

Talk #1: Holding it All – Nancee – (Bridge from April’s Big Group on Hatred)

How do we hold it all, as we move forward into the teaching of this weekend on Existence. How do we truly be with and open to all we experience and to what others experience – how to be with all perspectives, points of views, the difficult feelings and different experiences each of us have that can feel intense, upsetting, polarizing.

We actually have an opportunity here to begin to practice something different in our spiritual community than what we see in our divided nation today, to practice, learn, find new ways to bridge and perhaps even begin to heal the deep divides within ourselves and with each other. To make contact with the ground of our Being that can settle our minds, hearts and bellies and support us in discovering ways to express, and acknowledge our views and experiences from a wide and deep place of inclusion rather than contracted position of polarization and exclusion.

We need our spiritual teachings and practices to guide us. We need to deepen and fortify our invaluable practices of presence, inquiry, the Kath meditation and SLL. We need our bellies, our ballast, our bodies - to sense our here-ness, our Presence, we need to know presence, feel it, sense it, deeply in our body/soul. As our contact with Presence grows – the qualities of our essential nature - our allies - courage, strength, trust, steadfastness, solidity, compassion, peace, loving kindness, personal power are more available to us, and we can make contact with and begin to sense the fundamental ground of our Being that we are - that holds all our experiences.

#1 Exercise: 15 min 15 discussion

Explore your experience of the presence of holding when dealing with different perspective and views, when facing difficult feelings, thoughts, sensations, pain, grief, anger, fear, loss? Do you feel a sense of holding or not? If yes, how do you experience holding in your body? If not, how do you experience the lack of holding in your body? How are you holding whatever you are experiencing now? What essential qualities are present compassion, strength, solidity, sense of capacity, is there a sense of presence or not, what inner and outer resources do you rely on, what practices support you?

Talk #2: Perspective of Inner Work – Hameed

External/outer world can eclipse our inner world – need to understand the relationship of the two. Everyone has view of reality, philosophy of life – each develops perspective of reality and one’s place in it - true for every human being.

#2 EXERCISE: Perspective of Inner Work

Monologue for 15 min each: Explore your perspective of reality and your place in it. Discuss how close to or different from the perspective of the inner work. And how you can bring in the perspective for the work to inform more fully your view of reality. Then 15 min discussion between the three to pool your insights together.

Talk #3: True Existence – Hameed

Hameed gives a transmission of the aspect of Existence and its qualities

#3 EXERCISE: True Existence

Three Repeating questions

10 min each: Tell me how you know you exist

10 min each: Tell me how you experience your existence

15 looping: Tell me how you experience the presence of existence

#4: True Existence and the Infidel – Bob

Particulars vs Fundamental - Worldly vs Spiritual Life

Infidel Structure – the disbeliever: (atheist, materialist)

Ways Infidel/Beetle Shell Developed:

- **1:** History, family, cultural with its vicissitudes around abandonment, abuse, neglect - extent of experiencing or perceiving the absence of love or a spiritual quality in the environment. This is similar to the loss of basic trust.
- **2:** Everyone is conditioned and identified with our parent's beetle shell. Many of us had parents who were atheists, or who just didn't care about that realm of the spiritual or essential and lived their lives as if it didn't exist.
- **3:** most fundamental core of the ego - unquestioned supremacy of the physical world. Seeing is believing! Physical reality that we conventionally experience it is the real, ultimate reality.

#4 EXERCISE: MONO 15 minutes in three parts.

Exercise: Monolog 15 each with 15 “mini cyclonic” at end (60 minutes total)

Part 1: Explore the Infidel (Beetle) shell to see if you can recognize it in any way, shape or form. If yes, explore where it comes from and what maintains it now (i.e. your family history, religion, culture, relationships)?

Explore the ways it manifests in your life with particular focus to the DA teachings, your essential experiences and/or the essential experiences of others?

If you have essential experiences, do you tend to doubt or forget them and return to the usual, conventional beliefs about life and living? Is there a part of you that adheres to a concrete, materialist, "seeing is believing" point of view that obscures your spiritual access, experience, or faith in the teachings? A part that tends to exclude, diminish, devalue, prioritize Being and Essence as secondary, not that important, irrelevant, fantasy, imaginal?

If you don't have essential experiences, then in your monolog just explore as openly and sincerely as to what that might be about for you. Do you know why this is so?

Part 2: As you see more about this nonbeliever/infidel structure, notice if this helps you access, recognize and trust experiences of True Existence more? If not, see if something is still in the way (i.e. has the infidel "dug in")?

Part 3: 15-minute discussion-mini cyclonic: each member takes a turn contributing what you feel is emerging in your pod now as related to the exercise. Explore and contribute to this field together by saying a few things about the experience of existence that may be arising now (or not) and then pass it on to the next person 1 > 2 > 3

Include naming whatever other qualities might be present in your pod field.