

Welcome to Class #3

This week in class will shift from the stillness of the body scan to a form of moving meditation: gentle yoga. We will look at pleasant experience logs and share those reflections.

Next week you will have an enhanced challenge, because you will be noticing and documenting *unpleasant experiences* in everyday life. It will be tempting to see unpleasant experiences as problems to be solved. Most of us have well ingrained habits designed to get away from discomfort. You may have noticed by now that as in everyday life, there are pleasant and unpleasant aspects of the body scan meditation and sitting meditations we have practiced in this class. “Solving” or “escaping” discomfort often leads to more discomfort. Besides, we all know that escape is not always an option.

The idea is not to “get rid of” unpleasantness when it arises, but to explore it in its real dimensions: In addition to the circumstances in which you notice unpleasantness, you may explore where are you experiencing the unpleasantness in your body? What size is it? What is it like from moment to moment? Approaching unpleasantness with “beginner’s mind” can be helpful.

In addition, you may want to explore the nature of the thinking that surrounds the unpleasantness. Is it self critical or blaming? Judgmental? Catastrophic? Is your thinking past or future focused? Is it a story or a picture or a “movie”? If you recognize any of these, you may have identified a mental habit.

Rather than meeting unpleasantness by jumping into your usual habitual reaction you are invited to try an attitude of friendly curiosity and heightened awareness as an alternative. Keep in mind that when and if this exploration becomes too intense, just ease back and return to the breath, your “home base” for awareness.

Our class will be enriched as we hear your self-observations whether pleasant, unpleasant or neutral. It is all part of the swirl, the flow, the ever-changing full catastrophe!

Continue to practice with **beginner’s mind**. Be open to surprises and discoveries, knowing they may arise in unlikely places.

