

AM I THE 'NEXT BUDDHA'? **by Oshana**

A few years ago, I had an extraordinary meditation in which I experienced myself as pure love. I felt incredibly peaceful and serene. All of the usual mind chatter was gone. In a flash, I realized that each of us.....is the 'next Buddha'.

What does this mean? It means that we can choose to think, feel and act towards ourselves and others with love. Even if we are not very good at this yet, we can make this commitment anyway.

In the commitment is its fulfillment. Commitment moves mountains. To our amazement, obstacles disappear before our eyes. The love inside of us shows us everything we need to know or do.

Making this commitment does not mean that we should deny our thoughts or feelings when they are less than loving. Honoring whatever is happening completely and without judgment is the first step. The second is replacing it with love.

When I want to release a thought or feeling, I call upon God for help. Other times, I use an exercise like this one below. It can be used for any situation. I used it for self-judgment.

Self-Judgment Exercise

I was on a writing retreat in Sedona, Arizona and was sleeping in my car. A friend of mine invited me to stay at her house for a few days during my retreat. The evening that we were supposed to get together, she called to tell me that she had to postpone our plans.

My friend does spiritual work with people and often needs time to

recover. Even though I understood this completely, I could not help feeling disappointed. I used every method I knew to release this feeling, and it only grew stronger.

Then I realized that I had been judging myself harshly for feeling disappointed. It was the self-judgment I needed to release even more than the disappointment.

I pictured the self-judgment in front of me and brought it into my heart chakra, which is located between the breasts at the breastbone. To my surprise, the disappointment went away immediately!

This experience taught me the power of the heart to dissolve all fear. I know this because a few months later I was in Sedona again and the same thing happened. This time I was able to laugh and joke about it with my friend. The “charge” that had been there before was now gone.

Close your eyes and picture a situation in which you are judging yourself. Bring the self-judgment out in front of you now.

On a scale of 1 - 10, rate it with 10 being the highest.

Now bring it into your heart and let the love you have for yourself melt it away. Be with your experience for a few minutes.

Rate the self-judgment again. Where is it on a scale of 1 - 10? Repeat this exercise 2 or 3 times until you feel it get lighter or disappear completely. .

What new choices are opening for you now? Journal about them and any new insights or changes you are experiencing for 60 days. Acknowledge and nurture your new growth.

As the old aspects of our life disappear, we experience more and more love and a growing desire to serve others.

Every spiritual teacher I have known has established programs which serve people in some way. They have started hospitals, schools, animal sanctuaries, prison projects, programs for world peace and more.

With love in our hearts, we create new paradigms of service in the world. Many large institutions today are being replaced by ones which are more responsive to the needs of their participants. These new groups are founded in love and serve through love.

Our commitment to end fear on every level of human life paves the way for a new life for ourselves and others. Compassion, pouring from our hearts, enriches and enlivens all life on earth.

Our intention and desire to become love and serve through love is enough. Though it, we are given unending assistance. God polishes all of our rough edges, until one day, we know ourselves to be the 'next Buddha'.