Free@Work exercise by Richard Brady

I recently participated in a meeting on the topic Free@Work sponsored by the *Netzwerk Achtsame Wirtschaft* (Network for Mindful Business). As this past year has been anything but free for most educators, I’ve developed a short presentation on this topic, which might be used to introduce educators to mindfulness:

1. With a pen and paper nearby, close your eyes, sit quietly and breathe. Leave your eyes slightly open, letting in a bit of light, if that is more comfortable for you.

2. With your eyes still closed, contemplate a time in your life when you experienced freedom. Return there and experience it just as you did originally.

3. This experience was the result of numerous causes and conditions. Turn your awareness to what these were. Opening your eyes, make lists of ones that were

a. External (e.g., the environment, other people present, the activity you were engaged in)

b. Internal (e.g., your aim, memories from prior experiences, your mood at the time)

4. Cross off causes and conditions on both lists that are not present at your work

5. Closing your eyes again, contemplate your experience of freedom at work, paying particular attention to causes and conditions that are detrimental to your freedom

7. Opening your eyes, make lists of the detrimental ones that are

a. External (outside of you)

b. Internal (in your mind)

8. If the causes and conditions at work are insufficient for you to ever, or only occasionally, experience freedom, what might you do to change

a. External ones (e.g., spend more time with certain people, avoid others)

b. Internal conditions (e.g., stop regularly and smile to yourself or others, develop more compassion for yourself or others, accept reality)

9. Close your eyes again and return to the experience of freedom you began with.