

Renunciation Week 3: Working with Letting Go, Letting Be

“To cultivate inner peace, you’ll have to think like this: I’ll simplify my life. ... I’ll also have to trim the fat, relinquish the trivial in order to enhance the essential. Peace is also a not-doing. I may have to decide to limit my family size, or my career, or my television watching. .. I’ll select what I’m going to carry in my backpack, so that I’m “unencumbered by baggage,” free to amble. The life of peace is like an international flight permitting only one handbag. You’ll have to leave behind some of your cherished shoes and appliances. The international traveler, the hiker, and the climber feel relieved by what they have discarded.” Paul Fleischman, *Cultivating Inner Peace*

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Read the short piece by Phillip Moffett called “Three Ego-Renunciation Practices” posted on the course website (couldn’t figure out how to include a direct link to it here). Course website: <https://www.audiodharma.org/series/35/talk/10344/>

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Here is a poem by Naomi Shihab Nye about letting go of some social pressures: “The Art of Disappearing.”

<https://emofe.com/naomi-shihab-nye/the-art-of-disappearing/>

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### Passages from Ajahn Sucitto *Parami (chapter on Letting Go)*

“..keep asking yourself ‘Do I really need this?’ When you inquire into needs rather than wants, you’ll find that needs are simple. To me, clarity, balance, and the ability to bring forth the good seem to be needs...Needs tend to simplify and take you through the jungle of fantasy to a place of value.”

“Ajahn Chah said that being a monk is knowing about letting go but being unable to do so for ninety percent of the time .... However, with truthfulness there is a necessary development. You start to come more from the heart, the sense that works in terms of relating to experience, rather than fixing and organizing and making yourself into what you think you should be.”

“..you have to transcend rather than repress the flood; you have to know the pull of pleasure, feel it and relax it. You have to get to sense how attraction works, and how to release that energy by [shifting] to the awareness of it. This is a heart inclination rather than a technique, and awareness is brought to the fore through patience and kindness. So you give up the ideas of who you are and how things should be, and instead breathe patience and kindness into the grasping and the agitation.”

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Reflection: What's in your backpack that is weighing you down? Could you make the intention to notice each time you pick it up or add to it? Can you incline your heart with patience and kindness toward simple awareness of what's happening in that moment?