

## **Acceptance: Half-smiling and Willing Hands**

When trying to embrace the moment and lean into acceptance, we sometimes need to push our body out of its avoidance posture. When we are feeling reluctant or avoidance, our body tends to get small and closed off. The following are two ways to push ourselves into a acceptance posture.

### ***Half-Smiling***

1. Relax your face from the top of your head down to your chin and jaw. Slowly and progressively let go of each facial muscle and allow them to fall into a relaxed state. SLOW is key for this, we cannot force ourselves to relax. We need to focus on loosening our grip.
2. Let both corners of your lips to slightly up, just to the point where you can feel them. It is not necessary for others to see you smiling. The goal of a half-smile is for you to feel to contrast between the “smile muscles” and the rest of your face.
3. From here, try to spread out across your face and adopt a serene expression. Remember: your face communicates with your brain. A serene, calm face will send a clear message to your brain that we are calm and confident.

### ***Willing Hands***

*From standing:* Drop your arms down to your side, feeling them hang from your shoulders. Focus on that hanging feeling. Release any tension you may feel from your arms. Unclench your hands and turn them outward. From here, your arms should be relaxed and hanging at your side. Your palms should be facing forward with your fingers relaxed

*From sitting:* Place your hands on your lap or your thighs. With unclenched hands, turn your hands upward with palms facing the ceiling and fingers relaxed.



## Acceptance: Practicing Half-smiling and Willing Hands

When trying to embrace the moment and lean into acceptance, we sometimes need to push our body out of its avoidance posture. When we are feeling reluctant or avoidance, our body tends to get small and closed off. The following are two ways to push ourselves into an acceptance posture.

### Practice Checklist

- Half-smile when you first wake up in the morning. Use the few moments before you leave your bed and take on the day to set the tone for the day. Inhale and exhale slowly and gently three times while maintaining a half-smile.
- Practice your half-smile and willing hands during your free moments. When you find yourself sitting or standing with free time, look around and practice while looking at your surroundings.
- Half-smile and show willing hands while listening to music. Set aside 5-10 minutes each day to listen to music you enjoy. Pay attention to the words, music and rhythm of what you are hearing.
- Notice when you feel irritated and see if you are able to still half-smile and show willing hands.
- Note other effective times in your day to practice:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



## Half-smiling and Willing Hands – Practice Tracker

Describe your practice with half-smiling and willing hands this past week. Practice at least once a day. Practice both when you are not emotionally distressed as well as when you are stressed.

Check off any of the following exercises you tried:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Half-smiled when I first woke up in the morning.               | <input type="checkbox"/> Half-smiled with willing hands when my feelings were hurt.              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Half-smiled during my free moments.                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Half-smiled with willing hands when I did not want to accept something. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Half-smiled with willing hands while I was listening to music. | <input type="checkbox"/> Half-smiled with willing hands when I started getting angry.            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Half-smiled with willing hands when I was irritated.           | <input type="checkbox"/> Half-smiled when I had unpleasant thoughts.                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Half-smiled in a lying-down position.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Half-smiled when I couldn't sleep.                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Half-smiled in a sitting position.                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Half-smiled with another person.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Half-smiled when I was walking down the street.                | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:  |

Describe your practice below:

1. Situation: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe strategies used: \_\_\_\_\_

From 1 (not very effective) to 5 (very effective), how effective was this?: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Situation: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe strategies used: \_\_\_\_\_

From 1 (not very effective) to 5 (very effective), how effective was this?: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Situation: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe strategies used: \_\_\_\_\_

From 1 (not very effective) to 5 (very effective), how effective was this?: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Situation: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe strategies used: \_\_\_\_\_

From 1 (not very effective) to 5 (very effective), how effective was this?: \_\_\_\_\_