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Sip Your Cup of Tea - Part I

Autumn Shishon

My experience and mind clearing epiphany begins while lying on a mat in a yoga meditation class. Our regular meeting spot had changed, and we found ourselves in a new space created specifically for “enhancing the yoga experience.” Yet, despite that endeavor, we were uncomfortable in this new space, struggling to center our beings. Our instructor had graciously listened to our concerns, empathized, and then reminded us that the practice of yoga isn’t about the space in which you are, but instead, is about the space you find within. As a novice in the practice of yoga, this is very difficult for me, requiring effort even in the perfect surroundings.

So, I found myself laying on my mat, making a mental list of all the things that were hindering my meditation, blindly, forgetting that I, myself was the biggest hindrance. A rattle in the poor attachment of a light fixture above to my left, a draft seeping across my knees, an outside light source hitting my face making my brow rumple, a consistent hum-drum coming from another activity outside the room, combined with thoughts of the difficulties I had in finding a place to store my shoes, another person’s agitation at the new space, and the new, uncomfortable equipment I had just used, all these things kept me from centering myself.

I then became annoyed at the idea that I had just wasted an hour of my time in this awful place and promptly decided that as soon as the class was over, I would march

straight out of the class and tell the provider that I was not pleased! Yes! Indeed, that is what I intended to do! But, class was not over just yet. And so, I would continue to lie quietly, and decided that, as I was not getting anything out of this experience, I would utilize the time by making mental notes of other tasks that needed my attention. I praised myself for taking advantage of the time to be productive while I impatiently waited for the class to draw to an end. It wouldn't be long. I knew our meditation guide was having trouble with the new space and the whole dynamic of the situation as well. So, I felt assured that our time would pass quickly and maybe even be cut short. I began rolling topics thru my mind and making mental lists. After an indeterminate amount of time, I stopped my list making long enough to wonder; "What was taking so long?" I decided to peek out the corner of my eye at our instructor to get a sense of how close we were to the end.

In this moment, I was given a gift. She sat there, our instructor, calm and quiet. An aura of blue surrounding here, anchored from green and at her center a speck of purple. I blinked and closed my eyes for the briefest second to ensure what I was seeing. Despite all else, she was in that moment in its entirety. She was that moment. My range of emotion darted all over. I was shocked at the abundant flow of thought that was overtaking me. I was mystified at the beauty of her being. I was envious of the place that she was. I was sad that I had prevented myself from going along. And suddenly, I was anxiety ridden. I wanted to be in that space too. I was outside, and I desperately wanted centered in my own space. My eyes flickered shut. I took notice of my breath and all the parts of my body that it was reaching. In another instant I was feeling my body and the space around me. Another long, deep breath, and I felt the passing of air in me and then

through me. I felt like a fish may feel when being put back in water after being out for some time. I clearly identified the ebb and flow of my spirit. My body was feeling the area it possessed and then I was the area. The speed at which all these sensations were coming to me was so fast, that it was only in later moments that I became cognizant of them. What an amazing sensation.

Suddenly, it was all stopping. I felt as though I was being drawn backward from a string anchored in my stomach. I almost felt pain. What happened? Why had I stopped? I desperately wanted to move forward, to keep going. Yet, I was now planted and feeling confused. I was hearing the most peculiar rolling noise. I began to make out words. They were suddenly clear. “Now, begin to move you’re your fingers and your toes and stretch in a way that feels most comfortable for you.” Oh no! It was over! I had began a beautiful journey and been ripped from it. Why? Was I being punished? My head spun, and honestly hurt. I took a breath and a long moment to bring myself to an upright position. Here, I shook my head a bit to clear the fog. DAMN! It was all gone! I was now angry; seething that I had been robbed of so much so quickly. DAMN! Again, the thought stuck me that this whole hour had been a waste.

Then, for whatever reason, as I rolled up my mat, and gathered my shoes, my thoughts floated back to a question posed to us while our instructor read a passage at the beginning of class. “Are you living in the moment?” As I began to recite it to myself, I stopped to question my timeline. Was that in fact just less than an hour ago? It seemed as though so much had happened since then. Then I realized that it hadn’t been a waste of time.

As quiet murmurings began amongst other students, once again, my mind began

reeling. I was flushed and feeling cramped for space. I had just been handed a huge life lesson and was drowning in just the simple thought of it. I tried to still my mind, and collect my being. I needed to exit the room for some air. Destination unknown, I forged my way to the door and threw it open. Air! Space! I walked for a moment on shaky knees to a nearby chair. I needed to sit. I grabbed the arm of the chair for support and without thinking proceeded to plop myself down securely on the ground next to the chair. I needed to calm myself and restore some order to the barrage of thoughts and ideas that were being thrown at me. I knew that if my conscious being was being flooded, I could only expect that my subconscious was experiencing an overload of its own. I took a breath and placed my forehead to my palms. Breathe, just breath...

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