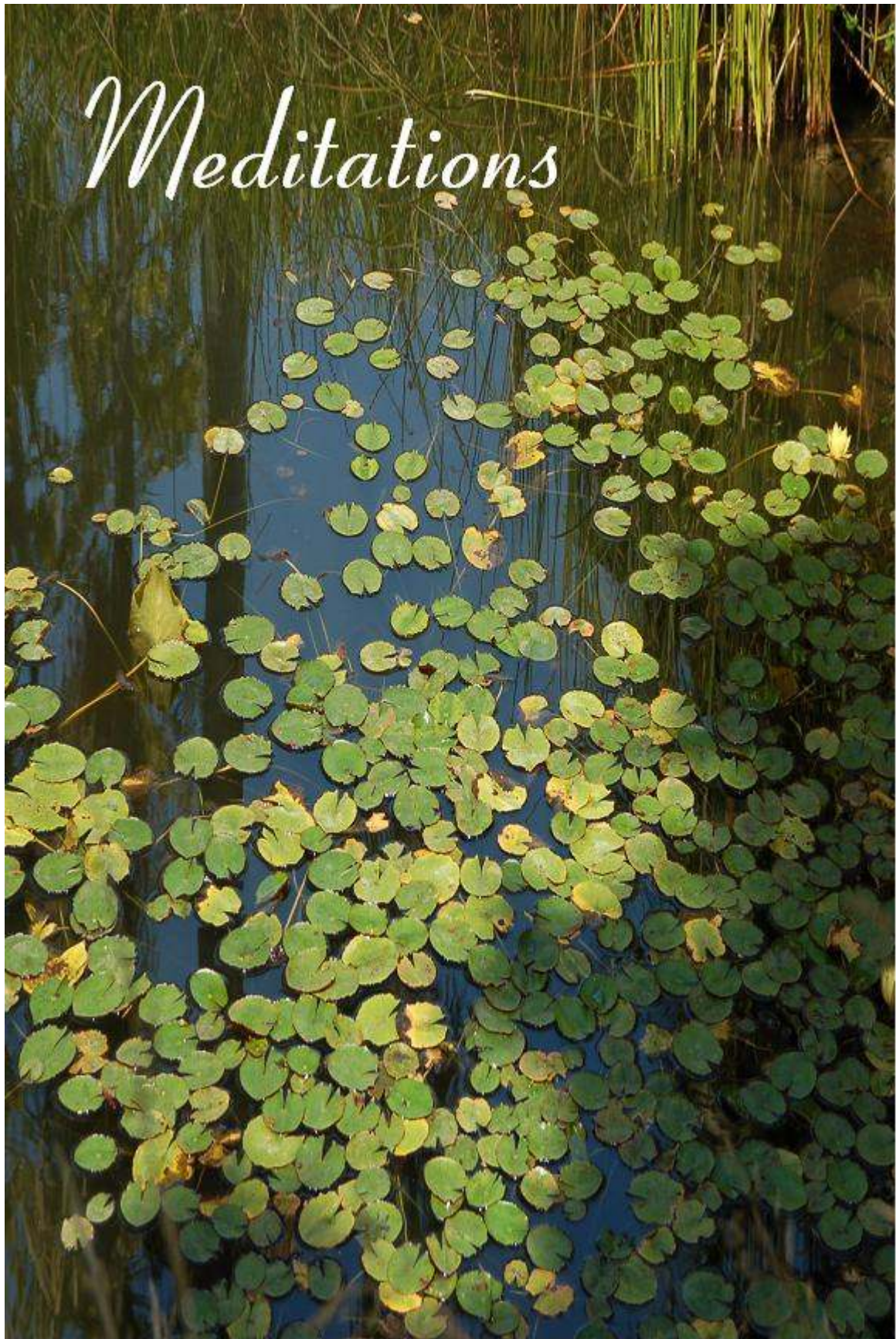


Meditations



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A Free Booklet

By

Richard Dinsmore

Meditations

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2012: Order and Harmony

With the coming of the new year comes reflection on the passage of time and evaluations of where we are and where we want to go. This new year finds a lot of uncertainty and trepidation in people, our country and the whole world. More than any other in recent history, the year 2012 is filled with mystery and no shortage of dire predictions surround its coming.

Order and harmony may seem like unusual concepts to associate with this year, but that is the very reason we should arrange our expectations to welcome them.

It may seem as if the forces that propel events in the world and in our lives are outside of our influence, but this is a lie perpetrated by adversaries of humanity.

It is said that when a butterfly flaps its wings, somewhere else a strong wind blows, meaning that every small action is magnified somewhere else. By creating order in our personal lives and blending harmoniously with people and events -good and bad-we begin to generate order and harmony throughout our lives, the world and the universe.



Once you have fulfilled your purpose, stop there.

Lao Tzu

There is a saying among surgeons and sculptors that “The enemy of good, is better.” Once a great deal of planning and careful execution creates the desired outcome, it is tempting to stand back, take a look, and then try to improve upon it. In surgery and in stone cutting it is impossible to go back if you make an error in a final push towards perfection.

It is valuable in our professions, finances and day to day life to set goals and work hard towards them. It is equally important in the long run to take a moment to enjoy the fruits of those achievements and not pass over them in a relentless pursuit of the next. A determination to succeed is important but part of real success is a well rounded life that includes well savored respites as much as glorious battles and great victories!



It is easier for someone living close to the land and close to nature to believe there is a Creator. Beauty, balance, interdependency, intricate design and the power of natural forces are humbling aspects of creation.

A young medical student once exclaimed that she saw God through the microscope, that the wonders she could see were a pure reflection of God. This is not animism or pantheism, it is a scripturally sound view of spiritual reality; *Nature reflects the invisible attributes of God.-Romans 1:20.*

Ancient Taoists believed that an immutable law guides the creation of all things and that law can be discerned in the natural world, but humankind is good at stumbling over the truth and going on as though nothing happened. *The fool says in his heart "there is no God" and goes calmly on his way as though he discovered a great truth- Psalm 14:1 .*

Carefully observing the cycles of nature teaches us to calmly accept every event in its time and season.



To be free of suffering, just do no evil deeds...openly, or in secret.
Gautama

Everyone wants to be free, and historically individual freedom is valued in all cultures and societies. In American culture the freedom to live and pursue happiness on our own terms is central and foundational to the political design of our government by the people. On an even more important scale, we are each responsible for our own sense of freedom from want, suffering and fear.

Many persons choose to surrender their volition to other people or to institutions, primarily to avoid fear. For some the fear of failure is paralyzing, and for others the fear of success is equally strong. Someone fearing success and freedom from suffering is laboring under the burden of guilt. Guilt is a human way of trying to pay back some psychic debt, or of atoning for some real or imagined sin. Freedom can be too painful for those who become accustomed to guilt and fear.

While it may be beneficial to bear the weight of examining regretted thoughts or deeds in the dark of a night, come the dawn it is important for our spiritual and psychological health to rise again with the sun and begin anew, and so much the wiser.

What is man's life for? What pleasure is there in it? Is it for beauty and riches? Is it for sound and color? But there comes a time when beauty and riches no longer answer the needs of the heart, and when a surfeit of sound and color becomes weariness to the eyes and a ringing in the ears.

Lao Tzu

I gathered for myself silver and gold and the special treasures of kings...whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them, I did not withhold by heart from any pleasure, yet the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing and in the end all is vanity.

Ecclesiastes

Modern life is filled with the loud voices of advertising, cultural influences and peer pressures telling us what we should want and what things represent success. We are bombarded with messages about how we should feel, and made to feel guilty if we don't feel that way, and we are offered objects, cars, vacations, even drugs to remedy the sense of inadequacy fostered by the purveyors of the material world.

Our own inner desires are easily drowned in this cacophony, and many of our true voices which match our true Selves were silenced when we were still young. Each of us has an occupation, profession or calling—a Work—that will truly satisfy us and allow us to do that work in the universe which we were individually created to perform.

This dissonance between what we want and what we are told we want is stressful and can lead to apathetic conformity. Courage in our convictions is the cure, success breeds success and action is the catharsis.



Be Where You Are

One of the most powerful sources of stress is to walk through our day with distracted and divided minds. Still thinking about what happened yesterday we are worried about what will come tomorrow. Constantly running behind schedule, a steering wheel in one hand and a cell phone in the other, we hardly know if we are coming or going. In this environment everything suffers, our careers, our children, our relationships and our bodies.

Worst of all, this kind of situation robs us of our lives because we literally miss every moment that flies past our inattentive minds. The cure is to simply be where we are moment to moment, minute by minute. There is no usefulness in carrying around the past with us, and no value in stealing from today's life to reach into tomorrow for yet more worries.

Take a minute several times a day and take a deep breath, look at the sky or the face of your child or a friend and smile at the miracle of every moment of being here now!



How do I know the world? By that which is in me.

Lao Tzu

I have overcome the world.

Yshua ben Joseph

We reflect what is in our minds and hearts outwards into the world. In this way we attract what we resonate with. Sometimes we draw our desires and other times we draw our worst fears into manifestation.

When we allow anger, frustration or fear to dwell within us, we will encounter angry persons, frustrating circumstances and fearful situations. If we can maintain our inner environments as loving, compassionate, accepting and fearless we more often find ourselves among like minded persons and life can seem to flow effortlessly.

Ultimately everything in the natural world can be subdued in this way and our fortunes and fates can be chosen by us. Even death, which is only a change of worlds, can be overcome in this manner.



If you scramble about in search of inner peace, you will lose your inner peace.

Lao Tzu

Great compassion makes a peaceful heart.

Gautama

A peaceful heart, makes a strong body.

Proverbs 14:30

We live in challenging times, times of great uncertainty in all areas of human endeavor, times of sudden and unpredictable violence in our midst, and times when good men and women are sent far across the world only to be killed in their efforts to preserve peace.

It is a challenge to make sense of what we find ourselves in at this point in human history, and the greater feat is maintaining our inner peace and contentment in the midst of entropy, chaos and fear.

Lao Tzu advises us to look within for our inner peace. Gautama Buddha teaches us that compassion for others will create peace within us. The Christian bible tells us that a peaceful heart will contribute to our health and well being. We cannot always influence our surroundings, but we must strive to control our inner environments.



Richard Laoshi and Simu Chris Dinsmore

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