



FIRST-SUNDAY CONTEMPLATIVE SITTING

JULY 2021

THE BLESSINGS OF SUMMERTIME

*"For the bees, the flower is the fountain of life;
For the flowers the bee is the messenger of love"*

— Gibrán

As we move into the month of July Spring has flowered into Summer with an invitation to breathe in the beauty that surrounds us. Summertime beckons us to a time of refreshment of mind and body as we enjoy the warmth of the longer days. The blessings of these days are perhaps even more poignant because of the long restrictions imposed because of the pandemic!

What is your favorite part of summer?

What are your favorite summer memories?

Spend a few minutes giving thanks ...

July also presents people living in the United States with the opportunity to come together as a nation to celebrate the 4th of July, Independence Day. It is a day to take time to celebrate and appreciate the blessing of freedom. The second sentence of the Declaration of Independence states:

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident,
that all men are created equal, that they are
endowed by their creator with certain unalienable
rights, among these are Life, Liberty and the
pursuit of Happiness."*



These words written more than two centuries ago, still resonate in our hearts and minds, not only because they are lofty ideals but because we still struggle to make them ring true for all people in the United States.

As we celebrate Independence Day once again let us continue to pray and work for Life, Liberty, and Happiness for every person in our country and the world.

CONTEMPLATIVE SITTING

*Mindfulness gives you the inner space and quietness to look deeply,
listen well, and be alive, awake and aware.*

- In stillness dwells the calm abiding Presence. I rest in you.
- There beyond reason, and thought is the One who draws me on. Be still my soul.
- Nothing to do, nowhere to go, no bells and whistles, only silence. I am free.

*Mindfulness, that deep silent encounter with the innermost center of our being.
Therein grows our capacity for the universe, for spirit, for God.*

Remember, AWARENESS is key – awareness I am sad, awareness I am cranky, awareness I am withholding, awareness I am at ease, awareness of such felt gratitude.
Awareness of just what is without blame or judgment or criticism ... Awareness is the gift.

Mindfulness Practice: Set a time of 5, 10, or more minutes.

Gently in silence, invite yourself to be with whatever you are aware of, whatever is arising in you ... thoughts or feelings ... breathing into it and out ...

- If what you are aware of is unpleasant, difficult or brings dis-ease, focus your breath there and allow the discomfort to soften and release.
- If your awareness is pleasant, receive it with a smile and release, pass it on. Each time returning to the breath, in and out.
- If your mind wanders, gently bring it back to the breath flowing in and out.

Simple mindful verses: You may choose just one to practice.

- Breathing in, I know I am breathing in. Breathing out, I know I am breathing out.
- Breathing in ... breathing out, breathing in ... breathing out, in and out.
- Breathing in, 2,3,4. Breathing out, 2,3,4.
- Breathing in, I am aware of my heart, Breathing out, I smile at my heart.

Let your imagination name any part of your body you wish; you could name friends, family, co-workers, elements of the cosmos, Earth, and other species.

My responses to this First Sunday reflection:


