

"Practicing even when distracted is good training."

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. All those hours of meditation, of coming back to awareness, of becoming familiar with our thought patterns and how our emotions get affected by them, help us here. Some could be said to manage well naturally in crisis situations - but often through an injection of adrenaline - not good for long term well being, surely. Good to be able to connect easily with the stillness underneath the thoughts, with our deeper awareness in the gaps between the thoughts - a better place to get sensible responses from. But we also learn because of the stress of the situation itself - it confronts us more strongly with our fears, and we see our conditioned reactions more clearly and know what we need to work with. Pema Chodron advises Tonglen practice, or perhaps just doing something different, in order to break our usual reactive patterns.

"Renew your commitment when you get up and before you go to sleep."

Can be encouraging as well as revealing, I think. Since as well as becoming more aware of faults in our practice, it can be encouraging to note that we have made some progress as well, and to see that we do not become so easily diverted by or submerged in our stories about events in our lives. I think that because we know we will review what we have done each day, this practice also tends towards making us more aware of what we are doing throughout the day.