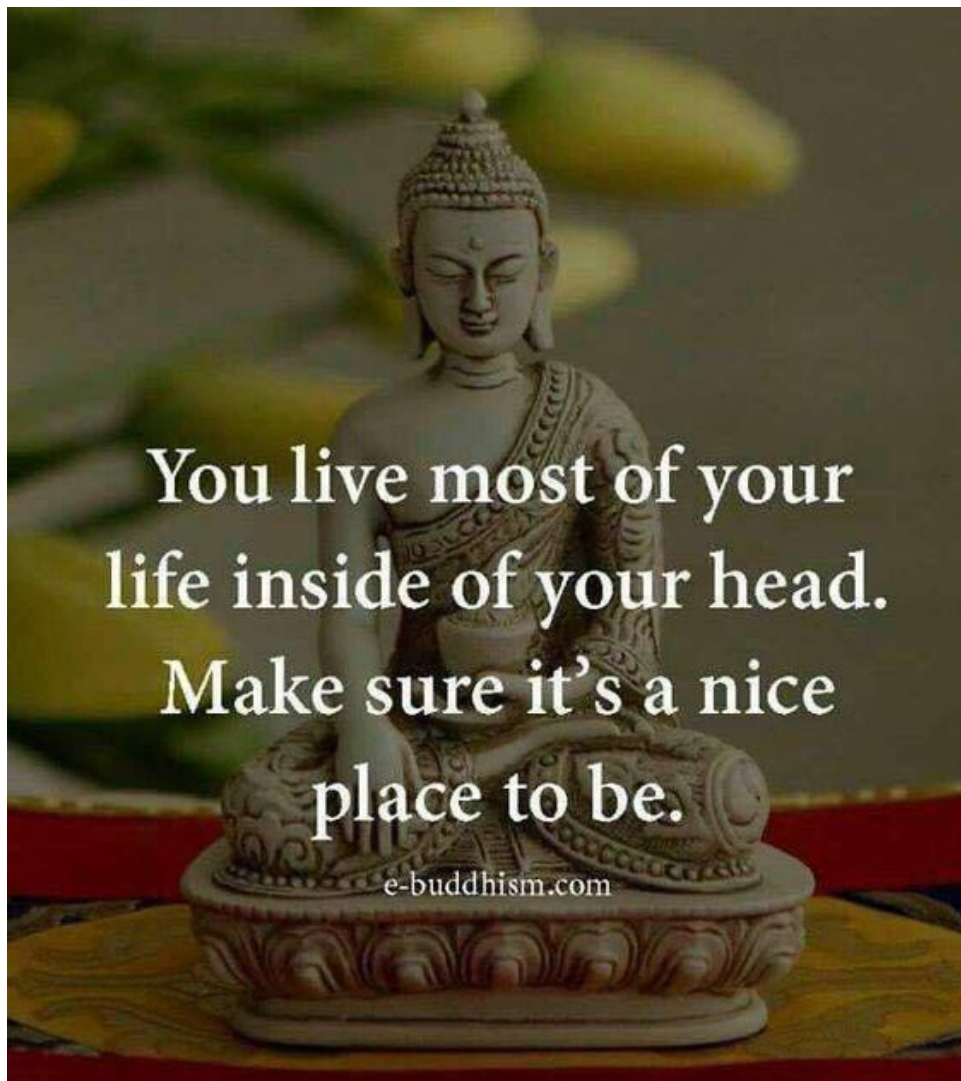


THE JOURNEY WITHIN – PART II

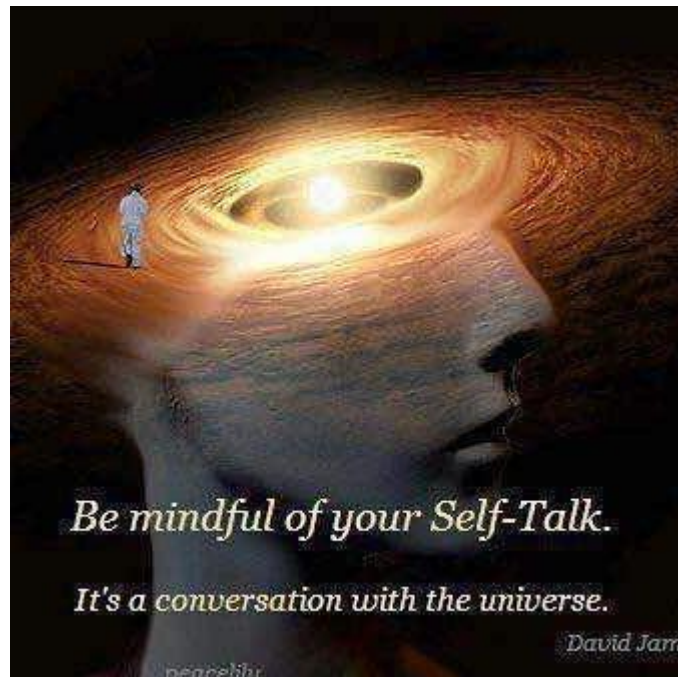


I recently completed the Sattipathana Vipassana Course. Its pretty much like the 10 day Vipassana course except that one needs to have completed a minimum of Three (3) 10 day Vipassana Courses & served in one (1) as a Dhamma Sevak/Sevika to qualify for it.

It's the discussion and explanation of the Sattipathana Sutra, which is a body of knowledge during the evening discourses that sets it apart from the regular Vipassana course besides its duration which is of 8 days. Rest of the schedule, technique, meditation hours etc. are all similar.

Undertaking this 8 day intense Sattipathana course after 6 months of the regular 10 day Vipassana course has helped me evolve and reinforce Aparna 3.0. It has also helped me delve deep into the science and rationale behind this meditation technique.

In the hustle-bustle of daily living, we're so externally focussed that there's hardly any time to pause or reflect on the chain of thoughts or patterns that our mind follows. This course gave me the perfect "Me Time" to take a pause and try "not to think" for a while. It may seem easy to begin with, however once you sit down...the mind wanders like a monkey; there is constant chatter, all kinds of self talk goes on.



Practising "Maun" during the course helps to reduce the chatter as you try to focus the mind on observing the sensations "in the present". The mind resists and wants to go back into its usual pattern of thinking about the "past" or "future". Its almost like a "tug-of-war" going on in the mind. This brings up different kinds of sensations which you experience in the present moment. The trick is to "merely observe" without "reacting" or "responding" to it.

There were two (2) key take aways for me from this course besides reinforcing Aparna 3.0. Ours was a small group of about 30 meditators (both men & women). There were a few who would be constantly emitting sounds due to belching or burping as soon as they sat to meditate in the Dhamma Hall. While on the face of it, it was really distracting me and the others trying to concentrate and meditate...I learnt the first lesson first hand here.

In life, there are numerous distractions and we encounter various deterrents. We must develop the ability to recognise these and yet need to remain "focussed" on our goal/s at all times. We must develop the skill to use a "stumbling block" as a "stepping stone".

The second take away was that there is no need for approval or consent from others to lead our lives. All we need to do is to tap into our “Inner Wisdom” for guidance. However, for this we need to be able to reach our souls.

While these 2 lessons seem very palatable intellectually and known commonplace, I learnt these experientially during this course.

Finally, our “Mind is a beautiful servant, but a dangerous master.”

Am glad to have taken one more meaningful step “In my Journey Within”.

Sabka Mangal Ho!