

## Acceptance

Here I am sitting in my favourite chair for meditation. Mind swirling with worried little stories about what's going wrong and what isn't done and what needs to be done. Heart racing (a titch), body restless (a lot). Anger is here, resentment is here, exhaustion is here. Six months into this pandemic for us and I'm "sick and tired of this".

The soothing voice of Jack Kornfield from my headphones to my ears:

*"Let yourself settle into your seat in a way that is comfortable. Let your eyes gently close"*

Ok, I say to myself....thank you Jack. I need this...

He continues:

*"Let your body be at rest on this earth. So there's a sense of steadiness and presence. Take a few deeper breaths, just to release whatever you are holding for the moment. To become more present"*

I notice my body start to relax and my breath to slow.

He goes onto say: *"Let's begin with a little reflection. As you sit quietly you can reflect on the fact that everything changes..."*

These words stop me in my tracks. Screeeeeeeech. Hold up. This hits me so hard that it makes me laugh out loud. From my belly laughing. I say to myself: "Oh Jack, you have no idea!!"

Actually, maybe he does. We all do. We have all being living amid constant change and uncertainty over the past 6 months of COVID.

Of course things change. The sun comes up and goes down. The seasons come and go. The brilliant fall colours of the leaves on the trees remind us that Autumn is here. Walking in the bush these days is a beautiful mix of neon orange, deep red, bright yellow colours. That Fall smell is in the air, pumpkins are out, mowing the grass there's an awareness that we won't be doing this many more times this year. Breath comes in and out. Thoughts appear and vanish. Emotions come and go. We have gains and losses, illness and good health.

We tend to welcome what feels good and joyful. Fully accepting these changes, 'cause we like them.

Not so easy to accept: wearing a mask to go out, internet connection down at our house, child has a runny nose, someone snapped at me, I snapped at someone, anxiousness is here.

James Baraz tells us, Mindfulness is:

**Simply being aware of what is happening right now without wishing it were different,**

**Enjoying the pleasant without holding on when it changes (which it will),**

**And being with the unpleasant without fearing it will always be this way (which it won't).**

My mindfulness practice allows me to enjoy what is pleasant, last night it was a walk after supper, savouring and enjoying walking along trails in the bush with dogs and loved ones.

My mindfulness practice also allows me to register the presence of a difficult experience with acceptance (I didn't say with resignation and I didn't say I liked it). These days I'm taking time to pause, breathe and allow my difficult experience to be here with kindness and tenderness. Inserting a loooooooooooooong pause whenever possible before I respond. Knowing that the unpleasant will not always be this way.

## ***Allow*** by Danna Faulds

There is no controlling life.

Try corralling a lightning bolt, containing a tornado.

Dam a stream and it will create a new channel.

Resist, and the tide will sweep you off your feet.

Allow, and grace will carry you to higher ground.

The only safety lies in letting it all in -

the wild and the weak -

fear, fantasies, failures, and success.

When loss rips off the doors of the heart

or sadness veils your vision with despair,

practice becomes simply bearing the truth.

In the choice to let go of your known way of being,

the whole world is revealed to your new eyes.

With Kindness,

Becky and Shelley