

A PATH WITH HEART  
A MEDITATION ON STOPPING THE WAR WITHIN

Sit comfortably for a few minutes, letting your body be at rest. Let your breathing be easy and natural. Bring your attention into the present, sit quietly, and notice whatever sensations are present in your body. In particular, be aware of any sensations, tensions, or pains you may have been fighting. Do not try to change them, simply notice them with an interested and kind attention. In each area of struggle you discover, let your body relax and your heart soften. Open to whatever you experience without fighting. Let go of the battle. Breathe quietly and let it be.

Then, after a time, shift your attention to your heart and mind. Now notice what feelings and thoughts are present. In particular, be aware of any feelings or thoughts you are now struggling with, fighting, denying, or avoiding. Notice them with an interested and kind attention. Let your heart be soft. Open to whatever you experience without fighting. Let go of the battle. Breathe quietly and let it be.

Continue to sit quietly. Then cast your attention over all the battles that still exist in your life. Sense them inside yourself. If you have an ongoing struggle with your body, be aware of that. If you have been fighting inner wars with your feelings, been in conflict with your own loneliness, fear, confusion, grief, anger, or addiction, sense the struggle you have been waging. Notice the struggles in your thoughts as well. Be aware of how you have carried on the inner battles. Notice the inner armies, the inner dictators, the inner fortifications. Be aware of all that you have fought within yourself, of how long you have perpetuated the conflict.

Gently, with openness, allow each of these experiences to be present. Simply notice each of them in turn with interest and kind attention. In each area of struggle, let your body, heart, and mind be soft. Open to whatever you experience without fighting. Let it be present just as it is. Let go of the battle. Breathe quietly and let yourself be at rest. Invite all parts of yourself to join you at the peace table in your heart.