

Midweek Pause—Be



Photo © Margaret Adie

“Just as a clay Buddha cannot go through water and a wood Buddha cannot go through fire, a goal-oriented healing practice cannot permeate deeply enough.”

– Darlene Cohen, “The Practice of Non-preference”

Consider: The magnitude of this message. It is a huge concept to absorb, especially when one is dealing directly with chronic pain or illness. Because we live in a goal oriented society, the verb that guides us is DO not BE. Our practice however calls for us to be and to accept that this is how it is today, whatever the circumstances may be. So when our present moment is filled with discomfort, whether that be physical or emotional, and the urge to DO arises, pause. Place your awareness on the experience of each of your senses (sight, touch, smell, sound, taste) and attempt to BE in that moment beyond the pain, realizing there IS more to that moment

than pain.

Prepare: Shifting such a deeply ingrained response is hard work. Really hard work. What we want to do is allow the pain to be louder and greater than any other given experience and we are driven to DO something to fix it. Some days it will feel impossible. Remember each day is a new opportunity and the first step is to merely catch yourself and your response. Actually changing the response to pain can be supported by this 10 breath technique. Practice with it now recalling a recent emotionally painful experience or with physical pain you are experiencing, closing your eyes and counting each individual breath.

Do: This week, when a painful emotion or physical pain arises catch yourself in the instinctive reaction to DO and let that serve as a reminder to step into mindful breathing, allowing yourself to BE. Taking in all of the experiences that come with being, all you see, all you feel, all you smell, all you hear, all you taste.