

Introduction to Meditation Class 52 Homework

Homework

Homework

- a. Consider Maria Rainer Rilke's poem, *Widening Circles (From The Book of Hours)*:

*I live my life in widening circles
that reach out across the world.
I may not complete this last one
but I give myself to it.*

*I circle around God, around the primordial tower.
I've been circling for thousands of years
and I still don't know: am I a falcon,
a storm, or a great song?*

- 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

Introduction to Meditation Class 52 Homework

out breath. Incorporate of period of exploring the tactile, feeling, mental and phenomenological fields of awareness as described above.

- e. *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.*
- f. *Suggested reading, listening & viewing*
 - i. *Read and listen to author and meditation instructor, Bodhipaksa's writings and on-line auditory guides on Metta Meditation, Loving Kindness Meditation. Bodhipaksa is author of Wildmind: A Step-by-Step Guide to Meditation, a book called Living as a River, and a book on Buddhism and the practice of vegetarianism. I'm also the author of eight audiobooks of guided meditations. At: <http://www.wildmind.org/metta>*
 - ii. *Watch Bodhipaksa's TEDx Talk, "The Surprising Secret of Unlocking Compassion." At: <http://tedxtalks.ted.com/video/The-Surprising-Secret-of-Unlock;search%3Atag%3A%22tedxtimberlaneschools%22>*
 - iii. *Listen to some of the guided meditations offered by The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society. Try those of the Founding Director, Mirabai Bush on Bare Attention (5 minutes); Breath & Sound (10 minutes); Loving Kindness Meditation (10 minutes) At: <http://www.contemplativemind.org/practices/recordings>*
 - iv. *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>*