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The Moment is Now
A Newsletter from *The Center for Courageous Living*

Six Supports for Mindfulness Practice

Like a stone thrown into a pond, mindfulness practice creates ripples that extend into all areas of our life and perhaps, in a small yet significant way, into the global community. The formal practices are associated with inner transformation. However, the biggest shift in experience occurs when the attention that we develop in meditation functions in day-to-day living.

A stable and regular meditation practice is key in this ripple effect. What helps us maintain a daily practice are these six supports.

Conducive Space Where are you practicing? Does it reflect your attitude and intention about the role of meditation in your life? Is it inviting? How does the space and time you choose to practice affect the integration of meditation into your schedule?

Basic Needs Met For the majority of us living in developed countries our basic needs are met. Nonetheless, we may find that we feel a need for better food, more clothing, and upgraded housing. These desires can become distractions. Perhaps you could take this moment to appreciate the fact that your basic needs are met and that these provide a good foundation for practice.

Contentment As mentioned above, it's hard to recognize what is *enough* and to feel content with how things are in this moment. When struggling with a sense of insatiable need, who can sit in meditation *and* cultivate attention?

Manageable Life Here we have a chicken-and-egg situation. Does mindfulness practice help us see more clearly and hence establish priorities for the activities of our life? Or, is it necessary to make one's life manageable, *breathable*, in order to establish and maintain a formal meditation practice? Whichever comes first, this support suggests you take a look at how you work with time (Are you over-committed?) and energy (Are you buzzing around like a bee?).

Ethical Behavior Generally, we know what the right thing to do is in any given situation. When we fall into habits of immorality (taking what is not offered, lying, gossiping, sexual misconduct, etc.) our mind becomes crowded with thoughts about the misguided words or actions long after the behavior. When our actions are morally correct, our mind is at ease.

Letting Go of Drama Catastrophizing, blaming, burning the fire of hatred, clinging to objects of desire - the presence of emotional dramas are reminders to soften and let go. We all know what it is like to attempt to sit still in meditation practice with a torrent of tempestuous theatrics of our own imaginings.

May your practice be filled with ripples of wakefulness! Janet.

Upcoming MBSR Retreat on October 21-23 SHAMBHALA MOUNTAIN CENTER

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