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| Adyashanti | “As human beings we maybe spend 10% of our time thinking about things we really need to think about – we spend the other 90% of our time imagining, fantasising and becoming involved in all sorts of internal stories and dramas that have no basis in truth” |
| Kalama Sutra | (from Buddha’s teachings) “Do not believe in something just because it is upheld by tradition or written in scriptures. Do not believe in something just because it is spoken by a teacher or upheld through history. Do not believe in something because it appears logical or is in concordance with your own views. When you know in yourselves that a teaching is wholesome, blameless, wise and when put into effect leads to happiness and well-being, that teaching you can believe” |
| Christina Feldman | “We feel helpless in the face of our high expectations and in our inability to attain them. We look inward for peace, compassion and clarity. We feel despondent when we discover chaos, disharmony and confusion” |
| Vanda Scaravelli | “Do not kill the instinct of the body for the glory of the pose” |
| Vanda Scaravelli | on practicing yoga “a new life came into my body...the intelligent heart” on her approach to yoga “you become intelligent and at the same time you are happy” |
| Rick Hanson | (psychologist author of ‘Buddha’s Brain’): “you really can nudge your whole being in a better direction every day” |
| Rick Hanson | “The pangs of living range from subtle loneliness and dismay to moderate stress, hurt and anger and then to intense trauma and anguish. The whole range is what we mean by the word suffering |
| John Lennon | “When I was 5, my teacher asked me, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" I said "Happy." She told me that I didn't understand the assignment. I told her she didn't understand life.” |
| Dhiravamsa | “Meditation is the means by which we sharpen our awareness and develop our insight – meditation is to be aware, to be alert, to be awake” |
| Dhiravamsa | “The Buddhist teaching emphasises the full living in the present – fully living in the present is the whole point of Buddhism” |
| Dhiravamsa | “What is the goal of meditation? A zen master said there is no goal because meditation is the goal itself. The goal of meditation is meditation as the goal of life is living” |
| Bruce Lloyd | “We mistakenly believe that happiness is something to be acquired when in reality it is something to be realized” |

- Grace Schireson "From the zen perspective three forces drive practice to a deeper level and may help you to develop confidence in your perception: faith, effort and doubt. Practice develops through the dynamic interaction between these three forces"
- Lerab Lingpa (19th century Tibetan meditation teacher) "Whenever you meditate bear in mind the phrase 'without distraction and without grasping' and put this into practice"
- Navasana "It is one of the oldest words in European languages and it has been kept in most of them. It shows that the Old people's of Europe had boats before the current languages were formed as they are. It is also, with numbers and members of the family, (and other words of daily life) one of the words that was compared in different languages in support of the theory that all the languages in Europe (except for Hungarian, Etrurian and Basque), come from the same original language. So, the word navasana, comes from the old Indoeuropean word 'nau'. In Latin there is navis (boat) and nauta (sailor), which in English give to navigate, navy and nautical. In Sanskrit the word naus (ship) - the "u" is called a semivowel, which means that it changes into a v in front of another vowel, that's why there is nautical, but navy and navasana. In Greek, it is also naus. In German there is the verb navigiren. In Russian there is navigatzia".
- Rick Hanson "The brain's negative bias intensifies unpleasant emotions such as anger, sorrow, depression, guilt and shame. It highlights past losses and failures, it downplays present abilities and it exaggerates future obstacles. Consequently the mind continually tends to render unfair verdicts about a person's character and conduct. The weight of these judgments can really wear you down".
- Henry Thoreau "I make myself rich by making my wants few"
- Native American "In my heart there are two wolves: a wolf of love and a wolf of fear. It all depends on which one I feed each day".
- Matthieu Ricard "Benevolence and compassion pervade the mind as a way of being".
- Rick Hanson "Modern life takes the jumpy distractable monkey mind we all started with and feeds it steroids".
- Rick Hanson "Paradoxically, the less your 'I' is here, the happier you are".
- Buckminster Fuller "I seem to be a verb".
- Sarah Ban Breathnach "Both abundance and lack exist simulataneously in our lives as parallel realities. It is always our own conscious choice which secret garden we will tend. When we choose not to focus on what is missing

from our lives but are grateful for the abundance that is present - love, health, food, family, friends, work, the joys of nature and personal pursuits that bring us pleasure - the wasteland of illusion falls away and we experience heaven on earth”

Christopher Germer (psychologist) – described mindfulness as “an awareness of present moment experience with acceptance”

Pema Chodron “The truth you believe and cling to makes you unavailable to hear anything new”

Christopher Willard “Our neural pathways form into ruts that are not always helpful. Imagine a dirt road that ambles across a meadow. The road is worn down over the years by trucks repeatedly driving over the same tracks. We continue to drive on this path because it has been worn down and it becomes more firmly established with each pass. This is exactly why we get stuck in old thoughts, feelings and behaviours. Now imagine for a moment that a gentle rain comes and softens the whole field. With soft ground creating a fresh and more direct path is that much easier. Mindfulness is like the rain that falls on the meadow, softening the ground to make blazing a new path easier”.

Cambodian proverb “Patience in a moment of anger will save one hundred days of tears”

Moby “Yoga has certainly turned the volume down on the more desperate thoughts”

Emilie Conrad “Sensation is not just the messenger of pain, discomfort and other emotions but is the link to an extraordinary aesthetic landscape that is our birthright... Stress and speed will rigidify tissue, compromising flow and adaptability, the very nutrients required to enjoy a healthy life and vibrant society”

Emilie Conrad “Nose breathing activates movement at several head and neck joints”

Julie Hill (spent two years up a tree, a 1000 year old redwood tree in California – protesting against logging – in early 1998 after she had been up the tree for two months, she heard radio warnings of a 70 mph storm winds coming her way – her first reaction was to climb down the tree but if she left the tree, then it would be cut down).
“I was trying to hold onto life so hard that my teeth were clenched, my fists were clenched, everything in my body was clenched completely and totally tight....I knew I was going to die...Had I remained tensed for the sixteen hours that the storm raged, I would have snapped. Instead...as I started to picture the trees in the storm, the answer began to dawn on me.The trees in the storm don't try to stand up straight and tall and erect. They allow themselves to bend and be blown with the wind. They understand the power of letting go....Those trees and those branches that try too hard to stand up strong and

straight are the ones that break....Learn the power of the trees. Let it flow. Let it go. That is the way you are going to make it through the storm. And that is the way to make it through the storms of life”.

Richard Freeman “The truth has been hidden very successfully in front of our eyes...there is no storyline in enlightenment: it is the end of the story”

Richard Freeman “When mula bandha occurs the thoughts stop”.

Richard Freeman “Right beneath the surface of experience is anxiety: dukkha”.

Buddha (in the words of Richard Freeman) “the whole path is the sangha”.

Hatha Yoga Pradipika (14th century text)

“Success comes to him who is engaged in practice. How can one get success without practice; for by merely reading books on yoga, one never gets success...Success cannot be attained by adopting a particular dress. It cannot be gained by telling tales. Practice alone is the means to success. This is true, there is no doubt” (Chapter 1 verses 67/68).

Joni Mitchell “They paved paradise to put up a parking lot”

Robert Bateman “The findings are that if children play in nature...they have less obesity, less attention deficit disorder, less depression, less suicide, less alcohol and drug abuse and less bullying and higher marks”

Yoshifumi Miyazaki (at Chiba University in Japan) “The purpose of forest therapy is to provide preventive medical effects by relieving stress and recovering the immune system diminished by stress...Stressful states can be relieved by forest therapy”.

Indian saying “Forests precede civilization. Deserts follow it”.

Richard Freeman “The one thing that will completely ruin all your happiness is your self”.

HY Pradipika “Respiration being disturbed, the mind becomes disturbed. By restraining respiration, the Yogi gets steadiness of mind” (2.2)

Norman Fischer “There is more suffering than we can know. Anxiety is suffering isn't it? There is a lot of anxiety. Not getting what you want is suffering. How many of us don't get what we want? Irritation is suffering. Anger is suffering. Having to put up with things you don't like is suffering. Knowing that you're going to have to die, and you really don't want to – that's suffering. Sickness is suffering. Old age is suffering. Not having enough money is suffering. Losing your job is suffering. Having a bad marriage is suffering. Having no marriage can be suffering if you want to have a marriage. Fear is suffering. Knowing you could lose what you think you have is suffering. Being ashamed is suffering.

Feeling disrespected is suffering. Feeling unloved is suffering. Feeling loved but not loved enough is suffering. Feeling lonely is suffering. Feeling bewildered is suffering. Being too cold, being too hot, being stuck in traffic, getting in the wrong line and the guy in front is very, very slow and the other line you could have got into is going much faster, and you could have been in the front of that line by now, but if you joined it now you would be at the end – all this is suffering. Even without talking about the earthquakes, the wars, the deprivation, the oppression, the illness and the hunger that is happening all over our world, suffering is really common. It's not a special condition. Suffering is a daily experience”.

- Michael Stone “There is a fundamental affinity between mind practices and body practices because they are both simply curves in a grand concentric circle that continually spirals in, on and through itself with no beginning or end....Buddhism and Yoga: it's important that we understand these traditions as shifting descriptions of reality and not fixed truths untouched by cultural traditions”.
- Uddalaka (a seeker in 'Yoga Vasista'): “There is no such thing as mind. I have carefully investigated, I have observed everything from the tips of my toes to the top of my head: and I have not found anything of which I could say: This is who I am”
- Chip Hartranft “Abhyasa means sit facing... Asana which means 'to be here' and also can connote 'sitting here'... Anapanasati means 'remembering to be aware as energy flows down and up”.
- Buddha (from Majjhima Nikaya) “The yoga is mindful as breath flows in, mindful as breath flows out”.
- Buddha “Whatever is impermanent is subject to change. Whatever is subject to change is subject to suffering”.
- Chamtrul Rinpoche “If you analyse it logically, in detail, you see that all physical forms break down until you get what modern physics calls a 'quark', the smallest part of an atom. Buddhists realized this 2500 years ago and call it the 'particle-less particle'. There is space between the quarks – shivering waves of energy but they never touch. This pure energy is 'emptiness' and that is the ultimate truth”.
- The Karmapa “Nothing is beyond the realm of possibility yet if we get sick or something bad happens, we are surprised. We never know when disturbing things will happen or the degree of intensity. There is no reliable consistency in life. So if we cultivate the view that 'everything is possible' the mind can be more prepared and be calm and spacious when the unexpected happens”.

- Michael Merzenich scientist has many claims for neuroplasticity including: “brain exercises may be as useful as drugs to treat diseases as severe as schizophrenia; that plasticity exists from the cradle to the grave; and that radical improvements in cognitive functioning- how we think, learn, perceive and remember - are possible even in the elderly”.
- Steve Jobs “Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life. Don’t be trapped by dogma – which is living with the results of other people’s thinking. Don’t let the noise of others’ opinions drown out your own inner voice” (2005)
- Steve Jobs "Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything – all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure – these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart." (2006)
- Richard Davidson “Because increased training in compassion meditation results in greater activation of areas linked to love and empathy, it suggests that emotions might be transformed by mental training. Science has long held that emotional regulation and emotional response are static abilities that don’t change much once you reach adulthood. But our findings clearly indicate that meditation can change the function of the brain in an enduring way.”
- Patanjali (2.2) “Great is the matter of birth and death; impermanence surrounds us. Be aware each moment; do not waste your life. Yoga's purpose or goal is to cultivate the experience of equanimity (samadhi) and to unravel the causes of negativity.”
- Mitch Albon (from ‘Have a Little Faith’): “The secret of happiness: be satisfied...be grateful...that’s it. I am in love with hope.”
- Michael Stone “We are so restless...Breathing bind practices bind our attention (citta) to the feeling of breath (prana), quieting the distractions of storytelling”.
- Paul Hawken (environmentalist and writer) “In our lungs are oxygen molecules breathed by every type of creature ever to have lived on earth”.
- Michael Stone “We need a well-rounded practice of ethics, self-care, attention to body and breath, and meditation so that all aspects of our lives are touched by practice”.
- Michael Stone “We can all feel what it’s like to rehash old stories of ourselves and others that are stale. Yet we continue to do so through an addiction to

gluing old stories as we paste ourselves together moment to moment , like some kind of collage. After a time it becomes hard to shift the groove of these stories. The coherence of a story depends on repetition. What is so powerful about attentiveness as a practice is that it disrupts these habitual stories so we can enter our lives more fully”.

Michael Stone (translating second sutra ‘yoga citta..’) “Yoga is the intimacy that’s left when there is no misidentification with the elaborations of the mind”.

Dogen “Days and nights, in walking, standing still, sitting and lying down, if you always contemplate in this way, you will know that your own body is like the moon in water, the reflection in a mirror, the heat waves in a hot day, the echo in the empty valley. You cannot say it is a being because even if you try to catch it you cannot see its substance. You cannot say it is non-being either because it is clearly in front of your eyes”.

Michael Stone “Yoga reminds us through aparigraha (nonacquisitiveness) and just about every other teaching that we need to be ‘other oriented”.

Suzuki Roshi “Because we respect ourselves, because we put faith in our life, we sit. That is our practice”.

Annie Lennox “The future hasn't happened yet and the past is gone. So I think the only moment we have is right here and now, and I try to make the best of those moments, the moments that I'm in.

Buddha “Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else: you are the one who gets burned.”

Yun-Men (Zen master in 10th century) – when asked “what is the highest teaching of the Buddha?” he replied “cake”.

Stephen Batchelor “The mindfulness sharpened my attention to everything that was going on within and around me. My body became a tingling, pulsing mass of sensations. At times when I sat outside I felt as though the breeze were blowing through me. The sheen of the grass was more brilliant, the rustling leaves were like a chorus in the endlessly unfolding symphony. At the same time there was a deep stillness and poise at the core of this vital awareness. The experience did not last in all its intensity for very long” (referring to Goenka Vipassana retreat).

Buddha “I took very little food...because of eating so little, my body reached a state of extreme emaciation...By this racking practice of austerities I have not attained any higher state of mind or any distinction in knowledge and vision. Could there be another way?”

- Stephen Batchelor “The aim of mindfulness is to know suffering fully. It entails paying calm, unflinching attention to whatever impacts the organism, be it the song of a lark or the scream of a child, the bubbling of a playful idea or a twinge in the lower back. You attend not just to the outward stimuli themselves but equally to your inward reactions to them. You do not condemn what you see as your failings nor applaud what you regard as success. You notice things come, you notice them go. Over time, the practice becomes less a self-conscious exercise in meditation done at fixed periods each day and more a sensibility that infuses one’s awareness at all times”.
- Susan Charles (American psychologist) “In marriage studies have shown that it takes five positives combined with one negative before someone will consider their marriage a happy one. If you have only two positives and one negative, that negative will wipe out the positive and people will consider their marriage a bad one...the negative is much more powerful than the positive”.
- Saying “Yesterday is history. Tomorrow a mystery. Today is a gift... That's why it's called the present”.
- J. Krishnamurti: “It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society.”
- Bruce Lipton “Be present to what is going on....my thoughts influence my brain and the brain releases chemistry that matches my thoughts – the more stress you are under, the more bad chemistry you experience...”
- Bruce Lipton “Today’s world is 24/7 run from the tiger – a negative thought can not only make you ill, it can kill you...scared to death”.
- Bruce Lipton “Your life is a reflection of what you see...cells automatically move away from toxicity and towards nutrition”.
- Bruce Lipton “We are all cells in the same body and when we work together we will create magic on this earth like nothing has ever been seen before...I am very optimistic”
- Narayan Grady “Calmness offers the possibility of responding out of wisdom and compassion, rather than out of anger – dharma practice encourages receptivity not passivity, equanimity not indifference”.
- Mark Twain “Anger is an acid that can do more harm to the vessel in which it is stored than to anything on which it is poured”.
- Ken McLeod (has completed two three year retreats in the Tibetan Buddhism lineage) “When the level of energy in the attention is higher than the level of energy in what you are experiencing, say anger or love, then you can experience the anger or love without getting lost in it”.

- Lama Yeshe “We love chocolate. Perhaps so much that on some level we may believe ‘as long as I have chocolate, I’ll be happy’. This is the power of attachment at work. But sometimes we can’t get our hands on any chocolate. And when the chocolate disappears, we get upset: ‘now I am unhappy’. But it’s not the absence of chocolate that’s making us unhappy – it’s our fixed ideas. Chocolate like all our pleasures and all our problems is impermanent: chocolate comes, chocolate goes. And that’s natural. When we understand that, our relationship to chocolate can change and when we deeply understand that, we truly will have no fear”.
- Douglas Jones “The neuropsychological evidence shows that the right hemisphere pays wide-open attention to the world, seeing the whole, whereas the left hemisphere is adept at focusing on a detail. In communication the right hemisphere recognizes all that is nonverbal, metaphorical, ironic or humorous, where the left is literalistic. The right is at ease with ambiguity and the idea that opposites may be compatible. Without the right hemisphere, we are socially and emotionally insensitive, and have an impaired understanding of beauty, art and religion. The left hemisphere is relatively rigid, rule-bound and abstract in its view. What makes us happy is not wealth but the reciprocal relationship between ourselves and one another, ourselves and the world. This is something the right hemisphere alone understands, since it is the ground of empathy and interconnectedness, where the left hemisphere is concerned with manipulation and sees the world atomistically”.
- Jan Bays The Dalai Lama was asked is it ever possible for a Buddhist teacher to have sexual contact with a student and not cause harm? He pondered and then replied that the exception might be a person possessed of such clarity, one who had transcended the duality of attraction and aversion, that he or she could drink urine and eat feces.
- Jack Kornfield Meditation teacher Larry Rosenberg went to practice with Zen Master Seung Sahn in Korea. During the journey he undertook a pilgrimage to other masters and temples, and while traveling on a remote road he came across a particularly elegant Buddhist shrine, or stupa, at the base of a mountain. Next to it was a sign, “Way to the Most Beautiful Buddha in All of Korea,” and an arrow pointing to the thousand-step path up the mountain. Larry decided to climb, hiking up the steps until he reached the top. The view was breathtaking in every direction. The simple Zen stone pagoda matched the elegance of the one below. But in place of the Buddha on the altar there was nothing, only empty space and the gorgeous green-hilled vista below. When he went closer, at the empty altar was a plaque that read, “If you can’t see the Buddha here, you had better go down and practice some more.”
- Anais Nin “We don’t see things as they are, we see them as we are.”

- Bernie Clark “Balance requires consciously honouring both the yin and yang energies of life. Yang is about change, movement, passion, climbing great heights, and accomplishing great deeds. Yin is about acceptance, allowing, stillness, enjoying the present moment and doing small everyday tasks as if they were great deeds.”
- Robert Walser (Swiss novelist in 20th century – from ‘Jakob von Gunten’): “Who can ever feel at ease when he cares about the world’s praise and admiration?”
- Judith Leif “The point is not simply to be accomplished meditators but to change our whole approach to life. Meditation is not merely a useful technique or mental gymnastic, but part of a balanced system designed to change the way we go about things at the most fundamental level. In this context, it is a way of exposing and uprooting the core problems of grasping and ego-clinging that separate us from one another and cause endless pain.”
- Yogi Mammoyanand “Contentment is a virtue when it is applied to material greed. The niyama of contentment does not actually apply to the spiritual desires of the aspirant. To ascend in the realms of spirituality, contentment is only a hindrance. A yogi should always remind himself ‘neti-neti’ (not this, not this)”
- Yogi Mammoyanand “Physics is only the little brother of spirituality. Physics constantly follows and endeavours to prove all that spirituality is talking about... As my guru often said ‘spirituality without science is merely a lie and science without spirituality has no purpose’”
- Yogi Mammoyanand “In my opinion, the greatest misfortune that can happen to a yogi is his followers. Followers inevitably raise the status of a yogi to a level that is difficult to resist. The more people praise and raise him, the more he gets carried away with the glory of his own false image”
- Glenn Black “Asana is not a panacea or a cure-all. In fact, if you do it with ego or obsession, you’ll end up causing problems”.
- Thomas Hannah (body therapists) “When you are young you go over and under fences, when you get ‘old’ you go around.”
- Anthony Lopodota “One day I was asked by a student why I do asana practice. My reply was because I like it, and so that I can put my pants on by myself when I am eighty”.
- Caitlin Moran “...Personally I like the fact we are going to die – there’s nothing more exhilarating than waking up every morning and going ‘WOW! THIS IS IT! THIS IS REALLY IT!... Death is not a release, but an incentive”.

- Nurse (in palliative care revealing the top five regrets): “1. I wish I’d had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me. This was the most common regret of all. Health brings a freedom very few realise, until they no longer have it. 2. I wish I didn’t work so hard. This came from every male patient that I nursed. They missed their children’s youth and their partner’s companionship. 3. I wish I’d had the courage to express my feelings. Many people suppressed their feelings in order to keep peace with others. As a result, they settled for a mediocre existence and never became who they were truly capable of becoming. 4. I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends. Often they would not truly realise the full benefits of old friends until their dying weeks and it was not always possible to track them down. There were many deep regrets about not giving friendships the time and effort that they deserved. Everyone misses their friends when they are dying. 5. I wish that I had let myself be happier. This is a surprisingly common one. Many did not realise until the end that happiness is a choice. Life is a choice. It is YOUR life. Choose consciously, choose wisely, choose honestly. Choose happiness”.
- Douglas Phillips “Our practice is to meet life exactly as it is and to notice whatever fear, anger, or doubt gets in the way of direct intimate contact with this moment, bringing attention to that as well. Rather than changing something or seeking to get somewhere we imagine we should be, practice is about seeing clearly exactly how things really are and how we relate to them. Practice thus becomes an increasing intimacy with life just as it is, and there is nothing—including the ideas that we should be getting something or somewhere—that is unworthy of the clear, nonjudgmental attention we call mindfulness. We often imagine that we have to solve or change what is there in our life, when the solution is found in the full attention to just what is here at this moment. The practice of moment-to-moment allowing—bringing full attention to when we are clinging and when we are not—is the practice of liberation. It is this full attention that heals the fragmentation of our lives”.
- Harada Roshi “The Samadhi of the Buddha isn’t about waiting for the future but finding joy no matter where we are, no matter how difficult or miserable our circumstances. It is about living wholly and totally in each instant. Our lives cannot be lived in a vague way. We have to keep sight on each footstep and live fully and thoroughly in each second”.
- Stan Goldberg “as intense heat and pounding are necessary for creating the highest quality swords, so are sharp points for shaping our lives”.
- Margit Bleecker (neurologist) “the brain is like a muscle... Those who are cognitively more active, exercise more and are more socially connected have more cognitive reserve”.

- Shelli Kesler (scientist) “The best news is that neuroplasticity exists across the lifespan – you’re never too old to improve your brain function”.
- Santiago Cajal (Spanish researcher and Nobel Prize winner said this in 1913): “In the adult brain nervous pathways are fixed and immutable. Everything may die; nothing may be regenerated”.
- Fred Gage (the impresario of neuroscience – one of the most well known neuroscientists working today) “The brain is an organ. It is tissue that is changing all the time and it is regulated by our environment. Our brains are affected by what we do... The thing we have to remember is that neurogenesis is not an event, it is a process – and there’s no question, physical activity makes new brain cells proliferate”.
- Chogyam Trungpa “I don’t think that Buddhism should be regarded as a religion, but as a social realization”.
- Chogyam Trungpa “Push-button elevators, prepackaged meat, air conditioning, flush toilets, private funerals, retirement programs, mass production, weather satellites, bulldozers, fluorescent lighting, nine-to-five jobs, television – all are attempts to create a manageable, safe, predictable, pleasurable world”.
- Chogyam Trungpa “The practice of meditation is based not on how we would like things to be, but on what is... We are talking about a very basic act: sitting on the ground, assuming a good posture and developing our sense of our spot, our place on this earth”.
- Fabrice Midal “A straight back represents the courage we need to confront our own existence, while an open, vulnerable chest expresses the gentleness we need to be able to reach it. The meditation posture should reflect the attitude of openness and attention to each moment”.
- Chogyam Trungpa instructing for meditation: “sit down and be aware of space... Meditation practice has this particular quality of providing a pure gap and not feeding on concepts of any kind”.
- Fabrice Midal “To describe this path Chogyam Trungpa often used the classic image of comparing hinayana to building the foundation of the house, while Mahayana is building the house itself. Tantra is then placing a golden roof on it”.
- Fabrice Midal “This opening that constitutes a human opening is gentleness and sensitivity. Whatever our culture, race or education, humans are born with this basic tenderness, this capacity to be touched by the world, to feel sad and to cry, to feel joyful. These are extremely simple qualities (which we may or may not recognize and cultivate). When we are genuine, we appreciate the world. This can be as simple as the way the bark curves on a tree, a mangy dog biting its tail, clouds crossing

the sky and announcing snow, the fact of missing a train that pulls away the very moment you arrive on the platform, or a particularly well-performed piece of music. Suddenly, we are moved. This is the germ of an opening that can be termed the experience of basic goodness”.

Rita Mae Brown “The reward for conformity is that everyone likes you except yourself.”

Pico Iyer “We have more and more ways to communicate but less and less to say – partly because we’re so busy communicating and we’re rushing to meet so many deadlines that we hardly register that what we need most are lifelines”.

Thought for the day “Love dissolves hate. Kindness melts cruelty. Compassion calms passion. Co-operation evokes love and when we bow, others bend. This creates harmony”.

Michael Stone “In the Lotus Sutra it is said that the quickest way to becoming a Buddha is not through extensive retreats or chanting but through seeing others as a Buddha. If you see others as Buddha, you are a Buddha”.

Pema Chodron “There's a common misunderstanding among all the human beings who have ever been born on the earth that the best way to live is to try to avoid pain and just try to get comfortable. You can see this even in insects and animals and birds. All of us are the same. A much more interesting, kind, adventurous, and joyful approach to life is to begin to develop our curiosity, not caring whether the object of our inquisitiveness is bitter or sweet. To lead a life that goes beyond pettiness and prejudice and always wanting to make sure that everything turns out on our own terms, to lead a more passionate, full, and delightful life than that, we must realize that we can endure a lot of pain and pleasure for the sake of finding out who we are and what this world is, how we tick and how our world ticks, how the whole thing just is. If we're committed to comfort at any cost, as soon as we come up against the least edge of pain, we're going to run; we'll never know what's beyond that particular barrier or wall or fearful thing.”

Metta Sutta, Sutta Nipata I.8

May all beings be happy.
May they live in safety and joy.
All living beings,
Whether weak or strong,
Tall, stout, average, or short,
Seen or unseen, near or distant,
Born or to be born,
May they all be happy.

Shenpen Hookham “It is not always clear to us how much thinking is necessary before

dropping thinking and resting in simplicity. Sometimes dropping thinking is a thought that we use to try to impose simplicity on a complex situation. You have to look to see if and when you might be doing that”.

- Everett Koop “There is no question that the things we think have a tremendous impact upon our bodies”.
- Swami Satyananda “Unfortunately most people have a mind that is in a continual state of disturbance and fluctuation”.
- Nietzsche “A very popular error: having the courage of your convictions. The point is to have the courage for an attack on your convictions!”
- Vanessa Veselka (Novelist) “Meditation leads me back to the present and then almost nothing is unbearable”.
- Godfrey Devereux "Yoga is not moral philosophy, existential enhancement or behavioural correction. It is a doorway into the vibrant wisdom of life itself that takes place through the agency of internal enquiry (svadhyaya). The eight limbs of yoga are not techniques. They are dimensions of human experience and awareness, accessed by deep self enquiry. The portals of effective self enquiry are the first two limbs of yoga, Yama and Niyama. Sensitivity, honesty, openness, intimacy, acceptance, integrity, trust, passion, enquiry and total-absorption are not behavioural imperatives, nor moral injunctions. They are lenses to focus our attention on that which is actually happening in and as body and mind..."
- Buddha “If beings knew, as I know, the results of giving and sharing, they would not eat without having given, nor would the stain of selfishness overcome their minds. Even if it were their last bite, their last mouthful, they would not eat without having shared, if there were someone to receive their gift”. (Itivuttaka 26)
- Buddha “When going forward and returning, he makes himself fully alert; when looking toward and looking away...when bending and extending his limbs...when carrying his outer cloak, his robe and his bowl...when eating, drinking, chewing and savouring...when urinating and defecating...when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, talking and remaining silent, he makes himself fully alert”. (Majjhima Nikaya 10)
- Dale Wright (Professor of Religious Studies) “There may be no greater sense of fulfillment in life than the simultaneous feelings of human interconnection and pure freedom that arise from an authentic act of selfless generosity”.
- Thich Nhat Hanh When asked “what do we most need to do to save our world?” – he responded: “what we most need to do is to hear within us the sounds

of the earth crying”.

Josh Schrei

“Our practice is to construct our lives so that there is literally no place in our hearts for a lie to hide... It is completely impossible to be spiritually clear when we are engaged in lying”.

Michael Stone

“Karma is not just something that happens to us: it’s the outcome of our choices and their consequences. We must cultivate responsibility for our actions and their consequences – not just at an individual level, but also at a social, political, economic and ecological level. This is the lived experience of karma”.

Carl Rogers

“The facts are friendly”.

Bodhin Kjolhede

(abbot at Rochester Zen Centre) “What drives some teachers to repeatedly put their own appetites ahead of their students’ welfare? ...we have to suspect that repeat offenders have some hole within them that they are trying compulsively to fill, an aching sense of incompleteness that drives them to act against their students’ interests and their own better nature. To see persistent misconduct on the part of a teacher as the flailings of a wounded healer may help us to understand and even forgive him for it, but their behaviour can’t be excused. Too many people get hurt. Many years ago, some of us were pressing a teacher about his series of sexual involvements with his students, finally prompting this jaunty reply from him: ‘you know, just because you’re enlightened doesn’t mean you’re dead below the waist’. Message: if you have a healthy libido, you can be excused for acting on your urges. Worst of all is when such teachers let themselves be referred to as zen ‘masters’. No one deserves such a title until having earned it through long-term self-mastery”.

Michael Stone

“The physiology of letting go is in the tongue. At the top of the inhale the soft palette lifts, and the temporal bones are released. If you keep your eyes looking forward and a little down the suboccipitals release. It’s important to keep the eyes steady and soft. The internal aspect of alignment: release of the tongue and softness/stillness in the eyes. This is the physiology of non-clinging”

Robert Birnberg

“The classical texts describe the essential qualities of a good Yoga teacher. Sthitadhi/mauni: mentally and emotionally stable, quiet. Someone reflective and responsible. The teacher shouldn’t leak or complain to the students about their own problems (often the mark of a teacher-less teacher), A good teacher has the ability to listen with complete attention, empathize, and give appropriate, non-reactive advice while remaining detached from the results. Jnani/sampradaya sevaka: authoritative, yet knows their limits, has a teacher of their own. A teacher should be quite knowledgeable, yet truthful about what they don’t know. They should demonstrate a deep understanding of the Yoga Sutras, and a comfortable command of Yoga’s various tools,

applications, adaptations, modifications and their effects. While no one is expected to know everything, a teacher connected to a teacher connected to a teacher has access to the entire lineage's body of knowledge and experience, and is constantly having their knowledge and skills reshaped, refined and tested for accuracy”.

- Tilopa (11thc Tibetan teacher) “Do nothing with the body but relax”
- Rumi “Out beyond ideas of right doing and wrong doing, there is a field, I'll meet you there”
- Will Johnson “When you're lost in thought, you're tense in body. It follows that if you can consciously work with the body during your sitting practice to soften and relax the tensions and allow more resilient and natural movement to accompany the passage of the breath, the chatter of the mind can be reduced, and your practice can start going really deep.”
- Lucy Tobin “According to work by academics at Leeds Metropolitan University, double-jointed football players have a higher injury risk than their less flexible team-mates... one third of the group were found to have benign joint hypermobility syndrome which meant they had at least four abnormally flexible joints... At the end of the season they found that the double-jointed players suffered 72 injuries at a rate of 22 injuries for every 1,000 hours on the pitch in match play and training – by contrast, the 36 ‘normal’ players picked up injuries at a rate of a little over 6 per 1000 hours spent in matches and drills...” (Guardian 28/2/2012)
- Doug Keller “To say that yoga began as a sex cult is like saying that Christianity originated with sado-masochistic rituals of simulated drowning (i.e. baptism). In other words, it is a statement that is so wrong in so many ways, despite containing a tiny grain of historical accuracy, that it is a fool's errand to even try to disentangle fact from foolishness.”
- Alan Clements (after long meditation retreat) “I fell in love with the simplicity of just being. There was no hurry. No place to go. No persona to uphold. No bills to pay. No appointments to keep. No one to please. Nothing to say. Nothing to fear. It was my first real glimpse of the natural mind – a mind free of conceptual involvement, at ease within its own uncontrived nature, abiding in a space of undistracted presence. Feeling life so immediately and fully brought a natural stature to everything you did. Suddenly everything opened – everything mattered: the way you sipped tea, the way you bathed, the way you relaxed the habit of outcome. The day became more like art than practice”.
- Noa Jones “The simple task of staying awake is one of the mightiest challenges of meditation practice”.

- Aura Glaser “We sometimes imagine that if we just lead our spiritual life the ‘right’ way, we won’t encounter life’s sharp edges. We will be on a direct path to ever-increasing tranquility and joy. We are not prepared for all of our unfinished business being exposed, all of our unresolved trauma pushing up from the depths like a geyser of black mud”.
- Rita Gross “This process of becoming comfortable with difference is very difficult, but it is essential because it allows us to move past competition and hostility”.
- Segyu Rinpoche “Curiosity, engagement and awareness bring growth – resistance or thinking you know only perpetuates your way of being and your patterns. It’s up to you”.
- Gregor Maehle “If we are in a state of calmness for one hour, this in itself will set a tendency for the future. If we then get agitated, aggressive or depressed, this will also call for repetition due to the imprints it leaves. If we constantly put in place imprints of calmness, the mind will slowly let go of its agitation and dullness and become calm. We have to invite the mind gently into stillness. In order to keep the mind calm, one has to supply a steady stream of imprints of stillness. This is what many meditation techniques do”.
- Tim Miller (61 years old – practicing/teaching ashtanga since early 1970s): “I’m interested in what works, what is effective...I’m not stuck in some model that says, ‘You can’t do that, that’s against the rules.’”

