**Buddhism Journal Homework Assignment**

**Due: A-Day Monday, October 14th**

**Or B-Day Tuesday October 15th**

-Either upload your typed journal to your homework folder OR hand in your written journal to Mr. C in person at start of class.

**Overview**: Over the 'Fall Break" 4 day vacation I want you to pick at least 2 days to practice some Buddhism experiments. Of course you can do more days if you want! On those 2 (or more days) I want you to practice some of the 8-fold path and 6 paramitas. You will simply "document" what you did and then write very short reflections about it at the end of the day. So your "journal" is just your documentation of what days and times you did this and some short reflections about it.

**Specific Details:**

1. Each day I want you to try to practice **Step #7 'Right Mindfulness'** at different parts of the day. At different times during each day ask yourself, "Am I practicing Mindfulness right now?" In other words, "Are you 100% present in whatever action you are doing and NOT doing two things at once?" For example, while eating breakfast, ask yourself, "Am I only eating breakfast right now with 100% mindfulness and presence? OR Am I eating breakfast and not paying attention to my eating and doing other things also such as looking at my iphone, talking to friends, etc.?" THEN TRY TO BE MINDFUL FOR THE NEXT 5 MINUTES. For 5 Minutes, ONLY EAT BREAKFAST and be 100% present.

-So try to do this at different times during the day, such as eating meals, talking to your parents or friends, taking a walk, reading a book, doing homework, taking a shower, playing a sport, etc, etc…. Try to catch yourself not being mindful and then try to be mindful for 5 minutes.

-Try to do this a few times each day

-In your journal write about this! Tell me about what activities you were doing and tell me about how you tried to be mindful. Also tell me about your reactions and thoughts about these experiences.

1. Each day I also want you to practice **Step #8 'Right Meditation'**. Each day I want you to practice formal meditation for 5 minutes each day. Maybe you can do it **right when you get up in the morning**, before you go to bed at night; maybe you can do it when you are bored, etc. You only need to do it for 5 minutes each day, but feel free to do more if you want.

-You can try some of the different meditation techniques we have learned so far, or you can try your own. For example, you can try….

1) Sit up straight with eyes closed or half-open. Breathe in deeply for 7 seconds; then hold your breath for 7 seconds; then slowly exhale for 7 seconds. Do this about 10 times. Then just sit quietly and put all your attention on your breath. Maybe try to focus on the exact moment when exhale turns to inhale. Every time your mind wanders away just bring it back to your breath.

Or

2) Count your breaths. Each inhale and then exhale you say to yourself "One" Then the next inhale and exhale you say to yourself "Two", etc, etc until you get to "Seven". After seven then return again from One.

Or

3) Just sit quietly and put all your attention on your breath. Just be aware of your breathing. Each time your mind wanders away just return it to the breath.

Or…do another type of meditation that you know.

In your journal you should document a list of the days and times you meditated and tell me what kind of meditation you did and write about your opinions, thoughts, reactions, and experiences of each meditation each time.

1. Finally each day I want you to try to think about and practice some of the other Steps of the **8-Fold** **Path** and/or some of the **6 Paramitas.**

-Remember on my website you have readings for both "The 8-Fold Path" and also the "6 Paramitas"

-But here they are again…

**8-Fold Path**

1.Right Knowledge

2. Right Aspiration

3. Right Speech

4. Right Behavior

5. Right Livelihood

6. Right Effort

(7. Right Mindfulness)

(8. Right Meditation)

**6 Paramitas**

1. Generosity
2. Morality
3. Patience
4. Joyful Effort
5. Concentration
6. Wisdom

So each day I want you to try to focus on at least one more thing from these lists and try to practice it at different times of the day.

For example, on Thursday I am going to focus on "Right Speech". I am going to be extra mindful about "Right Speech' on Thursday. I am going to really focus on everything that comes out of my mouth on Thursday. I will also try to use my speech to make someone else feel good, etc.

Maybe on Friday I will focus on "Right Behavior". For today I am going to try to be a vegetarian. Or maybe today I am going to try to make sure my behavior is as ethical as possible, etc.

Maybe on Saturday I will focus on "Joyful Effort". Whenever I am doing something on Saturday- especially things I normally do not like- I am going to do them with pure joy and gratitude., etc….

Maybe on Sunday I will focus on "Generosity" I will try to do at least one act of pure "karma yoga" again where I anonymously do something nice for someone else

SO REMEMBER EACH NIGHT TO WRITE IN YOUR JOURNAL and tell me about which thing you focused on that day, how did you try to practice it, and your reactions and reflections about it.

1. So remember that each day you should be practicing mindfulness and writing about it, practicing meditation and writing about it, and practicing the 8-fold path/paramitas and writing about it. You are only **required to do this for 2 days over the break,** but you can do more days if you want.

**EXTRA CREDIT OPTIONS:**

1. **Try to spend 1 entire day without any 'technology'. Turn off your iphone in the morning and do not turn it on again until the following day. (Tell me about it)**
2. **Try to spend 1 entire day as a vegetarian. (Tell me about it)**
3. **Go visit a Buddhist Temple. (Tell me about it)**
4. **Read a book about Buddhism for fun. You can borrow one of mine if you want. (Tell me about it).**