

Gaya mentioned Ken McLeod which prompted a bit of websurfing and a listen to a lecture he gave at Kannonji in SL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yXCT0HyqNAU> (there are also some reflections on SL as a teaching medium -- <http://musingsbyken.blogspot.com/200...fe-take-2.html>)

One story struck me in particular: a student felt it difficult to take in suffering, and the teacher's reply was, "if you really could take away all the pain of the world with one breath, would you hesitate?" An acknowledgement of a deep desire that we've turned away from -- maybe this is why even a casual reading of lojong can feel so powerful.

When practicing unconditional acceptance, start with yourself.

It's funny how the best meditation advice for me is still the most basic -- variants of don't do anything, stop, allow, etc. (in our last meeting, Zen and Calvino made a related point about dropping ideas about possible meanings, Katherine about giving up hope). "When practicing unconditional acceptance, start with yourself" feels like part of this instruction and it's surprising how often I go against it throughout the day -- "should be more like this, wow that was awful/great, how am I ever going to figure out ..." I seem to be able to find these in any given 2 second stretch. It can feel like a big risk to let go of that futzing, to just stand there unadorned with little efforts. I always seem to want something "fixed" before allowing myself to participate -- weirdly, before accepting compassion.

Take all the blame yourself.

Read a few blurbs and this one was my favorite -- <http://lojongmindtraining.com/Commen...r=2&proverb=12> -- especially the part about blaming the food!

It's been interesting to work with this slogan (in context of the one above) as a way to notice when and how blame comes up for me -- sort of a like holding a precept. Especially when writing code, I find myself blaming the computer a lot, buggy software or someone else's clueless oversight -- impatience is almost always involved. And when dealing with people, I find myself blaming especially when I want to deflect blame from myself (But why do I assume that anyone is trying to blame me in the first place? And even if they are, is that really so terrible?) For me, blame can quickly turn into its own story world. Holding still for a moment, accepting the blame (without indulging in it) provided an effective resolution today.

When everything goes wrong, treat disaster as a way to wake up.

It could be that I'm attracted to melodrama, but this one does not seem so hard to follow, at least in extreme situations. It's the minor disasters that are tricky -- is it possible to treat small annoyances as a way to wake up? This is why Eliza's refrigerator-cleaning revelations seem so important to me.