Engaged Living

7-day journal By Ram Mahalingam



Instructions

You have been practicing for the past several weeks with an overarching goal of being diligent about your practice. Renowned Tibetan teacher Dilgo Khyentse (2007) defines diligence as the "joyous effort and active determination to carry out positive actions, without any expectations or self-satisfaction." We focused on Diligence to Sit (DS) and Diligence in Practice (DP) for the past few weeks. You also learned several contemplative practices while journaling about DS and DP. Your journaling notes will help you identify systemic hindrances (personal and situational) that might impede your practice. Take the time to explore some practical strategies to be vigilant (e.g., finding time or space, tempering or sitting with disruptions, getting back on track) about your practice.

I hope these practices help you pause, reflect, and creatively engage with your lives with a commitment to personal and social change. I encourage you to practice every day for at least 15 minutes. Be diligent about your commitment to generate, receive, and sustain joy in and around your life. You are welcome to choose any of the tools you have learned over the past weeks to deepen your practice.

This week, we will focus on being diligent in our actions – our mindful engagement with our lives. This week, we will deepen our meditation practice and focus on **Diligence in Action (DA)** by setting intentions to deepen your connections. We will continue our efforts to become diligent about our practice as we continue to work on our **DS** and **DP**. Choose any of the three meditations we've practiced or any other meditations you are using.

Day 1:
DS/DP Observations:
Write a gratitude letter to a person who helped you a lot in the past.

Day 2:
DS/DP Observations:
Briefly write the acts of kindness you have noticed in the past seven days.
Day 3:
DS/DP Observations:
Briefly write about the expressions of happiness or joy you noticed in the past seven days.

Day 4:
DS/DP Observations:
Think of your favorite organization you want to support. Commit to helping the organization by identifying ways you can support it.
Day 5:
DS/DP Observations:
Create a list of people who will/can help you whenever you need. Pick one person from the list and send them a note (an email or text) thanking them for being part of your life.

Day 6:
DS/DP Observations:
Take a walk outside and notice things in nature that inspire you (e.g., a beautiful sunset, falling leaves). Set an intention (e.g., think of a small step like recycling or reducing waste generation) to build a sustainable world.
Day 7:
DS/DP Observations:
Think of one of the moments in your life that brought joy to others. Write about how it made you feel. Commit to bringing joy (small or big) around you for the next seven days. Be specific about your intentions.