

November Introduction to Meditation Class 4 Homework
Sunday November 24, 2013

1. Homework

- a. *As we are going into the holiday many of us anticipate various kinds of interpersonal stress. Consider using the Breath Formula to help you stay grounded and open to others. Notice when your body begins to tense in a stressful situation - look for the subtlest expressions your body speaks: shallowing or holding breath, heart beating, the adrenals beginning to surge, areas of muscle tension - we all have our familiar triggers. Once you hear your body, see if you can pause & consciously deepen your breath. If in conversation be aware of continuously fueling your body with nourishing breath to energize your ability to really hear the other person. When speaking try to take a deep breath first then express yourself as simply & succinctly as you can. There is nothing wrong with asking for more time to consider and then be heard.*
- b. *Continue to practice 5 minutes of relaxed "body breathing" either sitting or lying down. Body breathing is simply rotating your awareness through your body as you are aware of breathing. You can start with your feet and scan up or start with your head and scan down.*
- c. *Once your body is relaxed and your mind is calm, practice 10-15 minutes of formal sitting meditation. In formal sitting spend 10 minutes to review the 6 points of posture and following your breath. When your mind wanders simply notice mind wandering and come back to attending to your breath. Use concentration enhancement tools as needed - if you choose one try to stay with it as opposed to going from technique to technique.*
- d. *Try adding 5 minutes to your formal sitting practice to extend healing or wholesome qualities to the beings in your circle and beyond.*

- e. *Continue exploring informal mindfulness practices like the “mindfulness bell.” Can you find a signal associated with something you do everyday that will remind you to pause and take 3 conscious breaths with mindfulness. Some people use washing their hands, or when they first place their hands on the wheel of a car.*
- f. *Try checking in and journaling - make this fun! Infuse your practice with inspiration and loving kindness. Reflect on who is in your tribe. What qualifies them for membership? Zero in on those qualities. Can you use these wholesome qualities as a basis for building relationship with others outside your tribe?*
- g. *Connect with a meditation buddy in class and/or join our group, Mind Yogis, on the InsightTimer activity site: <https://insighttimer.com/home>*
- h. *Suggested reading, listening & viewing*
 - i. *For smart phone users who want 25 short guided short practices for self-directed brain change : Buddha’s Brain iPhone App at <http://www.rickhanson.net/multimedia/buddhas-brain-iphone-app>*
 - ii. *For more guided meditations and talks you can peruse the audio library at Dharma Seed <http://www.dharmaseed.org>*
- i. *Recommended Books:*
 - i. *Wherever You Go, There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Every Day Life by Jon Kabat Zinn (available at King County Library)*
 - ii. *The Miracle of Mindfulness: An Introduction to the Practice of Mindfulness by Thich Nhat Hanh (available at KCL)*
 - iii. *Why Meditate? by Matthieu Ricard*