Day 1

# Week

1

# Day

1

# Day Title

What Acceptance Is and What It is Not

# Lesson Name

The Nature of Acceptance

# Meme

(insert meme image)

# Summary

Acceptance means acknowledging reality as it is, without denial, avoidance, or distortion. It is not resignation, indifference, or passivity. Rather, acceptance creates clarity and frees energy for wise action. It softens suffering by closing the gap between what we want and what is.

# Daily Passage

Acceptance is one of the most misunderstood concepts in psychology and spirituality. Many people hear the word and imagine it means giving up, settling, or passively tolerating things that should be changed. Others mistake it for indifference, as if acceptance means not caring what happens. Yet true acceptance is something very different. It is not about resignation or complacency. It is about seeing reality clearly and relating to it with presence and compassion.

To accept means to acknowledge what is happening in this moment without denial or avoidance. It means saying, “This is here,” whether we like it or not. Acceptance does not require approval. We can accept that we feel sadness without liking sadness. We can accept that an injustice exists without condoning it. We can accept that we made a mistake without excusing it. Acceptance is simply the willingness to stop fighting reality.

When we resist reality, we create unnecessary suffering. Imagine being stuck in traffic. If we cannot accept that we are in traffic, we stew in frustration, clenching the wheel and rehearsing angry thoughts. The traffic is not optional. Our suffering, however, grows from the gap between reality and our refusal to let it be what it is. Acceptance closes that gap. When we accept, we may still wish things were different, but we no longer exhaust ourselves by fighting the fact that they are not.

Acceptance is not the same as passivity. It does not mean we stop acting to improve our lives or the world. In fact, acceptance often makes action more effective. When we see clearly where we are, we can choose wisely what to do next. Without acceptance, our energy is tangled in denial, anger, or self-pity. With acceptance, we can respond from clarity instead of reactivity.

Acceptance also does not mean becoming numb. Some fear that if they accept their grief, pain, or anxiety, they will sink into hopelessness. In reality, the opposite is true. Avoidance feeds intensity, while acceptance softens it. When we allow feelings to exist without pushing them away, they move through us more freely. Acceptance creates space for healing.

In relationships, acceptance does not mean tolerating harm or abandoning boundaries. It does not mean staying silent when change is needed. It means recognizing who the other person is right now instead of clinging to who we wish they were. We can accept someone’s limitations while still choosing how to engage. We can accept conflict while still working toward resolution. Acceptance grounds us in reality, and from there we can set boundaries or take action without denial or fantasy clouding the picture.

Spiritually, acceptance is often described as surrender. This is not about giving up, but about laying down the fight against what already is. Life includes joy and pain, gain and loss, success and failure. Acceptance is the recognition that all of it belongs. It allows us to meet life with open hands instead of clenched fists.

The practice of acceptance is not easy. Our minds are wired to prefer pleasure over pain, control over uncertainty, permanence over change. Acceptance requires humility, patience, and courage. It asks us to soften into the truth, even when that truth is uncomfortable. Yet the paradox is that acceptance, far from trapping us, is what sets us free. It frees us from the exhausting battle against what is, and it opens us to the possibility of responding with wisdom, compassion, and creativity.

In the weeks ahead, we will explore acceptance in many forms: self-acceptance, acceptance of others, acceptance of emotions, the body, the past, change, and impermanence. But it begins here, with this simple yet radical understanding: acceptance is not resignation. It is presence. It is clarity. It is the willingness to see life as it is, and in that seeing, to discover the possibility of wholeness and freedom.

# Alternative View

Some critics argue that acceptance can lead to complacency, especially in the face of injustice or personal dysfunction. They caution that telling people to “accept” can sometimes silence legitimate anger or discourage needed change. To be useful, acceptance must be paired with discernment and action, not used as a way to justify inaction or oppression.

# Activity

What situations in my life do I currently resist most strongly?

How does resistance show up in my body, thoughts, or relationships?

Can I imagine what it would feel like to accept this situation, even if I still want it to change?

Where might acceptance free up energy for clearer, wiser action?

What do I fear might happen if I truly accepted things as they are?

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Day 2

# Week

1

# Day

2

# Day Title

Why We Resist Reality

# Lesson Name

The Nature of Acceptance

# Meme

(insert meme image)

# Summary

Resistance arises as a natural human response to pain, fear, and lack of control. It shows up in the body, mind, and behavior, and while it sometimes protects us, it often prolongs suffering. Acceptance begins with recognizing resistance and meeting it with compassion. Letting go of resistance frees energy and opens us to healing.

# Daily Passage

If acceptance is the practice of meeting life as it is, then resistance is its opposite. To resist reality means to fight against what already exists. We resist when we deny our feelings, when we argue with circumstances, or when we cling to the way we think things “should” be. This resistance is not evidence of weakness. It is a deeply human instinct, born from our desire for control, safety, and certainty.

Why do we resist reality so fiercely? One reason lies in the brain itself. The human nervous system evolved to protect us from threat. When something painful or frightening arises, our first impulse is to push it away. If we feel grief, we try to distract ourselves. If we feel fear, we may tense or avoid. If something in life does not match our expectations, we rehearse thoughts like, “This should not be happening.” The mind treats discomfort like danger, so resistance becomes a survival reflex.

Another reason is psychological conditioning. From childhood, we learn which emotions, behaviors, or identities are acceptable and which are not. If anger was punished, we resist anger in ourselves. If vulnerability was mocked, we resist showing weakness. This conditioning creates inner resistance to whole parts of our experience, leaving us fragmented.

We also resist reality because of our attachment to control. We want life to bend to our preferences, so we cling to how things were or how we imagine they should be. When circumstances do not comply, we resist. A job loss, a breakup, an illness, or even traffic can stir up frustration precisely because we cannot control it. Acceptance asks us to soften into uncertainty, but control tells us to fight against it.

Resistance can even show up in spiritual practice. Many people meditate or pray hoping to get rid of unpleasant thoughts or emotions. But this is just another form of resistance. Instead of meeting what arises, we try to push it out of awareness. The paradox is that what we resist tends to persist. A repressed emotion often returns with greater intensity. A denied truth lingers in the background until we finally turn to face it.

Resistance is not all bad. At times, it protects us. If someone is harming us, resistance gives us the energy to set a boundary. If we are in danger, resistance motivates action. The problem is that we often resist not only what is harmful but also what is unavoidable. We resist the weather, the passage of time, the reality of loss, or our own inner experience. This constant battle drains us and deepens suffering.

The practice of acceptance begins with noticing resistance. We can ask ourselves, “Where am I saying no to reality?” Resistance often shows up in the body as tension, tightness, or holding the breath. It shows up in thoughts as judgments or repeated mental arguments. It shows up in behavior as avoidance, distraction, or addiction. By gently observing these patterns, we bring them into awareness, where they can begin to soften.

Compassion is essential here. It is easy to judge ourselves for resisting, but judgment only creates another layer of resistance. Instead, we can recognize that resistance is trying to protect us. It is a part of us that longs for safety. By meeting resistance with kindness, we invite it to relax.

When we let go of resistance, even for a moment, we often feel a wave of relief. The tightness eases, the mind quiets, the body softens. Acceptance is not about liking what is happening, but about ending the exhausting war with reality. By releasing resistance, we create the conditions for healing, clarity, and peace.

# Alternative View

Some argue that resistance can be necessary and even healthy. Without resistance, we might accept harmful situations that should be changed, such as abuse or injustice. In this view, resistance is not always the enemy but can be a source of empowerment. The challenge is to discern when resistance is protective and when it is preventing us from living fully.

# Activity

What situations in my life do I resist most strongly right now?

How does resistance feel in my body?

What thoughts or judgments show up when I resist?

Can I identify ways resistance may be trying to protect me?

What might shift if I allowed myself to soften into reality instead of fighting it?

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Day 3

# Week

1

# Day

3

# Day Title

The Psychology of Avoidance

# Lesson Name

The Nature of Acceptance

# Meme

(insert meme image)

# Summary

Avoidance is a natural but often unhelpful strategy for dealing with discomfort. While it offers short-term relief, it prevents healing and deepens suffering over time. By noticing avoidance, approaching it with compassion, and practicing small steps of courage, we can shift from avoidance to acceptance.

# Daily Passage

If resistance is saying “no” to reality, avoidance is the act of turning away from it. Avoidance is one of the most common strategies we use to cope with discomfort. We avoid painful emotions, difficult conversations, or unpleasant truths by distracting ourselves, numbing out, or pretending the problem does not exist. While avoidance may bring short-term relief, it often deepens suffering over time and keeps us from experiencing the freedom that comes with acceptance.

Avoidance is rooted in our biology. The human brain is wired to seek pleasure and avoid pain. When something feels threatening or overwhelming, the nervous system pushes us to withdraw. This makes sense in survival contexts: if a situation is dangerous, avoiding it may keep us alive. The trouble comes when we apply this instinct to our inner world. We treat feelings like danger, so we try to escape them. Yet emotions, unlike predators, cannot be outrun. When suppressed, they tend to resurface in unexpected ways—through anxiety, depression, physical symptoms, or self-destructive behaviors.

Psychologists describe avoidance as a key feature of many mental health struggles. In anxiety, avoidance may look like steering clear of feared situations. In trauma, avoidance can show up as numbing or dissociation. In everyday life, avoidance may take the form of constant busyness, overworking, binge-watching, scrolling, or substance use. These behaviors keep discomfort at bay, but they also prevent us from processing and moving through what we fear.

Avoidance is not only about emotions; it can also involve relationships. We may avoid conflict to keep the peace, even when silence erodes trust. We may avoid intimacy to protect ourselves from rejection, only to feel lonely. We may avoid vulnerability because we fear being judged, yet this keeps us disconnected. In each case, avoidance trades short-term safety for long-term pain.

At its core, avoidance is an attempt to control. We believe that if we can keep uncomfortable feelings or situations away, we will be safe. But control is fragile. Life continues to bring change, loss, and uncertainty. When avoidance is our primary strategy, we are left unprepared to meet reality when it inevitably arrives.

The path out of avoidance begins with awareness. We can ask ourselves, “What am I avoiding right now?” This question can shine a light on behaviors that feel automatic. Perhaps we notice that we pick up our phone when sadness arises. Perhaps we realize that we avoid rest because silence brings up discomfort. Naming avoidance is the first step toward reclaiming choice.

The next step is compassion. We avoid because we are trying to protect ourselves. Judging avoidance only creates more shame and resistance. Instead, we can thank avoidance for its effort and gently explore what lies beneath it. Often, the feelings we fear are not as unbearable as we imagine. When we allow them space, they soften.

Finally, we can practice turning toward discomfort in small, manageable ways. This might mean pausing for a few breaths before distracting ourselves. It might mean journaling about a feeling we usually push aside. It might mean initiating a difficult but necessary conversation. Each time we face what we would rather avoid, we build resilience. Over time, this resilience expands our capacity for acceptance.

Avoidance promises relief, but acceptance delivers freedom. By facing what we fear, we discover that reality, though sometimes painful, is also workable. We learn that we can hold discomfort without being destroyed by it. This is the paradox of avoidance: the very act of turning away from pain creates more of it, while turning toward it opens the path to healing.

# Alternative View

Avoidance is not always harmful. At times, avoiding a situation or emotion can be wise. If we are not resourced to face a painful memory, avoidance may provide necessary protection until we are ready. Some forms of distraction, such as resting with a movie or engaging in hobbies, can be restorative. The key is not to eliminate avoidance entirely but to use it consciously, without letting it run our lives.

# Activity

What feelings or situations do I most often avoid?

How do I usually distract or numb myself when discomfort arises?

What does my avoidance try to protect me from?

Can I recall a time when facing what I avoided brought relief or healing?

What small step could I take to turn toward something I usually avoid?

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Day 4

# Week

1

# Day

4

# Day Title

The Spiritual Roots of Acceptance

# Lesson Name

The Nature of Acceptance

# Meme

(insert meme image)

# Summary

Acceptance has deep spiritual roots across traditions. In Buddhism, it is mindfulness; in Christianity, surrender; in Stoicism, focusing on what we can control; in Indigenous wisdom, harmony with nature. Across all traditions, acceptance aligns us with reality, reduces suffering, and connects us to something larger than ourselves.

# Daily Passage

Across cultures and traditions, acceptance has been recognized not just as a psychological skill but as a spiritual practice. Long before modern psychology began exploring mindfulness and self-compassion, wisdom traditions taught that peace arises not from controlling life but from surrendering to it. By looking at the spiritual roots of acceptance, we can deepen our understanding of why it matters and how it transforms our lives.

In Buddhism, acceptance is woven into the Four Noble Truths. The first truth teaches that suffering is an unavoidable part of existence. The second truth explains that much of this suffering arises from craving and resistance: the refusal to let life be as it is. The practice of mindfulness invites us to observe experience without clinging or rejecting. When we rest in mindful awareness, we stop fighting reality, and suffering begins to ease.

In Christianity, acceptance appears in the language of surrender and trust. The prayer “Thy will be done” is a recognition that life does not unfold according to our individual desires alone. Spiritual teachers describe acceptance as laying down the burden of control and entrusting life to God. This surrender is not passive but rooted in faith that meaning and grace can emerge even from difficulty.

In Stoic philosophy, acceptance shows up as the discipline of distinguishing what we can and cannot control. The Stoics taught that peace comes from focusing on our own thoughts and actions while accepting the unfolding of external events. Marcus Aurelius wrote, “You have power over your mind, not outside events. Realize this, and you will find strength.” This echoes the essence of acceptance: choosing presence and agency within limits.

Indigenous traditions also honor acceptance through relationship with nature. Many teachings emphasize harmony with the cycles of the earth, the seasons, and the inevitability of death. Rather than resisting change, these traditions often invite us to see ourselves as part of a larger web of life, where acceptance of natural rhythms leads to balance.

Across all of these traditions, acceptance is not a single act but an ongoing practice. It requires humility, the recognition that we are not in control of everything. It requires compassion, the willingness to soften rather than harden in the face of pain. And it requires courage, to remain open even when life feels uncertain.

What unites these diverse teachings is the insight that suffering often comes not from circumstances themselves but from our refusal to accept them. Acceptance is the path to freedom because it aligns us with reality rather than against it. By aligning ourselves with life, we discover a deeper source of peace that does not depend on everything going our way.

For modern seekers, the spiritual roots of acceptance remind us that this practice is both ancient and universal. Whether framed as surrender, mindfulness, trust, or harmony, acceptance has always been a doorway into wisdom. It invites us to see life not as something to conquer but as something to enter into with reverence.

Ultimately, acceptance as a spiritual practice connects us to something larger than ourselves. It asks us to trust that life, in all its joy and sorrow, belongs. It reminds us that our role is not to control the tide of existence but to learn how to flow with it. In this flow, we may glimpse the profound truth that we are not separate from life but participants in its unfolding mystery.

# Alternative View

Some people fear that spiritual teachings on acceptance encourage passivity or blind faith. If taken rigidly, surrender could be used to justify injustice or inaction. For acceptance to be healthy, it must be paired with discernment and responsibility. True acceptance does not mean abandoning effort or ethics, but engaging with life more wisely.

# Activity

Which spiritual tradition or teaching about acceptance resonates most with me?

How does my own worldview shape the way I approach acceptance?

Where in my life might I practice surrender or trust instead of control?

How do I experience resistance to the idea of letting go?

What might it feel like to see acceptance as a sacred practice rather than just a coping tool?

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Day 5

# Week

1

# Day

5

# Day Title

Radical Acceptance in Everyday Life

# Lesson Name

The Nature of Acceptance

# Meme

(insert meme image)

# Summary

Radical acceptance is the practice of meeting each moment fully, without denial or avoidance. It applies to daily frustrations, emotions, relationships, and life challenges. Acceptance reduces unnecessary suffering and creates space for wise, compassionate responses. It is not a one-time decision but an ongoing practice woven into everyday life.

# Daily Passage

Acceptance can sound like a lofty concept, something we might encounter in spiritual texts or therapy sessions. Yet its real power is found in daily living. Radical acceptance means meeting each moment exactly as it is, without denial or avoidance. It does not mean liking everything that happens, but it does mean releasing the constant battle with reality. When practiced consistently, radical acceptance becomes less of an idea and more of a way of moving through life.

To understand radical acceptance, consider the small frustrations of everyday existence. The coffee spills on the morning commute. A child throws a tantrum. The internet connection crashes during an important meeting. In these moments, resistance often flares up: “This shouldn’t be happening!” But the truth is that it is happening. Radical acceptance allows us to pause, take a breath, and acknowledge, “This is the reality right now.” That shift dissolves unnecessary suffering and creates space for wise action.

Radical acceptance also applies to our inner world. When anxiety arises, we often fight it with self-criticism: “Why can’t I relax?” When sadness appears, we may push it away with distraction. These strategies add a second layer of suffering on top of the original pain. Radical acceptance invites us to say, “Anxiety is here,” or “Sadness is here.” Naming the truth softens the inner struggle. While the feeling may not vanish immediately, it becomes less overwhelming when we stop treating it as an enemy.

Relationships offer another field for daily acceptance. We cannot control the moods, choices, or behaviors of others, yet we often exhaust ourselves trying. Radical acceptance means recognizing that people are as they are in this moment. It does not mean tolerating abuse or ignoring boundaries, but it does mean releasing the illusion that we can remake others to fit our desires. By accepting others as they are, we can choose how to respond with clarity rather than resentment.

Radical acceptance is especially powerful when facing situations we cannot change. Chronic illness, disability, financial loss, or grief may not be fixable. Denial only prolongs the pain, while self-pity can keep us trapped. Radical acceptance acknowledges the reality and says, “Even though I wish this were different, this is what is true right now.” This honesty is the foundation for resilience. From here, we can discover new ways to live meaningfully, even within limitation.

Importantly, radical acceptance is not a one-time event but a moment-by-moment practice. We may accept something in the morning and resist it again by evening. That is normal. Each time we notice ourselves fighting reality, we have another chance to soften. Over time, this repetition builds inner strength, much like exercising a muscle.

Daily practices can support this shift. Mindfulness meditation helps us observe thoughts and feelings without judgment. Journaling gives language to what we are resisting and creates space for clarity. Even simple pauses—placing a hand on the heart, taking a deep breath, or saying, “This too belongs”—can anchor us in acceptance in the middle of daily stress.

Radical acceptance in everyday life is not about perfection. There will be moments of resistance, frustration, and struggle. The goal is not to eliminate these but to notice them and return to presence more quickly. The more we practice, the more natural it becomes. Eventually, we may find ourselves meeting even difficult moments with a quiet inner “yes,” not because we enjoy them, but because we recognize that reality, as it is, is always workable.

# Alternative View

Some may worry that practicing radical acceptance leads to passivity. If we accept a difficult job, a failing relationship, or injustice, are we simply settling? Critics argue that without discernment, radical acceptance could blur into complacency. To address this, it is important to remember that acceptance is not approval. We can accept the present moment while still working for change, but with less resistance and more clarity.

# Activity

What daily frustrations trigger resistance in me most strongly?

How might radical acceptance shift my experience of these moments?

When was the last time I allowed an uncomfortable emotion to simply exist without pushing it away?

How do I confuse acceptance with approval, and what would it mean to separate the two?

What small daily practice could help me anchor radical acceptance in my routine?

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Day 6

# Week

1

# Day

6

# Day Title

Small Acts of Acceptance

# Lesson Name

The Nature of Acceptance

# Meme

(insert meme image)

# Summary

Acceptance grows through small, daily choices. By reflecting on moments where we already practice acceptance, we strengthen the muscle of presence and resilience. Reflection also reveals where acceptance is harder, guiding future growth. Small acts, repeated over time, create lasting transformation.

# Daily Passage

Acceptance often sounds like something grand, something we must achieve all at once in a sweeping moment of transformation. Yet in truth, acceptance grows out of small, everyday choices. Each time we soften into what is, instead of fighting reality, we take a step toward freedom. Reflection on these small acts helps us recognize that acceptance is already happening in our lives, often in ways we may overlook.

Think of the moment you burn dinner and, instead of berating yourself, you shrug, laugh, and order takeout. That is acceptance. Or when a rainy day cancels your outdoor plans and you settle in with a book instead of sulking. That is acceptance. Or when a friend disappoints you, and instead of replaying the frustration endlessly, you acknowledge your hurt and move forward. That, too, is acceptance.

These small acts may not seem spiritual or profound, but they build the foundation for larger transformations. Acceptance is a muscle, and every small use of it makes us stronger. By reflecting on where we already practice acceptance, we can see that it is not a foreign skill we must acquire but a capacity we can nurture.

Reflection also allows us to notice where acceptance is still difficult. Perhaps we handle daily inconveniences with grace but resist more painful realities, such as illness, aging, or grief. By acknowledging these areas gently, we shine light on the places where practice is most needed. Reflection is not about judgment but awareness. It asks: “Where am I already meeting life as it is, and where am I still resisting?”

One way to practice reflection is through journaling at the end of each day. Ask yourself: “What did I accept today?” It could be as simple as sitting patiently in traffic, choosing to rest when tired, or letting go of the need to be right in a conversation. Over time, you will begin to notice that acceptance is not rare but woven into daily life.

Another practice is gratitude, which is a form of acceptance in itself. Gratitude acknowledges reality as it is and finds value in it. When we practice gratitude for the small things—a warm meal, a smile from a stranger, the comfort of a bed—we strengthen the capacity to embrace life as it unfolds.

Reflection also reminds us that acceptance does not erase effort. We still try to cook dinner well, plan for sunny days, and nurture our relationships. The difference is that when things go wrong, we do not collapse into despair. We adapt, we breathe, we accept. This flexibility is a sign of resilience.

Over time, the accumulation of small acts of acceptance changes us. We become less reactive, more patient, and more at peace. Life continues to bring both joys and sorrows, but our relationship with them shifts. Instead of clinging to the good and rejecting the bad, we allow both to belong. We discover that acceptance is not a rare event but a daily practice, cultivated through countless small choices.

As we close this first week, let reflection be both a celebration and an invitation. Celebrate the ways you already practice acceptance, however small. Invite yourself to notice new opportunities to soften into reality. Remember that wholeness does not arrive in one leap but through steady, patient steps. Each small act of acceptance is a golden thread, and together, they weave a life of freedom, compassion, and peace.

# Alternative View

Some may argue that focusing on small acts of acceptance risks avoiding deeper issues. Reflecting on spilled coffee or canceled plans may feel superficial compared to the work of accepting trauma, loss, or profound injustice. While small acts are important, it is essential to eventually apply acceptance to the larger challenges of life. Otherwise, we may use small reflections as a way to bypass the deeper work.

# Activity

What was one small act of acceptance I practiced today?

Where in my life do I notice acceptance comes naturally?

Where do I still struggle to soften into reality?

How might daily reflection strengthen my ability to accept bigger challenges?

What small act of acceptance could I bring into tomorrow?

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