What's Helping?

For most of his life, my dear husband has sprung out of bed every morning, full of energy and focus. I've needed a little time before I can begin my day with similar energy and focus.

Lately, specifically for the last six weeks or so, we've both been having a hard time engaging with days that all seem to start with existential dread. I wake up afraid to face the news. But I don't have to tell you that.

A lot of people have telling me what I should be doing: speaking loudly and publicly; laying low and preparing clandestine work of resistance; taking care of the whole nation; making my efforts local; keeping informed of everything that is happening; ignoring everything except the things I can change; avoiding news all together. Everything I hear conflicts with everything else that I hear. And it's all valid.

Hopefully by now, you've figured out what works for you. So let me tell you what works for me:

The first thing I do is snuggle with my little dog for a minute. Then I check in with my husband about how we are doing. We don't talk first thing about the news or work, because that ratchets up the anxiety. I take care of my physical needs, including coffee and a walk. I don't *watch* news at all, because video footage just makes things more intense. (Honestly, I could not have watched the President and his henchman towering over Mr. Zelenskyy as they bullied him.) I only listen to the news during my commute, and turn it off if my driving is being negatively affected. I read what I can of the news articles forwarded to me. I meditate when I can, focusing on gratitude, loving self-reflection, listening for the wisdom of the universe, and extending peace to a litany of people. Including those who see me as their enemy. And many, many times each day I stop to close my eyes, make a gesture I've heard called the *Gyan Mudra*, and take a deep breath. I try not to think about "them" and all the ways "they" are wrong. I try not to use harmful words like "stupid" to describe other people. I try to be helpful, and to accept people as they are.

My feeling is that if I can pay attention to the things that help me stay centered, I can respond better when necessary.

Maybe something in my practices will help you. Or not. The important thing is that we're all making space for one another to do whatever we need to do to survive and help others do the same. I'd love to hear what you are doing.

In Peace,
Rev Denis