

The Willpower Instinct Meditation Book Group Meeting 4  
Saturday, April 28, 2012

*Welcome to our exploration of movement, meditation & Kelly McGonigal's The Willpower Instinct.*

*Visit my web-site: <http://dharmaworks.net/DharmaTouch/> to review a summary of what we cover in each class, find the homework suggestions and other resources you might find helpful. The following outline is a list of suggested homework. Please try to realize the benefits of building your awareness and willpower by practicing some or all of these steps every day.*

1. Homework Suggestions

- a. Get the sleep and rest you need*
- b. Meditate for 10-15 minutes in the morning & evening*
- c. Observe how your inner voice affects how you feel and what you choose to do*
- d. Reflect and journal about this week's explorations under the microscope & try some or all of the exercises concerning your willpower challenge in Chapter 4 & 5.*
- e. Reading Chapters 5 & 6*

2. Self Reflection Investigations & Exercises: Chapters 4 & 5

- a. If you practice moral licensing – try to revoke your license by remembering the why of your willpower challenge forget about considering whether you “deserve” a reward. Can you deepen your commitment to your goal? Can you see yourself as one who has realized this goal? Is your success enough of a reward to sustain your commitment? (Ch. 4)*
- b. To avoid self-sabotaging optimism try to reduce the variability of your behavior each day. When can you say no to an “I Will” challenge – ask yourself why can't you say yes? Explore the why of the resistance. (Ch. 4)*
- c. Are you aware of what gets your dopamine neurons firing? What unleashes the promise of reward that compels you to seek satisfaction? Get to know the experience of reward seeking on all levels – in your body, heart and mind. (Ch. 5)*

- d. *Are you aware of the effects of neuro-marketing or other environmental triggers that can stimulate a promise of reward response in you? Can you activate your discerning mind to distance yourself from them as simply witness them? (Ch. 5)*
- e. *Have you experienced the stress of desire? How does it manifest? Are there healthful ways of alleviating anxiety? (Ch. 5)*
- f. *Try “dopaminizing” your “I Will” challenge. Link the activity you’ve been putting off with something that gets your dopamine neurons firing. Challenge yourself to select something that is congruent with your “I Want” motivation.*
- g. *Try mindfully indulging in something that your brain says will make you happy but never really seems to satisfy. Try to stay present with the outcome – does reality match the promise of reward.*

### 3. Extra Credit

- a. *Watch Kelly’s 20 minute presentation on What Science Can Teach Us About Meditation:*

<http://kellymcgonigal.com/2011/08/01/61/>

- b. *Read some or all of Katherine Griffin’s Yoga Journal article about Yoga Nidra, “Reflections of Peace”:*

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