

Aging with Wisdom and Compassion Week 4 (2/9/26) Home Practices

***Reminders: NO CLASS on Monday- Presidents Day – Next Class Feb 23

Class starts at 10:30 (ET), I will come to class at 10:20 for Q&A

1. **Sitting:** For a minimum of 10-20 minutes per day. Do your best! Keep your meditation simple (no apps or if you use them only a couple of times a week).
2. **Practice Gratitude:** Text or e-mail your buddies, 3 things you are grateful for every day. They can be anything. Helps to lighten the heart! Thank someone every day!
3. **Continue to Contemplate the following:**
 - I am of the nature to age. I am subject to aging. Aging is unavoidable -Buddha.
 - All conditioned phenomena are impermanent. Their nature is to arise and pass away. Living in accordance with this truth brings the highest happiness. - Buddha
 - **The 5 reflections:** I am of the nature to age. Aging is unavoidable, I am of the nature to get ill. Illness is unavoidable. I am of the nature to die. Dearth is unavoidable, All that is dear to me and everyone I love are of the nature to change. There is no way to escape being separated from them. My actions are my only true belongings. I cannot avoid the consequences of my actions. My actions are the ground on which I stand. – Buddha & Narayan
4. **Impermanence:** All things do not remain the same from one moment to the next but are constantly changing. This is a fact of life. The way things are. Through not being aware or accepting this truth, we become attached to people and things. Wishing them to remain the same and last forever, we become disappointed when they do not. Or wishing ourselves to remain the same and last forever, we become disappointed when we do not. Getting to know impermanence enables us to be more realistic and frees us from a great deal of unnecessary suffering.
 - **Reflections:**
 - i. Our bodies are steadily degenerating. The Buddha taught us to see that the body doesn't belong to us. It's natural for the body to be this way. There's nothing wrong with the way the body is. It's not the body that causes us suffering, it's our wrong thinking. When we see the right wrongly, there's bound to be confusion.
 - ii. Having been young your body has become old and now it's meandering towards its death. Don't go wishing it was otherwise. The Buddha told us to see the way things are and then let go of our clinging to them. Conditions don't belong to us. Take this feeling of letting go as your refuge.
 - iii. The Buddha taught that our real home is inner peace. Our body is not our real home. We take it to be self, to be "me" and "mine," but in fact it's not so at all. Your body has followed its natural course from birth until now it's old or sick and you can't stop it from doing that—it's the way it is. The Buddha encouraged us to contemplate the body and mind so as to see their impersonality, see that neither of them is "me" or "mine." They have a merely temporary reality. It's like your home: it's only nominally yours, you couldn't take it with you anywhere. It's the same with your wealth, possessions and family — they're all yours only in name, they don't really belong to you, they belong to nature. This truth applies to everyone!

5. **Practice Awe: “From wonder into wonder, existence opens” - Lao Tzu-** Awe is the emotion we experience when we encounter vast mysteries that we don’t understand. We can find it anywhere! Finding awe is easy if we take a few moments to pause and open to wonder. Each of us can find our own way to awe. We can find in the strength, courage, kindness, generosity of others, in collective movement, in actions, like dance, sports, in nature, in music, art, visual design, in mystical encounters, in witnessing a birth or a death or in meeting life & death, in deep understanding or insights. (just to name a few) Wonders are all around us.- If we simply pause open our hearts and minds to wonders we can see deep patterns of life, of nature- Awe helps us when we face loss or trauma, when we face the uncertainties, unknowns, impermanence and transitions of life. Awe can transform our bodies, hearts, and minds. **Please reflect on Awe daily. Pause. Open your hearts and minds- form an intention to Discover AWE!**

Thank you for your practice. Feeling Grateful for all of you