



MINDFULNESS AND HEARTFULNESS: THE TWO WINGS TO FREEDOM

October 22, 2020





Outline of Today's Workshop

- Opening Meditation adapted from Sylvia Boorstein
- Intentions and Ground Rules
- Meeting Life “Fully” and Meeting It “as a Friend”
- Mindfulness as a Path to Awareness and Acceptance
- Guided Practice
- Questions and Answers
- Closing Words



Outline of Today's Workshop

- **Opening Meditation adapted from Sylvia Boorstein**
- Intentions and Ground Rules
- Meeting Life “Fully” and Meeting It “as a Friend”
- Mindfulness as a Path to Awareness and Acceptance
- Guided Practice
- Questions and Answers
- Closing Words



Outline of Today's Workshop

- Opening Meditation adapted from Sylvia Boorstein
- **Intentions and Ground Rules**
- Meeting Life “Fully” and Meeting It “as a Friend”
- Mindfulness as a Path to Awareness and Acceptance
- Guided Practice
- Questions and Answers
- Closing Words



Outline of Today's Workshop

- Opening Meditation adapted from Sylvia Boorstein
- Intentions and Ground Rules
- **Meeting Life “Fully” and Meeting It “as a Friend”**
- Mindfulness as a Path to Awareness and Acceptance
- Guided Practice
- Questions and Answers
- Closing Words



Meeting Life “Fully” and “as a Friend”

- Life is hard...and life under COVID-19 has been *really* hard.
- Under these conditions, our tendency is NOT to meet life fully or to meet it as a friend.
- Under these conditions, our tendency is to fight or to flee.
 - How do we flee? By busying, distracting, exhausting or numbing ourselves.
 - How do we fight? By bracing, complaining, ranting or resisting.
- Whether we're fleeing from life or fighting it, our experience in these moments is one of tightness and contraction.



Meeting Life “Fully” and “as a Friend”

- So why do we fight or flee even if it’s ultimately dissatisfying?
 - We do it because it’s hardwired by evolution.
 - We’re designed to move *away* from or move *against* what’s unpleasant and what’s painful.
- So if you’ve found yourself “fleeing” from life or “fighting” against it in the last seven months...there’s NOTHING wrong with you.
- Of course, we pay a price...and the price is our sense of aliveness, joy, satisfaction and vitality.
- So how *can* we learn to meet life fully and to meet it as a friend, even when it’s hard?



Outline of Today's Workshop

- Opening Meditation adapted from Sylvia Boorstein
- Intentions and Ground Rules
- Meeting Life “Fully” and Meeting It “as a Friend”
- **Mindfulness as a Path to Awareness and Acceptance**
- Guided Practice
- Questions and Answers
- Closing Words



Mindfulness as a Path to Awareness and Acceptance

- Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction founder Jon Kabat-Zinn defines mindfulness as “awareness that arises through paying attention, on **purpose**, in the **present** moment, **non-judgmentally**.”
 - Paying attention on **purpose** in the **present** moment counters our tendency to flee. In other words, we learn to face life fully.
 - Paying attention **non-judgmentally** counters our tendency to fight. In other words, we learn to face life as a friend.



Mindfulness as a Path to Awareness and Acceptance

- Tara Brach refers to this as the “two wings” of mindfulness:
 - Awareness: Facing life fully and courageously and seeing it just as it is.
 - Acceptance: Receiving life with a kind, gentle and curious regard.
- Jack Kornfield describes it as “bowing down” to life. It’s not that we have to *like* what’s happening—it’s simply about acknowledging and accepting what’s happening because it’s *already* happening.
- In other words, mindfulness isn’t just about being *mindful*—it’s also about being *heartful*.



Mindfulness as a Path to Awareness and Acceptance

- So when we practice mindfulness meditation, we practice:
 - recognizing and acknowledging what's arising in our experience (i.e., our sensations, our feelings, our thoughts, etc.); and
 - accepting and receiving our experience as it is—without trying to fix anything or get rid of anything.
- When we learn how to do this with when we meditate, we eventually learn how to do it in real life situations.



Guided Practice



Questions and Answers



Closing Words

“If our hearts are ready for anything, we are touched by the beauty and poetry and mystery that fill our world.

When Munindraji, a Vipassana meditation teacher, was asked why he practiced, his response was, ‘So I will see the tiny purple flowers by the side of the road as I walk to town each day.’

With an undefended heart, we can fall in love with life over and over every day. We can become children of wonder, grateful to be walking on earth, grateful to belong with each other and to all of creation. We can find our true refuge in every moment, in every breath.”

*- From the book **True Refuge: Finding Peace and Freedom in Your Own Awakened Heart** by Tara Brach*



Thank you for your
commitment to
your well-being and
the well-being of
the world!

May your
exploration benefit
you and the people
around you!

