

CLASS CONTENT WEEK 3

MEDITATIONS

- Q&A outcomes from previous week
- This week we will experiment with several different types of meditations that focus on using our senses – hearing, taste/smell, sight, visualizing, and bodily sensing. In addition some internal dialoging too.
- **Internal Dialog Meditation** – Doing an internal dialog may help you to focus on the present moment and not on thinking about other things. After settling into your breathing routine, you can create a short repetitious phrase. Some examples:
 - As you breathe in say “Let” and breathing out “Go.”
 - Breathe in “love” and out “compassion” or “gratitude”
 - Remember the body scan can also use reference to “now __ is relaxed.”You can create your own saying that brings a comforting focus to being in the moment.
- **Counting Meditation** – You can challenge yourself to count the number of breaths you take before being side-swiped by another thought. Each complete breath is an additional count of one.
- **Exercise** (5 minutes) - Experiment with doing internal dialog and counting meditation techniques.
- Q&A what worked or what did not?
- **Mountain Meditation** – Mountain Meditation is a **visualization** technique. Elemental sense of nature, solid dwelling place, grand panoramic views. Mountains are abiding presence, stillness, unmoving and beautiful. Sit and breathe in the mountain qualities. Visualize becoming a mountain. Your head the lofty peaks and the body becomes grounded with the earth. Witness the sun passing in the day, the moon at night, and the four seasons of the year. Metaphorically, you are linked with the stillness, strength and stability of the mountains.
- **Lake Meditation** – This is another **visualization** meditation. Water is elemental. We, ourselves, are composed mostly of water. Water easily separates to allow passage of anything. Visualize a body of water held in a basin by earth itself. The depths of the lake are reservoirs of your thoughts and feelings holding (accepting) all the qualities of mind and body. See the colors, the movements on the surface...ripples and waves. (The Insight App has a Kabot-Zinn Lake Meditation – He starts by asking you to lie down. You can do this short meditation sitting. Also the Meditation ends without saying it is over. So you can continue mediating on your own.)
- **Exercise** – (6:45 minutes) Kabot-Zinn Lake Meditation (Insight Timer app meditation).
- **Standing Meditation** – Visualize becoming a tree. Use your breath to stay in the moment; breathe from your abdomen; your eyes can be closed. Sensate your feet becoming deeply rooted in the ground and your body the tree trunk flexible movement in the breeze. A tree is not rigid, but gives and releases to the force of wind. Your arms

become tree limbs at your side casually hanging (or your hands clasped together). Work at being in touch with the air on your skin, the feel of your feet in contact with the ground, the dance of light and color and shadow dance in the movement of the tree. Be present in the moment. You can stand wherever you find yourself. When alone you might try extending your arms (tree branches) reaching to the sky into the sun...being branches and leaves being open and receptive.

A strong emotion is like a storm. If you look at a tree in a storm, the top of the tree seems fragile, like it might break at any moment. You fear the storm might uproot the tree. But if you turn your attention to the trunk of the tree, you realize that its roots are deeply anchored in the ground, and you see that the tree will be able to hold. During a storm of emotion, do not stay at the level of your head or heart, which are like the top of a tree. Go to the trunk of the tree and focus your attention to the movement of your abdomen as you breathe. The center of your body's gravity is just below your navel. This is a place to weather the storm. Practice (by standing, sitting, lying down) this orientation. Do not wait for emotion to appear before you begin this practice, or else the storm of strong emotion will carry you away.

- **Exercise** (3 minutes) - Standing Meditation

- **Walking Meditation** – You attend to the task walking moment to moment rather than attending to your breath. You are not walking to get to anyplace...no place to go. Walk back and forth in a lane, or walk in a circle. The slow effort of moving one leg and then the next. The coordinated effort of the leg muscles to operate. The slight sense of falling/leaning forward in order to make the next step. Again as in sitting, your attention will leave focus to an arriving thought. Again release the thought and return to awareness of your making steps. (You can bring walking meditation to where you find yourself. To anywhere. Slow down a bit be aware of the pace you are taking. Simply remind yourself to be in the moment taking each step. Say that you have a destination (goal) of leaving the house to get to your car. Okay, direction is set, now be mindful of the step you are taking in the moment. Be present to each step. If your mind wonders to the car or driving...return awareness to the step you are taking.) There is a saying that life is lived during the path to arriving at your intended goal.
- **Exercise** (5 minutes) – Do lane walking meditation, 15-20 steps and turn around, eyes cast somewhat in front of you. Walk at a pace you find comfortable, hands at side or clasped in front or in back of you. Cultivate a sense of ease, no hurry to get anywhere. Attend to/feel your feet. If distracted by thoughts kindly return attention to your feet.
 - Stand comfortably with your eyes open, feet about hip distance apart, weight evenly divided between the feet. Arms can be at your sides, behind you, or in front of you, whatever feels most comfortable. Let yourself feel connected to the ground.
 - Become aware of any sensations in the toes, soles, and heels. Feel free to shift your weight between the feet to make these sensations clearer.
 - Start walking slowly, remaining relaxed and alert. Feel your feet touching the ground. Silently note to yourself “touching, touching.”
 - Bring attention to each movement of walking—lifting, moving, placing.
 - Notice what is happening around you but keep your focus on the sensation of walking.

- If you find you're able to attend with some continuity to the sensations in your feet and legs, let your awareness expand to take in the light, colors, sounds, and smells around you. Notice whatever predominates in your awareness. No control, no effort, no explicit focus.
- If you get overwhelmed, or if your attention gets hijacked by trains of thought—no problem, bring yourself back to the feeling of your feet touching the ground.
- When you are ready to stop, return to your breath, the feeling of your feet on the ground, and stretch.
- **Kindness Meditation** – Loving kindness Meditation starts with your breath and relaxing...centering yourself. Then, from your heart or from your belly, invite feelings or images of kindness and love to radiate until they fill your whole being. Allow yourself to be cradled by your own awareness as deserving of loving kindness as any child. Let your awareness embody loving kindness, breathing it in and breathing it out, as if it were a lifeline. (For some of us, loving ourselves is hard because we do not consider ourselves deserving. Exploring these thoughts may help in dissolving the reasoning -belief- that is holding us back.) Once you have established yourself as a center of love and kindness radiating throughout your being, you can radiate outwardly and direct the loving kindness outward to family, friends and others. There is no natural limit of expanding loving kindness. Loving kindness is the innate friendliness of an open heart.
- **Exercise Kindness Meditation (5 minutes)** – Kindness starts within you. You can consider repeating with each breath the following: “May I be happy”, next breath “may I be well”, next “may I be safe”, “may I be peaceful”, “may I be at ease.” After doing these breaths for a while, you might consider thinking of a friend and do the above thoughts, “May you be happy,” etc.
- **Object meditation** – Choose a favorite or interesting object, such as a stone or flower. Spend several minutes observing every aspect of it: shape, hues, textures, smells, tastes. Use all your senses. Go for the details. While looking maintain awareness of your breath.
- **Raisin meditation** or any other of dried food that you can slowly eat. A taste of mindfulness. Example: <http://mindfulness-solution.com/> has a 20 minute raisin meditation: first 10 minutes centering with breath and next 10 working with the experience of tasting.

CLOSING

- Homework - Continue the meditation sittings you began during week 1 and/or experiment with the various meditation techniques to see what works for you.
- Homework - Complete at least one body scan per day.

You might consider doing a breathing meditation with a follow-up body scan and then finalizing with a few more moments of being present with your breath.

- Q&A