

Living Beautifully Meditation Book Group Meeting 1 Homework  
*Saturday, October 20, 2012*

1. Homework Suggestions

- a. Get 8 hours of sleep (or the number of hours you need to feel truly rested)*
- b. Meditate for 10 minutes in the morning & evening*
- c. Experiment with the “1 ½ Minute Thing” every day*
- d. Reflect on this week’s reflection questions & try the exercises*
- e. Consider journaling*
- f. Suggested reading*
  - i. Living Beautifully with Uncertainty & Change, Chapters 2, 3, 4 & 5*

2. Reflection Questions & Exercises: Chapters 1 & 2

- a. Pema is encouraging us to accept & relax into what she calls the fundamental ambiguity or uncertainty of life rather than resisting it.*
  - i. How does this resonate with you? Do you find yourself resisting change? Are you familiar with the ways you avoid or cling to experience to keep life comfortably familiar? How are your methods working?*
- b. Pema says with a fixed identity (FI) we busy ourselves with trying to rearrange reality to conform to our view.*
  - i. Are you familiar with the ways you may be perceiving reality to conform to your FI?*
  - ii. Do you have difficulty accepting positive, negative even neutral feedback?*
- c. Try the practice of simply directing your full attention to strong sensation – it could be anxiety or physical pain – and breathing in and out of the spot that hurts. You become receptive to the direct experience of it – without dwelling on whatever “story line” the mind is making.*
- d. Pema talks about an “emotion like anger, that’s an automatic response lasts 90 seconds . . . when it lasts longer it’s because we’ve chosen to rekindle it.” We fuel strong emotions with our*

*thoughts . . . recycling the story line . . . strengthening our old habits. She suggests we refrain from this habitual response and do the “1 ½ minute thing” which is to: acknowledge the feeling with full compassionate, welcoming attention. . . have a direct experience of it, free of interpretation . . .”*

- i. Are you familiar with the ways in which you prolong a thought or emotion by “recycling the story line”?*
- e. Pema describes strong emotions as “kleshas”, conflicting emotions that cloud the mind: anger, craving, pride, jealousy. The challenge is to notice their emotional tug and then stay with the direct experience without the story line. Try it for the 1 ½ minute thing – as often as you can.*
- f. Pema describes the 3 Commitments (3 C’s) as 3 levels of working with groundlessness. Underlying them is the basic instruction to make friends with yourself. . . to extend honesty and kindness to yourself. You can do this and:*
  - i. Be fully present*
  - ii. Feel your heart*
  - iii. Engage this moment with complete awareness*

### 3. Other Resources

- a. Pema’s discourse on Basic Goodness
  - i. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XmTHmuGN7fl>
- b. Pema’s audio course on the Three Commitments (Walking the Path of Liberation):
  - i. <http://catalog.kcls.org/eg/opac/record/815262?qttype=keyword;query=the%20three%20commitments>
- c. Witness demonstration of everything in Chapters 1 & 2 while watching The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel:
  - i. <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1412386/>