

## Introduction to Meditation Class 36 Homework

### Homework

- a. *Consider this inspiration from Alan Wallace: Mindfulness of the Body: On the Elements*

*When we closely investigate experience of perception, we find the fundamental physical constituents of reality include elements of earth, water, fire & air. When the earth element predominates, we feel solidity. Water . . . fluidity. . . Fire makes us feel hot . . . The body is suffused with the air element manifesting as continuous movement and change. Many sensations that emerge are expressions of motion & change. All experiences include all four elements to varying degrees; at times one element is predominant.*

*These elements aren't the ones described by modern physics because they pertain to a different domain. We are not investigating what exists independently of experience but the constituent elements of experience itself: tactile sensation itself. We can't see earth element . . . The eye can't distinguish heavy from light. Visual perception can't detect solidity, fluidity, heat.*

*Earth, water, fire and air are objects of tactile perception. The air element is defined as that which is light and motile. Motion or motility is an expression of air element which is an object of tactile perception. When we feel motion we know it without looking.*

*Space is fundamental. The elements of earth, water, fire and air arise out of space and they dissolve back into space. When we fall asleep the psyche dissolves into the substrate consciousness and all appearance dissolve into the substrate. Dream appearances emerge from the substrate and ultimately dissolve back into it. When we awaken all sensory and mental appearances arise from substrate. Whether we're asleep or awake the substrate is space of the mind.*

- b. *Give yourself a daily allowance of 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.*

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- c. *Once your body is relaxed and your mind is calm, take some time to think about the most important benefits you'd like to realize from practice - your heart felt aspirations. Then let go of your questioning & begin stilling your mind.*
- d. *Practice 10-15 minutes of formal sitting meditation. Be guided by the themes we used in class: Intentionally settle your body, speech and mind while focusing on the tactile sensation throughout the body. Once you've established this foundation of calm, narrow your attention to the sensations of breathing in your belly. Attend to the entire length of the in-breath, the entire length of the out-breath. Arouse your attention with the inhalation. Release thoughts with the exhalation. When your mind wanders simply notice, relax, come back to sensations in the belly and attend to the each in breath; each out breath.*
- e. *As an alternative to focusing on the breath you can practice Mindfulness of the Body on the Elements.*
- f. *As you conclude your practice bring to mind your most meaningful aspirations & envision their actualization with the yearning: May these wishes be filled by the value of this practice, with great benefit for all.*
- g. *In post meditation, reflect on the nature of perceptual phenomena. Consider how you experience "me or mine."*
- h. *Try checking in and journaling - make this fun! Consider how your practice is benefiting you and your relationship to others.*
- i. *Consider attending the Eight Week Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction course offered by Deborah Klibanoff which begins on March 9th. You can find more information about Deborah and the course at: <http://grow-aware.com>*
- j. *Suggested reading, listening & viewing*
  - i. *Read the Tricycle Magazine interview & suggested practices with Will Johnson "Full Body, Empty Mind" at:<http://>*

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[dharmaworks.net/DharmaTouch/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Full-Body-Empty-Mind-Will-Johnson-Interview.pdf](http://dharmaworks.net/DharmaTouch/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Full-Body-Empty-Mind-Will-Johnson-Interview.pdf)

- ii. *Listen to the rich inventory of talks & guided meditations presented by B. Alan Wallace. You can start with the fundamentals & learn mindfulness skills by following the thread of his teaching at: <http://podcasts.sbinstitute.com/fall2012/page/10/>*
- iii. *For more guided meditations and talks you can peruse the audio library at Dharma Seed <http://www.dharmaseed.org>*