



Cloud Mountain - Newsletter

ACCEPTANCE

How do we hold with openness an awareness our own commitment to be skilled and wise? Meditation is primarily a willingness to be intimate with our life, a life which leaves nothing out. The very act of stopping, sitting, looking and being open with each breath is an expression of the whole. It can be a glib comment 'be accepting', but actually most us have been trained not to be. The gentle work of including what has been painful, difficult to embrace along with our understandable aversion or denial, is of itself a testimony to the intelligence which meets us always present, even when we are not. It is also to become daring, creative and trusting of life in all directions. Acceptance is grounded in our true nature, empty of all gradations of cause, result, merit, gain and lack.

Acceptance is to see no-thing is actually against us; even our delusions and mistakes have no permanent reality. Our bright nature shines continuously in every moment undiminished by circumstances, birthright, standing or desires for or against. Releasing every idea of self and other, sinking into the clear vast space of un-held movement invites acceptance. Our dramas and stories which seemingly shape and confine us cannot remove acceptance as our true ground.

'The debris floats, moves on the great fast flowing river, the water unperturbed by what is carried is unbiased, unknowingly true to its course'

On the other side we live in community, holding a variety of relationships, roles and most importantly we commit to live awake inside our own skin. The place of honest functioning also means practice keeps alive this freedom as an act of mutual compassion. Sometimes we find ourselves needing to be reminded again and again nothing binds us, and we commit not to bind another. Illusions, delusions and even behavior do not diminish what is our fee nature. Acceptance means allowing them as irritants to season and inform our practice, a realization of **what is essential resides in the thickest and testiest of times**. In the wake of revelations regarding the sins of the church, we are reminded how important the work of interior life is. The religious persona is the trickiest and most resistant to vulnerability. Mature practice is to move across the spectrum of spirit and soul, and back again, again and again. Digging dirt, bowing, changing nappies, and the sweet touch of pleasure and life need to be welcomed and celebrated-this is the Dharma, this is Jesus-"this is my body" If we split this most delicate work we are in danger falling side-wards and grace becomes a cloak rather than the bare lived fact of compassion, passion and freedom to roam with confidence. Acceptance always seems to require this dialogue, a mirror like viewing, seeing what presents but also seeing the mirror reveals form is emptiness, no-thing weighs us down. This is the true basis of acceptance a basis which has no base-wonderful!

We have only now, only this single eternal moment opening and unfolding before us, day and night.

Jack Cornfield

March 2019

WEDNESDAY MEDITATION

Sitting 7pm – 8pm

NEWSLETTER

The NEWSLETTER is offered on a monthly basis to keep you informed of retreat opportunities.

If you do not want to receive this newsletter please let us know via email.

This paper is empty of an independent self. Empty, in this sense, means that the paper is full of everything, the entire cosmos. The presence of this tiny sheet of paper proves the presence of the whole cosmos.

Thich Nhat Hanah

Next two retreats: Mark the dates. (web changes made)

Zen/Contemplative Retreat

Friday 5 - Monday 8 April

A retreat for those seeking to begin a practice and for long time practitioners: Zazen, (Contemplation) Silence, Mindful walking, Teacher interviews and communal experience of meditation.

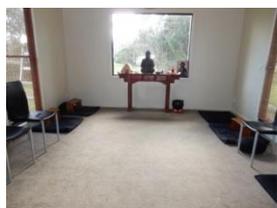
Cost: Residential full \$300, \$220 concession.

Dunkeld & Peaks Pilgrim walk - Southern Grampians

Friday 3 - Monday 6 May

A three day easy-moderate 60K walk with four nights accommodation. A group experience of walking in the beautiful plains and mountains of the southern range. Guided and supported with all food, accommodation, engaging conversation, hospitality and options for art, meditation/yoga.

Cost: Residential single: full \$580, \$450 concession. **One space left for couple with their own room.**



Stays at Cloud Mountain

If you are seeking opportunity to take a break for rest, reflection, meditation with support or without we are most willing to have you stay. Our hope has been to establish Cloud Mountain Retreat for those who might benefit from taking time to be separate for a period for the purpose of pausing and deepening the soulful aspects of their work and life. The house is wonderfully positioned besides the arboretum, farmlands with walks and spaces for contemplation. We have a dedicated space for meditation/yoga and a space for art practice with smaller spaces for quiet reading and reflection. Please inquire through email or phone. It is advisable to book a space in advance. Costs can be tailored to your capacity to contribute.

***The universe is porous and so are we
What we take as unbending and fixed
Turns out to be eternally young
Fresh and ready***

***Meditation is to be in accord with the heart beat of the universe
It is never an achievement***

***Rather a slow turning towards what is
No matter the weight of our tired life***

The universe is not persuaded-it always arrives new.

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*As I reached into the
cavities of life
What I thought were
holes
Were light wells
What I thought were dark
Prisons
Were forgotten songs and
laughter
'Come in' said a clear old
voice
Pick up the pieces
Scoop up the fragments
What you have spent a
life ignoring have lazily
slept
They have quietly waited
for the soft innocence of a
warmer gaze
The discarded percolates
with irritating vitality
Their truth lies not in
rearranging concepts
Only a willingness to hold
with soft trembling hands
For an ageless peering
Returns
A leaner mind
A wild ripe heart
A simple
Falling in
Acceptance*

Paul Sanders