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mp.47 Saying Yes 11.22.12

These are some responses to an assignment for a correspondence course I am taking through the Unitarian-Universalist Association.

1. Meditation on Yellow - Saying Yes. This is an important meditation for me. I have a hard time letting myself enjoy my desires. Sometimes i withhold all together. Other times it is meagerly metered out. There is some holding back always.

I need to learn to say "yes....and" and not "yes...but" I am constantly managing my experience. On guard for possible problems, I fear circumstances will not turn out well. My meditation practice has shown how fearful my consciousness is. Saying Yes to my experience whatever the details, brightens up my life. Yellow works quite nicely to symbolize this brightening process.

2. What Joyful games did you try? did you make up any? which were most helpful for you? I found the practicing of paying attention to when I say NO most helpful. I found it very revealing how I am asked quite a bit for something in the Dining Hall when I prepare the food trays for the inmates in segregated housing. Even when I have extra items, there is a resistance to saying yes to the request.

I generally respond positively to the request, but there is still a holding back. I hear thoughts in my head about others taking advantage. I ultimately ignore the thoughts to say "yes...but," but part of me is clearly wanting to say no.

The image of life as an acting improvisation was helpful when I am in conversation with another person. I find that I frequently do not "take" what others offer in conversation in the way that it was intended. I will redirect conversation to something I was thinking about not necessarily what the other person was saying. I have noticed this and worked on treating it in improve format. Letting go of my agenda and seeing where the other's agenda may take me.

3. Changes I have noticed about myself since starting this course. I meditated on this feeling of resistance. It is very common feeling transcending just pleasurable (desire) but also pain (aversion) and even neutral states (indifference). Life itself is something to be pulled against rather than leaned into as Puma Chadron says. This practice of yes is a very valuable exercise for me. One that allows me to embrace life rather than shrink from it in fear.

I hope to make this a daily mantra - yes. Life has been not something to embrace, but something to be scared of or at best endured. With practice of yes (and) I can begin to rewire my brain to enter into the stream of life rather than remaining on the bank apprehensively watching the current.

Of course not every experience is desired. This is not a practice to indulge every passion without limit or to inflict unending pain on myself. The yes says to me that whatever comes I can handle it better by leaning into the experience rather than pulling back. Pulling back I don't fully experience the joy or pleasure and does not protect me from the paint of unpleasant events/emotions. Pulling back infuses suffering into all experiences painful or pleasurable.

"Yes" allows me to engage whatever comes fully knowing that I will get more from the temporary pleasures of desire & experience less suffering from my temporary pain. In every case my saying yes only means and will not be adding more self inflicted suffering to the whatever life brings.

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mindful prisoner

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