about the challenging time you have been through lately?

- “Out of 12 family members, 9 of us have had COVID. When my kids got the virus, it was terrible and I was constantly watching them to make sure they were breathing, as they slept. I became even more anxious about going to work and leaving the house, at that time too. Currently we have two family members who are very sick- they are on oxygen and can’t get hospital beds.”
- “During this challenging time, the support I’ve received from others around me has been invaluable. I am reaching out and people are listening. It is wonderful to be able to lean on them.”

How do you create space for yourself and your well-being?

- “Currently I am homeschooling my kids, whilst maintaining a full-time job and attempting to keep it all together. It is challenging to find time for myself, but the “You are not alone” campaign is helping me to do that. I am also finding some time to breathe- and this has been amazing.”
- “If I’m having a bad day, I call a friend and I cry it out. I love people and I feel safe sharing my emotions with others. These are very helpful conversations for me and are a way that I create space for myself in my day”

Top tips for creating space:

- Viktor Frankl said that “Between stimulus and response there is a space and, in that space, lies my freedom to choose my response and in that lies my growth and my happiness”
- Create space for yourself by using tools such as meditation, breath work techniques or leaning on a friend.
- Stop and take a pause, even if its three seconds. You will be more ‘response-able’ if you do.
- Up your support network and find creative ways to support people who are going through crisis.
- Showing up for others is tough when you yourself are struggling. Make sure you are taking care of yourself and your own mental health too
- This is a terrifying time, but it can also be a meaningful time too. Be there for one other. Don’t wait until it’s too late...lets be more vulnerable and more loving now, whilst we have the time.

Mindful practice: Pressing pause

- With a pen, draw a pause button on your thumb
- Place your hands in your lap and begin to breathe deeply. Focus all your awareness on your breath.
- You will find that your mind has wandered, touch your index finger and thumb together and press the pause button, as you bring your awareness back to the breath. Every time your mind wanders, let this be your practice.
- Do this for a few minutes and open your eyes gently when you’re ready.