

I notice the homework practice is what I and some others engage in, with PaB, which is stopping on a continual basis, in the midst of whatever is going on (distraction- "Yeah Dao, Agreed! What ISN'T distraction?"), to practice. In the case of PaB it would be to 'drop what you have to see what you are', but after a while it takes on different flavors, and the point is cultivating **continuity** of awareness. These days I think of it as relaxing moreso than stopping.

During conversations, it is mostly a relaxing of my own 'self talk loop', to better relate to the 'other' ... dropping distance. Zen mentioned Tonglen in his report, and this is a practice which can fit in naturally with daily interactions, especially 'stressful' ones.

Related to last week's session and this one, I woke one day with a kind of direction "Don't save people from the outside", which I thought was funny because the last thing I want to be doing is 'saving anyone'. That's language I left behind years ago. As I've gone over it this week though, I've gotten friendlier with the sentence as a kind of reminder not to expend energy on 'outer effects' of things or on good intentions to 'help', but to dig deeper into practice, being aware in that place of 'no distance', and to let the outer effects (as says a good friend) care for themselves. I don't need to convince anyone of anything, and it doesn't really matter if I ever see if what I 'do' matters on a surface level... The main thing is the motivation.... inner witness.

As for **renewing commitment every day before getting up/going to sleep**, this is a surprisingly powerful thing to pay attention to so far, though I think it will take a while longer before it is part of my rhythm to pause more deeply when waking up. Some days this seems very natural, but not 'consistent'. I suppose for me this has been about noticing the presence of awareness/a sense of lucidity.. and letting that come up before I step into the day.

At night I do tend to set myself into a practice stance for sleep.

This week I was thinking about ethics again, and realizing what a deep impact paying attention to 'not being wasteful' has had on my life in the last several months. The tricky thing is to seriously and sincerely engage awareness/mindfulness in this area while not imposing extra-sensitivity onto others I live and deal with. It is a strange thing to live differently without 'demanding' that others do so 'from outside' but instead letting the situation/world **respond** in realization of codependent arising. Two years ago I think I would not have thought it possible to do so... would have broken things up into a kind of either/or antagonism between 'visions'. Hm.. Anyway it is interesting.

Notes:

Dao: *Sometimes it's possible to see the emptiness even of this distracted frame of mind, see it directly -- sometimes it's not, and then it can help me notice the specific character of the mind that I've taken on.*

I would love to hear more about this.

Gaya: Your being able to leave the emotion of the situation behind and move on in your day reminded me of my dealing with the counselor that day at my daughter's school, and also something because of other situations I have to work on every week leaving a crucial appointment.

I'd love for you to elaborate, too.

Zen: *Seems to be about how well, how quickly, we can recover our equilibrium when we have had a nasty surprise of some sort that really throws us. Life is full of such experiences. This is when our practice pays off.*

A friend had an experience this week and drew my attention to the way all conceptualizations of practice fly out the window when faced with fear or something like what you call a 'nasty surprise'. I read your report and thought how spot on it is that this is where rubber-meets-road and the practice/awareness we've cultivated either comes into play or shows us up.