

## A few mindfulness exercises for the pandemic

- ① Be mindful of anxiety as a phenomena affecting body and mind. Don't fight it or indulge it. See the anxious thoughts as simply thoughts, like clouds passing through the sky of the mind. See the physical sensations as merely sensation, part of nature. Breathe deeply. Imagine the anxiety leaving the body with the outbreath. Imagine calm and clarity entering the body and mind with the inbreath.
- ② Develop mindfulness of the urge to touch the face, and endure through it. (Remembering how it feels when the impulse passes away is a help in resisting it the next time). Be mindful while washing your hands for twenty seconds. For example try reciting inwardly: 1-Buddho, 2-Buddho, 3-Buddho up to 10-Buddho, then 10-Buddho, 9-Buddho... down to zero. Be mindful of the distance between you and others
- ③. Develop mindfulness as an inner refuge by daily periods of chanting and meditation. Chanting Pali verses with full attention is calming. Chanting in translation brings to mind important reflections that are uplifting and wise. Meditation helps to create a quiet oasis of inner calm amid all the confusion of daily life.
- ④ Be mindful of children's fears. Explain the virus to them as best as you can; encourage them to ask questions. Let them know that their safety is your first concern. Beware of your speech concerning the virus in their presence.
- ⑤ Be mindful of your use of social media. Restrict your consumption of news. Catching up once or twice a day is sufficient. Avoid unreliable social media that stir up fears or are full of miracle cures. (This will all be much easier if you observe how your mental state is affected by what you look at on your screen). If you have children, ensure that they are similarly restrained.
- ⑥ Be mindful of the suffering of others. Don't be reckless. Don't be selfish in your use of precious resources. Get together with like-minded friends and offer assistance to any elderly people at risk or children going hungry
- ⑦ Be mindful of this opportunity to spend some quality time with your family.

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