

# Mindfulness & Meditation: Awakening Joy



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# Homework Review/Questions from Last Week



- Practice mindfulness meditation daily
  - Set your duration (how long you wish to meditate) and your intention (what you intend to focus upon) before beginning
  - Intentionally incorporate present awareness and curiosity
    - ✦ Eating, breathing, listening, watching, sensations in body, etc.
- Start with brief (5 minute) exercises
- When mind wanders, gently and persistently bring it back
  - Remember, you ARE NOT trying to hold your mind still or produce deep relaxation – we are training in skills of awareness, curiosity, and gentle persistence – and that is all!

# Awakening Joy



- Cultivating mindfulness of pleasant things in life
- Transferring formal meditation skills into informal meditation

# Actively Cultivating Pleasant Experiences



- Where does happiness come from?
  - Happiness is not a result of your environment
  - It comes from within
- You already have everything you need to be happy
  - The “seeds” of joy, contentment, love, kindness, etc. are already inside you
  - And so are the “seeds” of anger, doubt, resentment, fear, sadness, etc.
  - We must become mindful gardeners of our thoughts, actions, and emotions in order to water the seeds that we want to grow
- “If you water apple seeds you don’t get mango trees”

# Watering Desirable Seeds



- Limiting exposure to violence, anger, selfishness, jealousy, etc.
  - TV/movies, books, hateful news, etc.
- Increasing exposure to love, kindness, altruism, gratitude, peace, etc.
  - Positive relationships, uplifting stories, inspiring music, etc.
  - Mindfulness of gratitude
    - ✦ Actively plan time to be mindful of...your tongue!
  - Meditation, noble silence, helping others, prayers of gratitude
- Adjust as needed to stay in rhythm with life circumstances
  - By doing so, practice *living from abundance*

# Translating Formal to Informal Meditation



- **Formal Meditation**
  - Cultivates powerful skills of attention, awareness of the present moment, and curiosity/openness/nonjudgment
- **Informal Meditation**
  - Applies the skills cultivated in formal meditation to life as it naturally unfolds moment by moment
  - Conversations or even conflict with someone
    - ✦ Promotes patience, forgiveness, and love through understanding
  - Work and chores
    - ✦ Washing the dishes
  - Fun stuff!
    - ✦ Walking in a park, playing with grandkids, sipping tea, etc., etc.!

# Homework



- Actively choose which seeds to water each day
  - pay attention to ways that life seems to change when you consciously water seeds of the things you want to experience
    - ✦ be on the lookout for things you do which cultivate experiences you may wish to minimize
    - ✦ adjust your involvement in these as life requires
- Practice, practice, practice
  - implement both formal and informal meditation daily
  - observe with curiosity the results of each
- Have fun, explore, be playful with your practice!
  - when we bring our full attention to anything, it becomes a richer experience...play with this idea!



Thank you!

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