HEALING HAND
Lay a hand on the part of your body where you feel this most intensely. Imagine this is a healing hand--the hand of a loving nurse or parent or partner. Send some warmth into this area--not to get rid of the feeling, but to open up around it, make room for it, hold it gently.

SOFTENING
See if you can soften up around the feeling, loosen up, and hold it gently.

ALLOWING
See if you can allow this feeling to be there. You don't have to like it or want it--just allow it.

EXPANSION
See if you can open up and expand around the feeling. It's as if, in some magical way, all this space opens up inside you.

THE OBSERVING SELF
Take a step back and look at this feeling from your observing self.

THE CURIOUS SCIENTIST
Notice where this feeling is in your body. Zoom in on it. Observe it as if you are a curious scientist who has never encountered anything like this. Where are the edges? Where does it start and stop? Is it moving or still? Is it at the surface or inside you? Hot or cold? Light or heavy?

THE CHOICE TO FEEL
Suppose I could give you a choice:
(a) you never have to have this feeling ever again, but it means you lose all capacity to love and care, or
(b) you get to love and care, but when there's a gap between what you want and what you've got, feelings like this one show up.
Which do you choose?

FEELINGS

PHYSICALIZING
Imagine this feeling is an object. Is it liquid, solid, or gaseous? How big is it? Is it light or heavy? What temperature is it? Is it at the surface or inside you? What shape does it have? What color? Is it transparent or opaque? What does the surface feel like--hot or cold, rough or smooth, wet or dry?

COMPASSION
Hold this feeling gently as if it's a crying baby or a whimpering puppy.

THE STRUGGLE SWITCH
Is the struggle switch on, off, or at the halfway point we call "tolerating it"?
If the switch was like a dial with a scale of 0 to 10, and 10 is full on struggle, and 0 no struggle at all, then right now, what level are you? Are you willing to see if we can bring it down a notch or two?

NORMALIZING
This feeling tells you that you're a normal human being who has a heart and who cares. This is what humans feel when there's a gap between what we want and what we've got.

METAPHORS
Quicksand
Passengers on the Bus
Demons on the Boat
Wade Through the Swamp
Pushing Against a Clipboard

BREATHE INTO IT
Breathe into this feeling. It's as if your breath flows into and around it.

NOTICING
Notice where this feeling is.
Notice where it's most intense.
Notice the hot spots and cold spots.
Notice the different sensations within the feeling.

Figure 8.1 **Common Acceptance Techniques**