**Secondary**

**Exercise: React v Response**

Difficult emotions such as fear or anger are not the enemy. It is our reactivity toward these difficult emotions that are most harmful. Often when anger or fear is here, our lower brain is in charge. This is where the fight/flight/freeze response originates and it is responsible for maintaining our survival. The more we go over the scary or angry story, the more anger and/or fear we continue to feel and thus get caught up in reactivity. The lower brain doesn’t have control over our actions and when mindfulness is present, we support the higher brain to see the bigger picture with calmness and clarity.

Imagine yourself driving a car, where your PFC is in the front seat and Reptilian brain fight and flight are in the backseat. Fight and Flight are scared and angry saying things like, “Stop, that car almost hit us.” “Hey, you BEEPX%##, son of a BEEPXX%%%##, you just cut me off!”

Your higher brain is in the driver seat and can speak to the lower brain. “I hear you. You guys are welcome to come along for the ride, but I am driving here and we are safe.” When mindfulness is present, you can remember that you always have a choice regarding how to respond.

**Compassion**

Come into a comfortable and supported seated posture. Begin to bring your awareness inside and slow down the rhythm of your breathing. Acknowledge any event that happened today or this week that was difficult. Select a moderately difficult experience. It is important that we practice with something moderately challenging vs. the most challenging. Bring your awareness to what happened, thoughts, feelings, and let your heart begin to open as you breathe in and out. Turn towards the moderate difficulty with compassion and acceptance

May I be kind to myself.
May I find peace and healing.
I am doing the best that I can in this moment.
May I accept and find ease with things just as they are.