

Introduction to Meditation Class 48 Homework

Homework

- a. *Can you give yourself periodic moments of mindfulness in which you explore your experience as it manifests from “gross to subtle?” For example - spend 5 minutes sitting in your car before driving. Start by bringing your awareness to physical sensations, the more subtle feeling tone - pleasant, unpleasant, neutral - the more subtle mental events - emotions, thoughts, memories, imaginings - the even more subtle realm of the space from which all experience arises - the space your perceiving arises from. You can do this “mini” practice at any time or place - even multiple times a day.*
- 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.*
- 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. *Incorporate of period of exploring the tactile, feeling, mental and phenomenological fields of awareness as described above.*

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- 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. *Try checking in and journaling - make this fun! Consider how your practice is benefiting you and your relationship to others.*
- h. *Suggested reading, listening & viewing*
 - i. *View Neuroscientist, Sara Lazar, present at TEDx Cambridge “How Meditation Can Reshape Our Brains” At: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8rRzTtP7Tc>*
 - ii. *Read author and spiritual teacher, Ram Dass’ article “Shifting Our Perception with Meditation” from his book “Journey of Awakening: A Meditator’s Handbook” At: <http://www.ramdass.org/shifting-our-perception-with-meditation/>*
 - iii. *For more guided meditations and talks you can peruse the audio library at Dharma Seed <http://www.dharmaseed.org> and or D.I.Y. Dharma <http://www.diydharma.org/about-us>*