Spirit Mountain Retreat

A Day of Mindfulness
via Zoom

Monday, October 26, 2026
9:30 am - 3:00 pm
Theme: Detachment

To pay attention,
this is our endless and proper work
~ Mary Oliver

9:30 am **Welcome, Introductions, and Intentions**
Arriving and coming into the Presence – of this place, with these people

9:45 am I have arrived Breathing in I am home Breathing out

Group Mindfulness Practice ~ Breathe and Relax
Sharing of Experience

10:00 am **Reflections on Detachment**

You have the freedom to be yourself, your true self, here and now, and nothing can stand in your way.
~ Richard Bach (Jonathan Livingston Seagull)

10:15 am **Group Mindfulness Practice** ~ Breathe and Relax

10:30 am **Contemplative Time:** Continuing the Practice on your own
Walking meditation, reading, writing, sitting, inner listening

Reflect:

Remain in the world, act in the world, do whatsoever is needful, and yet remain transcendental, aloof, detached, a lotus flower in the pond.
~ Osho, The secret of secrets

Spend some time today writing about your experience

2:30 pm **Gather back on Zoom to share Gleanings of the Day**

3:00 pm **Closing**

THOUGHTS ON DETACHMENT:

Attachment is the great fabricator of illusions; reality can be obtained only by someone who is detached.
~ Simone Weil

They should tell you when you're born: have a suitcase heart, be ready to travel.
~ Gabrielle Zevin

Take any emotion—love for a woman, or grief for a loved one, or what I'm going through, fear and pain from a deadly illness. If you hold back on the emotions—if you don't allow yourself to go all the way through them—you can never get to being detached, you're too busy being afraid. You're afraid of the pain, you're afraid of the grief. You're afraid of the vulnerability that loving entails. "But by throwing yourself into these emotions, by allowing yourself to dive in, all the way, over your head even, you experience them fully and completely. You know what pain is. You know what love is. You know what grief is. And only then can you say, 'All right. I have experienced that emotion. I recognize that emotion. Now I need to detach from that emotion for a moment'.
~ Mitch Albom, Tuesdays with Morrie: An Old Man, a Young Man, and Life's Greatest Lesson

You know, I think the people I feel saddest for are the ones who once knew what profoundness was, but who lost or became numb to the sensation of wonder, who felt their emotions floating away and just didn't care. I guess that's what's scariest: not caring about the loss.
~ Douglas Coupland, Player One: What Is to Become of Us

I never said it was easy to find your place in this world, but I'm coming to the conclusion that if you seek to please others, you will forever be changing because you will never be yourself, only fragments of someone you could be. You need to belong to yourself, and let others belong to themselves too. You need to be free and detached from things and your surroundings. You need to build your home in your own simple existence, not in friends, lovers, your career or material belongings, because these are things you will lose one day. That's the natural order of this world. This is called the practice of detachment.
~ Charlotte Eriksson, Empty Roads & Broken Bottles: in search for The Great Perhaps

I release my parents from the feeling that they have already failed me.

I release my children from the need to bring pride to me; that they may write their own ways according to their hearts, that whisper all the time in their ears.

I release my partner from the obligation to complete myself. I do not lack anything, I learn with all beings all the time.

I thank my grandparents and forefathers who have gathered so that I can breathe life today. I release them from past failures and unfulfilled desires, aware that they have done their best to resolve their situations within the consciousness they had at that moment.

I honor you, I love you and I recognize you as innocent.

I am transparent before your eyes, so they know that I do not hide or owe anything other than being true to myself and to my very existence, that walking with the wisdom of the heart, I am aware that I fulfill my life project, free from invisible and visible family loyalties that might disturb my Peace and Happiness, which are my only responsibilities.

I renounce the role of savior, of being one who unites or fulfills the expectations of others.

Learning through, and only through, love, I bless my essence, my way of expressing, even though somebody may not understand me.

I understand myself, because I alone have lived and experienced my history; because I know myself, I know who I am, what I feel, what I do and why I do it.

I respect and approve myself.
I honor the Divinity in me and in you.
We are free.

~ Anonymous

Subhuti, someone might fill innumerable worlds with the seven treasures and give all away in gifts of alms, but if any good man or any good woman awakens the thought of Enlightenment and takes even only four lines from this Discourse, reciting, using, receiving, retaining and spreading them abroad and explaining them for the benefit of others, it will be far more meritorious. Now in what manner may he explain them to others? By detachment from appearances-abiding in Real Truth. -So I tell you-

Thus shall you think of all this fleeting world:

A star at dawn, a bubble in a stream;

A flash of lightning in a summer cloud,

A flickering lamp, a phantom, and a dream.

When Buddha finished this Discourse the venerable Subhuti, together with the bhikshus, bhikshunis, lay-brothers and sisters, and the whole realms of Gods, Men and Titans, were filled with joy by His teaching, and, taking it sincerely to heart they went their ways.

~ Siddhārtha Gautama, Diamond Sutra

Detachment is not giving up the things in this world, but accepting the fact and to be continuously aware that nothing is permanent.

~ Aditya Ajmera

For Someone Awakening To The Trauma of His or Her Past

For everything under the sun there is a time.
This is the season of your awkward harvesting,
When the pain takes you where you would rather not go,

Through the white curtain of yesterdays to a place
You had forgotten you knew from the inside out;
And a time when that bitter tree was planted

That has grown always invisibly beside you

And whose branches your awakened hands
Now long to disentangle from your heart.

You are coming to see how your looking often darkened
When you should have felt safe enough to fall toward love,
How deep down your eyes were always owned by something

That faced them through a dark fester of thorns
Converting whoever came into a further figure of the wrong;
You could only see what touched you as already torn.

Now the act of seeing begins your work of mourning.
And your memory is ready to show you everything,
Having waited all these years for you to return and know.

Only you know where the casket of pain is interred.
You will have to scrape through all the layers of covering
And according to your readiness, everything will open.

May you be blessed with a wise and compassionate guide
Who can accompany you through the fear and grief
Until your heart has wept its way to your true self.

As your tears fall over that wounded place,
May they wash away your hurt and free your heart.
May your forgiveness still the hunger of the wound

So that for the first time you can walk away from that place,
Reunited with your banished heart, now healed and freed,
And feel the clear, free air bless your new face."

~ John O'Donohue, To Bless the Space Between Us: A Book of Blessings

WITHDRAWAL can be a very positive way of stepping forward and done well, a beautiful freeing act of mercy and as a human behavioral art form, underestimated in this time of action and engagement. So much of what we are involved with, in even the highest cause, becomes involvement at the busy periphery, where the central conversation has been lost to the outer edges of what was to begin with, a very simple central invitation. Withdrawal is often not what it looks like – a disappearance – no, to withdraw from entanglement can be to appear again in the world in a very real way and begin the process of renewing the primary, essential invitation again. Though life does seem determined to be a beautiful, and entrancing distraction – just as we ourselves are a distraction to others, testing them as we test ourselves and our mutual sincerity – our participation in this dance of distraction also makes more real, and more necessary, our ability to return to essential ground, to an essential person or an essential work.

We stick to the wrong thing quite often, not because it will come to fruition by further effort, but because we cannot let go of the way we have decided to tell the story and we become further enmeshed even by trying to make sense of what entraps us, when what is needed is a simple, clean breaking away. To remove our selves entirely and absolutely, abruptly and at times uncompromisingly is often the real and

radically courageous break for freedom. Unsticking ourselves from the mythical Tar Baby, seemingly set up, just for us, right in the middle of our path; we start the process of losing our sense of falsity, of ridding ourselves of illusions, of letting go of our self manufactured enemies, and even our false friends, and most especially the false sense of self we have manufactured to live with them: we make ourselves available for the simple purification of seeing our selves and our world more elementally and therefore more clearly again. We withdraw not to disappear, but to find another ground from which to see; a solid ground from which to step, and from which to speak again, in a different way, a clear, rested, embodied voice we begin to remember again as our own.

~ David Whyte