

# **Stand Up For Compassion: A Free Course and Resource for Navigating Uncertain Times with Jack Kornfield**

## **Chapter 1: Choosing Your Own Spirit: Navigating Uncertainty, Suffering, and Change with a Mindful Loving Presence Amidst it All**

### **Chapter 1.1: Guided Meditation Practice: A Compassionate and Mindful Presence Through It All: Taking Your Noble Seat Amidst Life's Worldly Winds**

In this opening chapter, Jack leads a guided meditation aimed at helping us decompress from the intensity of the news media onslaught, teaching us to nobly take our seat no matter the outside circumstances. Helping us remain centered and stable in loving kindness through all of life's Eight Worldly Winds, Jack takes the long view, and invites us all to do the same.

- Decompressing from the intensity of the news, politics, and social media
- Taking your noble seat amidst life's Eight Worldly Winds and play of opposites
- Feeling a stable and centered presence wherever you are
- Resting in a quiet, open, mindful loving awareness
- Feeling a true sense of loving kindness right here
- Becoming consciousness itself, vast, timeless, spacious
- Witnessing the arising and passing of all, and holding it all in love

*“The seasons turn, elections come and go, whole nations and civilization arise for a time and pass. You are the witness, the timeless consciousness, the loving awareness that sees the mystery of arising and passing, and holds it all with love.” – Jack Kornfield*

*“With loving kindness, notice the energy of the mind—the stream of thoughts and plans, ideas, worries, imaginings, analysis, understandings, stories, images—a river of thoughts, feelings, images, and words. You can hold it all in loving kindness and say, ‘Thank you mind for all that worry just trying to keep me safe, I’m okay just now, you can relax.’” – Jack Kornfield*

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## **Chapter 1.2: Mindful Loving Awareness is Big Enough to Hold It All: Quietening the Mind, Tending the Heart, Listening to the Cries, and Responding with Wisdom**

In this chapter, Jack explores how we can wisely navigate the changes of the world, particularly fear, uncertainty, and suffering. Helping us step out of the body of fear, he guides us to quiet the mind, tend the heart, listen to the cries of the world, and see through the eyes of wisdom. How can we handle these times? Mindful loving awareness is big enough to hold it all.

- Navigating change and impermanence regarding politics, media, and fear
- How mindful loving awareness is big enough to hold it all
- Quietening the mind, tending the heart, listening to the cries, and responding with the heart of wisdom

- Stepping out of the body of fear and stepping into the timeless reality of love, presence, and a vast vision
- Poetry, art, astonishment, and the human experience

*“This time calls for us to take a step back, center, see anew with the heart, and the eyes of understanding.” – Jack Kornfield*

*“Mindful loving awareness is big enough to hold it all.” – Jack Kornfield*

*"It helps me not just to speak of politics, but to remember art, poetry, and other ways of seeing." – Jack Kornfield*

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### **Chapter 1.3: The Wisdom of Uncertainty, Suffering, and Impermanence: The Unshakable Freedom and Tenderness of Accepting Change**

In this chapter, Jack shares deep Buddhist wisdom to help dislodge our worries and open us to the freedom that is our birthright. Laying out the reality of uncertainty, suffering, and impermanence, Jack shares the inner-medicine, the tenderness and freedom that comes when we let go and accept the ever-changing nature of reality.

- What Ajahn Chah’s wisdom for current politics would be
- Opening to change, honoring impermanence, facing suffering
- Annica, Dukkha, Anatta, —the wisdom of uncertainty, suffering, and impermanence
- Navigating the Great Turning of the World
- Climate change, A.I., technology, and evolution

- Shifting from exploitive and consumer consciousness to one of interdependence and mutual care
- Facing the dew-like reality of nature with a loving tenderness

*"It's not about an election one way or the other, they come and go. There's such huge other forces happening right now—climate change, artificial intelligence, nuclear fusion energy—huge possibilities and huge problems. As T.S. Elliot says, 'In my end is my beginning.' Everything that turns offers a new openness and beginning for something else." – Jack Kornfield*

*"There is a freedom when we accept that things change." – Jack Kornfield*

*"So, take a seat in the freedom outside of time, open to change, allow the dance of it all." – Jack Kornfield*

*"Dukkha is part of life, did you not notice? And when we open to it, something happens – we realize it's not personal." – Jack Kornfield*

*"Dew evaporates, and all this world is dew... so dear, so refreshing, so fleeting." – Zen Master Issa*

*"Our freedom comes when we realize our dukkha is not a mistake." – Jack Kornfield*

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#### **Chapter 1.4: You Get to Choose Your Own Spirit in Every Moment: Creating a World of Compassion, Kindness, Courage, and Mutual Care**

In this chapter, Jack dives deeper into uncertainty, suffering, and impermanence, namely how these three often difficult marks actually lead to freedom and compassion. Through spelunking the thresholds of birth and death, Jack helps us stand up to current politics like Arjuna accepting his duty as a warrior in the Bhagavad Gita. From here, Jack reminds us that in every moment we get to choose our own spirit, and that human history is actually one of kindness, compassion, courage, and mutual care.

- How Annica, Dukkha, Anatta connect with Nirvana and unshakeable freedom
- Exploring sacred thresholds of birth and death
- Dissolving the illusion of separation and realizing we are interwoven with it all
- Politics as a form of ritualized warfare
- Standing up like Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita
- Human history as also containing compassion, courage, and sweetness

*“The sense of separation is a fiction; we are interwoven in the breath of the earth.” – Jack Kornfield*

*"We know that we're not separate. You know it especially when you're on the mountaintop looking down after some amazing hike, or listening to a piece of music that transports you beyond the small sense of self. You know it when you make love, or take psychedelics, or have some profound meditation, or dance until you disappear. We all know it." – Jack Kornfield*

*“You get to choose your spirit no matter what happens—what greater gift could there be?” – Jack Kornfield*

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## **Chapter 1.5: Remembering Who You Truly Are: Finding Freedom From Fear by Turning Towards What is Difficult**

In this chapter, Jack helps each of us remember who we truly are, uncovering the innate dignity and nobility at the center of our being. Exploring the transformative power of becoming a modern Bodhisattva of compassion, he shares how we can find freedom from fear by turning towards what is difficult.

- Remembering who you truly are—your innate dignity and nobility
- Seeing from a place of unconditional love and freedom
- Finding refuge in Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha
- Living this life as a modern Bodhisattva of compassion
- Finding freedom from fear by turning towards what is difficult

*“We forget the kisses sometimes and remember the trauma and wounds, but there’s so much more.” – Jack Kornfield*

*“With freedom from fear, we turn towards the difficult and see it as the perfect place to care, to build compassion, to transform.” – Jack Kornfield*

*“When we see with the eyes of the Dharma, we see the possibility of living in a different way.” – Jack Kornfield*

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## **Chapter 1.6: The Transformative Power of Community and the Great Freedom on Interdependence: Cultivating Trust, Faith, and Collective Wisdom**

In this chapter, Jack illuminates the true power of our collective wisdom and mutual care. Diffusing loneliness by helping us remember our inexorable connection to all beings, Saints, Gods, nature, the Great Mystery, and each other—Jack reignites our passion for touching this world with kindness, tenderness, and faith. This is the great freedom of interdependence—recognizing that you are never alone!

- Remembering the power of collective wisdom and mutual care
- Our inexorable connection to all the great Saints, Gods, and to the Great Mystery, and each other
- Touching this world and your life with kindness
- Trusting others and having faith in community
- The great freedom of interdependence—you are not alone, we are always in this together

*"Community is born into us; we are born into community." – Jack Kornfield*

*"Those who do not have faith in others will not be able to stand on their own. Those who are suspicious will always be lonely." – Zen Quote*

*"This is the great freedom—you're not alone, you're supported and loved, and part of this no matter what." – Jack Kornfield*

*“You are free—you are free to do beautiful things with your life.” –  
Jack Kornfield*

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## **Chapter 1.7: Guided Meditation Practice: Becoming the Great Tree of Compassion: Rooted, Steady, and Stable**

In this chapter, Jack leads a guided meditation for us each to become a rooted, strong, stable, and steady tree that can withstand any of the Worldly Winds and difficult circumstances of life. Bringing in a sense of calm and ease breath by breath, he invites us to relax and notice how our body is breathing along with the body of the Earth. From here, he uncovers each of our birthright as consciousness itself—mindful loving awareness.

- Sitting with stability and steadiness, as if you were a rooted tree
- Setting an intention to quiet the mind and tend the heart
- Inviting in a sense of calm and ease beyond the thoughts and emotions
- Allowing your body to breath along with the body of the Earth
- Becoming the mindful loving awareness, the field of awareness, consciousness itself

*“Let yourself feel the steadiness of the earth, almost as if you have roots going down like you are a great tree—steady, rooted, and still, even when the wind blows through the branches.” –  
Jack Kornfield*



*“As you feel each breath, there will be a stream of thoughts, sensations in the body, sounds and emotions—let them arise and fall like waves of the ocean around the breath.” – Jack Kornfield*

*“For a time, just feel how your body breathes with the body of the Earth.” – Jack Kornfield*

*“You are the Buddha, steady and calm, the loving witness to it all.” – Jack Kornfield*

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### **Chapter 1.8: Reading Materials and Journal Prompts: Staying Steady and Hopeful Amidst The Great Turning: Always Look for the Helpers**

Dear ones,

We are at a major time of change on this earth, what JoAnna Macy calls, ‘The Great Turning.’ This opportunity asks if we as a species are ready to shift from an exploitive, consumer-consciousness to one of interdependence and mutual care. To actually do this, we must first remember that suffering is not the end of the story. It’s never been about an election one way or the other, they come and go. There’s such huge other forces happening right now—climate change, artificial intelligence, nuclear fusion energy—huge possibilities and huge problems.

***“In my end is my beginning.” – T.S. Elliot***

Everything that turns offers a new openness and beginning for something else. There’s a freedom when we accept that things change. We take our seat outside of the small self, we stop resisting, and we fully open into the great movement of life. We

finally reconnect to the vast mystery of life, the cosmos, consciousness, and the heart. We start to see the light shining through the darkness.

***“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, “Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.” – Mr. Rogers***

It's true, difficult times call on our best spirit. We must remind ourselves that in uncertain times our own steadiness can become a sanctuary for others. Like the strings of a violin being played will resonate with another nearby on a table, our resonance of peaceful stillness and steadiness spreads out in every direction, touching the hearts of all beings near and far, that they might find a deeper quiet, a loving presence.

The children's Bodhisattva, Mr. Rogers, describes how his mother taught him to see the disasters of the world in a new way. Instead of focusing just on the tragedy and loss: look for the helpers. Expand your gaze to take in all the people who are rushing in from all sides to offer their care, assistance, and support. Amidst the hard times let yourself see the wave of compassion that arises around the suffering—the human heart that can not be stopped.

Through aiming our attention and energy at the helpers, focusing on the lamp shining in the darkness, we begin to shift our whole being towards warmth and generosity. By embodying hope and compassion, we become the lamp, the guiding light for others and ourselves to remember the way back home to the wholeness of love in each of our hearts.

***“When the crowded refugee boats met with storms or pirates, if everyone panicked, all would be lost. But if even one person remained calm and centered, it was enough.***

***They showed the way for everyone to survive.” – Thich Nhat Hanh***

I can hear my friend Krishna Das singing the Zen prayer given to him from Roshi Bernie Glassman:

***“Calling out to hungry hearts, everywhere through endless time, you who wander you who thirst, I offer you this Bodhi Mind. Calling out to hungry spirits, everywhere through endless time, calling out to hungry hearts, all the lost and the left behind. Gather around and share this meal, your joy and your sorrow I make it mine.”***

With metta,  
Jack

**Journal Prompts:**

- *What are small practices and perspectives I can incorporate each day to stay steady and grounded amidst change?*
- *Note how you will handle fear next time it arises in your body*
- *Look for the helpers—name three acts of kindness you saw recently (you can include your own!)*

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**Chapter 2: A Spiritual Rudder for Navigating Difficult Times**

**Chapter 2.1: Guided Meditation Practice: Mindful Courageous Love: Opening the Great Heart of Compassion**

In this chapter, Jack leads a guided meditation helping us open to the great heart of compassion at the center of our being. After

helping us remember that the circle of compassion is not complete until it includes ourselves, Jack invites us to breathe mindful courageous love into the world, and begin to see the beautiful child of the spirit in everyone we meet.

- Compassion as the tenderness of the heart when it encounters suffering
- Including yourself in the circle of compassion
- Opening to the great field of care and offering compassion to all within it
- Offering compassion, kindness, mercy, forgiveness, to yourself and others
- Seeing the beautiful child of the spirit in all beings, their tenderness and innocence
- Breathing a courageous love for our human family

*"Compassion is the tenderness of the heart when it encounters suffering in ourselves or the beings around us." – Jack Kornfield*

*"The circle of compassion is not complete until it includes yourself." – Jack Kornfield*

*"Breathe out a courageous love, a strength of compassion that extends into the whole fabric of human society, our human family." – Jack Kornfield*

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## **Chapter 2.2: Navigating Samsara and the Nature of Uncertainty: The Wobbly Promise of America**

In this chapter, Jack highlights the ongoing maelstrom of change we find ourselves in as the pendulum of politics swings on. Exploring how it is truly possible to navigate samsara and the nature of uncertainty with a mindful compassion, Jack reflects on the Buddha's vision for a wise society based on mutual care. From here, he reads Alison Luterman's powerful poem, *Praise the Broken Promise of America*, so we can awaken to what's happening, and navigate it from a powerful spiritual rudder.

- Seeing clearly this world's maelstrom of change
- Navigating samsara and the nature of uncertainty
- Creating a wise society based on mutual care
- Alison Luterman's powerful poem, *Praise the Broken Promise of America*
- Directing our lives, no matter our political persuasion, from a deep spiritual rudder

*"As our life goes along, we think we know what's going to happen, we have our plans. But the Buddhist texts write that, 'Karma can change as quickly as the swish of a horse's tail.' That is the nature of samsara, this world of birth and death, has the nature of uncertainty." – Jack Kornfield*

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### **Chapter 2.3: Creating a Wise Society Based on Mutual Care: Transforming Anxiety and Fear into Imagination and Hope**

In this chapter, Jack helps us ground ourselves and steady our hearts amidst the waves of change and cultural anxiety. Reflecting on how your highest values become your deepest spiritual rudder, Jack outlines the path to working with anxiety in the body, and how culturally we can begin to transform our

anxiety and fear into positive hope and imagination through practicing loving kindness.

- Remembering your best values as things change
- Grounding yourself and steadying your heart
- Working with anxiety in the body
- Transforming our cultural anxiety for imagination and hope
- Not buying into the the media zeitgeist
- Loving Kindness (metta practice) as an antidote to fear

*“The modern media is almost designed to activate fight, flight, or freeze, to colonize the nervous system, to make you afraid and worried. Don’t buy it, it’s not who you are, it’s not what we are as human beings.” – Jack Kornfield*

*“When a society treats its members with respect, cares for the weak and vulnerable among them and tends the natural world around... it can be expected to prosper and not decline.” – Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*

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## **Chapter 2.4: Standing Up for Compassion and Becoming a Makeweight of Hope**

In this chapter, Jack highlights the crucial importance for us to stand up for compassion and speak up for our highest values in this world. Sharing deeply moving stories based on coming together in integrity, Jack helps stretch our notion of time by having us take “the long view.” How long? As long as it takes. Reflecting on how we can be hopeful in difficult times, he

illuminates how each of us has the ability to tip the scales to compassion.

- Standing up for compassion and speaking for your values
- Deeply moving stories of coming together for integrity
- Taking the Long View—all the cycles of birth and death
- Learning how to be hopeful in difficult times
- Becoming a makeweight of hope to tip the scales to compassion

*"Take the long view—set your best intention, align your heart and mind in all the cycles of birth and death. That deep intention of wisdom creates what's possible for a wise society. It becomes a rudder through difficult times." – Jack Kornfield*

*"When I despair, I remember that all through history, the way of truth and love has always won. Yes, there have been murderers and tyrants, and for a time they can seem invincible, but in the end, they always fall. Think of it, always." – Gandhi*

*"It doesn't take a lot for us to add our goodness—to serve, to care, to support, to awaken. You can be the makeweight that tips the scale to compassion." – Jack Kornfield*

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## **Chapter 2.5: Living as a Modern Bodhisattva with a Beautiful Purpose: Remembering Your Strength, Courage, and Creativity**

In this chapter, Jack shares the need for connecting with community, especially during difficult times when it may be easy to isolate. Reflecting on the thousand small ways we can connect with others, he explores how we can begin to live like a modern Bodhisattva with a beautiful purpose, drawing on our strength, courage, and creativity. From here, he speaks to the possibility of a New Underground Railroad.

- Taking refuge in community during difficult times
- The thousand small ways to connect with others
- How to live like a modern Bodhisattva—bringing support and compassion, and alleviating suffering
- Drawing on your moral strength, courage, and creativity
- Remembering you are here for a beautiful purpose
- The possibility of a New Underground Railroad forming

*"It's a time to get quiet and remember that you're here for a beautiful purpose, oh Bodhisattvas. What better thing to do with your life?" – Jack Kornfield*

*Now is the time to draw on your moral strength, courage, and creativity. It's almost like the world has orchestrated this because the globe needs a reset. We know this with climate change, warfare, racism, A.I., all these things—we need a new set of values to really come forth." – Jack Kornfield*

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## **Chapter 2.6: Guided Meditation Practice: Navigating Turbulent Times with Mindful Loving Kindness**



In this chapter, Jack speaks to the benefit of spiritual practice for providing us a deep rudder to mindfully navigate turbulent times. Through this lens, he leads a meditation on suffusing our lives with Loving Kindness—helping us soften, relax, and find grounded support here and now. From this space of soft, mindful, ease, Jack invites us to wrap ourselves and the whole world in metta, loving kindness.

- Spiritual practice as a wise rudder during difficult times
- Metta and invoking the spirit of love within ourselves
- Holding all that arises with deep kindness
- Allowing ourselves to soften, relax, and rest easily
- Feeling completely supported by the earth below us
- Suffusing the whole world with unobstructed, sublime love

*“Become the one calm person on the boat who shows the way for all.” – Thich Nhat Hanh*

*“A powerful way of practicing metta is to invite in the feeling of love without specific words or images. You become a beacon of kindness. Then whatever arises as you sit—thoughts, people, images, concerns—will be held in that kindness.” – Jack Kornfield*

*“Whatever floats your love boat, follow it.” – Jack Kornfield*

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## **Chapter 2.7: Reading Materials and Journal Prompts: Stand Up For Compassion**

Dear ones,

We are living in wild times.

I have been shocked and concerned by the ramifications of many of our new governmental policies. In the midst of the current political upheaval and divisiveness, I want to offer a reminder of Buddhist teachings that can help us to navigate.

To start, I invite you to read the powerful poem by my friend Alison Luterman at the bottom of these teachings. It is a wake-up call. I was moved to tears and moved to truly question how to respond.

If you have a conservative perspective, please know that I value you. The benefits of the Dharma are universal; it doesn't choose parties or politics. It offers a path for well-being, individually and collectively.

Here are some traditional teachings to help navigate these times. Read them slowly, let them guide you in your way.

**Remember your best values.**

“When a society treats its members with respect, cares for the weak and vulnerable among them and tends the natural world around... it can be expected to prosper and not decline.” –  
Mahāparinibbāna Sutta

**Don't take sides and fall into the trap of who is right or wrong.**

“The wise do not cling to their views.” – Sutta Nipata

**Steady and ground yourself. Quiet your mind and open your heart.**

“Become the one calm person on the boat who shows the way for all.” – Thich Nhat Hanh

**Don’t be afraid.**

When frightened monks came to the Buddha, he taught the practice of Lovingkindness and Compassion as a great protection. Don’t fall into fear.

Remember H.L. Mencken’s words, “The whole aim of politics is to keep the populace alarmed and hence clamorous to be led to safety.”

**Take a Long View. How long? As long as it takes. Trust.**

Remember, in all the cycles of existence...

“Hatred never ends by hatred. This is the ancient and eternal law.”  
– The Dhammapada

**Support what is good.**

The liberal Rahm Emanuel publicly cheers the president on to receive a Nobel Prize hoping he can end the conflicts in Ukraine, The Middle East, Iran, North Korea.

### **Live with integrity and the virtues of Non Harming**

“Others will be cruel. We shall be kind. Thus we will incline the heart.

“Others will speak falsely. We shall speak truth. Thus we will incline the heart.”

“Others will exploit and steal. We shall be honest and generous. Thus we will incline the heart.” – Sallekha Sutta

### **Do not be afraid to stand up and speak up for these values.**

“Truthfully will I speak. With good intention will I speak. For the benefit of all will I speak.” – Vinaya Pitaka

*Pause even as you read these teachings ..... sense how they invite the heart's caring.*

**Remember your fundamental dignity and nobility. See it in everyone.**

“O Nobly Born...” Remember, no one can take your spirit.

**Look with clear eyes. Believe in science, observation, heart, honest wisdom.**

“Do not follow what others say. See for yourself this is harmful, this is beneficial.” – Kalama Sutta

**Do not avert your gaze. We are in it together.**

“Did it never occur to you that you too are subject to loss and suffering?” – Digha Nikaya

**Join with others to serve, care, awaken.**

It is in community that we can foster liberation.  
Take Refuge in Sangha.

**Be a Bodhisattva.**

You have been practicing for this, Now is your time to make a difference.

Reach out and mend what is torn. Act with compassion for all.

“The Bodhisattva enters the realms of the hungry ghosts, the jealous gods, lovingly enters the realms of all beings to alleviate suffering.”

**Consider and reflect.**

How can I contribute to a healthy society—one that meets in harmony, protects the vulnerable and honors the natural world?

**For myself, I am listening to how best to respond.**

It's not clear yet, but I will work somewhere, on the border, in soup kitchens, supporting the best in our leadership, helping the neighbors who could be taken away from their children, helping others stay well and centered, helping new Bodhisattvas stand up.

Let's join hands in compassion and care,  
Jack

**Praise the Broken Promise of America**  
**by Alison Luterman**

Praise deep mineral veins under rich dirt,  
and fossilized remains of dinosaurs turning themselves into gas  
for our benefit. Praise the exhausted earth,  
miles and miles of subsidized corn  
and cattle lowing from their hell-holes  
in automated milking barns.

Praise farmworkers rising before dawn,  
their sore backs and aching knees. Praise the myths  
that drew them here, stories eagerly consumed  
when there is nothing to eat but faith.

Praise the courage of the reverend to look  
the dragon in the eye and preach mercy;  
praise whatever hidden waterways are still pristine.  
Praise music that refused to play at the funeral of democracy.  
and the killing cold that swept through Washington  
when the fake Pope took power.

Praise drag queens and lipstick lesbians, boys who are girls  
and girls who are lions, butch women wearing tool belts,

and all the music theater nerds  
who are even now building new passageways  
mapping the next underground railroad  
and suiting up to be conductors—oh, everybody,  
get on board! This train will chug quietly  
across the great plains and over rocky Sierras,  
into the desert where people still leave bottles of water  
and packets of food for the desperate  
who have always been the lifeblood  
of this nation. It will stop in obscure hamlets  
to pick up fugitives with tears tattooed on their cheeks  
and fraying backpacks overspilling with contraband books.  
Praise the weirdos because if anyone can save us  
it will be us. And praise all the glittering illusions  
we gawked at, ignoring our own neighbors  
in favor of a 24-hour peep show on the internet.  
Praise the convict fire fighters on the front lines in L.A.,  
battling the insurmountable for ten dollars a day. We gambled  
our future for a hot air balloon with a hole in it. Praise  
our reckless hubris, and the infinite distractions  
of the hall of mirrors we find ourselves in now, and bless  
our overwhelmed brains, scurrying like mice for shelter.  
Bless our collective rage, and protect  
the officers who stood up on January 6th and now see their  
attackers  
roaming the streets like rabid dogs, ah, bless the animals  
we have always been, in our coats and shoes  
and clumsy language, bless our willful ignorance,  
so enormous, so world-altering, that, like the great wall of China,  
it can be seen from outer space,  
where the gods are shaking their heads even now,  
in pity and in awe.

### **Journal Reflections:**

- *What are my highest values in this life that are worth standing up for?*
  - *What is my idea of a Wise Society? How can I help create this around me?*
  - *Where am I experiencing fear/anxiety, and how can I imagine my way to hope?*
  - *How can I stand up for compassion and speak my truth?*
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## **Chapter 3: You Are the Imaginal Cells of the Butterfly: Awakening Humanity and Creating a Wise Society During the Great Turning**

### **Chapter 3.1: Mindful Instructions for Walking Meditation: Stepping into Presence with Steadiness, Balance, and Ease**

In this next chapter, Jack gives instructions for walking meditation, which can be done outside or indoors, and helps bring a mindful loving awareness to the subtle motions of our body. Jack shares how we can learn to center ourselves, embrace stillness in embodied motion, and find presence in every step. Through this practice, we are invited to flow through life with a balance and ease.

- Learning walking meditation as a way of stepping into presence
- Stepping out of the thinking mind and into the rhythm of your body
- Bringing mindfulness into embodied motion
- Grounding yourself with the simple act of each step
- Bringing presence into the subtle movements of your life



*"The point isn't to get to the end of the journey—that's not what meditation is. Rather, it's to be right where you are." – Jack Kornfield*

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### **Chapter 3.2: The Birth Process of the Great Turning: Navigating Late-Stage Capitalism with a Fearless Heart**

In this next chapter, Jack dives into the rising questions and concerns from students regarding the divisive state the world finds itself in currently. Helping us find a grounded center amidst life's struggles, Jack dissolves the 'right vs left' political mentality and shares how to navigate Late-Stage Capitalism in the 21st century with a fearlessness and fiercely loving heart.

- Staying centered amidst life's struggles
- Ending 'left vs right' and fear politics
- Navigating Late-Stage Capitalism in the 21st Century
- The Great Turning as an opportunity to reset our lives as human beings
- The Great Turning as a birth process—messy, painful, dangerous, and beautiful
- Remembering your innate fearlessness in every situation

*"This isn't a political statement, it's a Dharma statement." – Jack Kornfield*

*"This world is made from our hearts and our being." – Jack Kornfield*

*“Here we are, 21st century, late-stage capitalism, which has gotten to the place where there’s increasing extremes of rich and poor for exploitation. We’re at the time Joanna Macy calls the Great Turning – the great opportunity really for us to reset our lives as human beings.” – Jack Kornfield*

*“We have to stay in the present, because if you let yourself get drowned by the news and fearful thoughts, you’ll go swimming in the rising and falling of the ocean of grief and fear. And that’s not who you are. Meditation invites you to have a very different perspective.” – Jack Kornfield*

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### **Chapter 3.3: Transforming from Caterpillar to Butterfly: Trusting the Natural Process of Renewal**

In this chapter, Jack outlines the spectacular process of a caterpillar transforming into a butterfly—noting the amazing reality of the ‘imaginal cells’ which hold the vision of the new butterfly even as the caterpillar dissolves in the chrysalis. Here, Jack invites us to bear witness to both the ocean of tears and the immense beauty which the process of renewal births. Sharing stories of Black Elk, and Gary Snyder, Jack shares on meditation, heartbreak, love, and trusting the process of renewal.

- The process of how caterpillars transform into butterflies through imaginal cells which carry the image of the butterfly
- Bearing witness to both the ocean of tears and immense beauty of the universe
- Trusting the constant renewal of life and nature
- Black Elk, Gary Snyder, and the power of loving the earth

- Meditation and the letting yourself sit with heartbreak

*“When a caterpillar makes a chrysalis, it dissolves, becoming a gelatinous mass of cells—some of which are related to the old caterpillar, and some of which hold the imagined possibility of the new butterfly. These are called ‘imaginal cells.’ Apparently, there’s some struggle in the chrysalis about who’s going to win out, but can we go back to the old caterpillar? I don’t think so. Gradually, the imaginable cells begin to build the wings of the butterfly.” – Jack Kornfield*

*“There are bigger forces than politics, climate change, and A.I. They are big, but in a way they are trivial compared to the forces of the turning of the seasons and the return of life. There’s another force, something mysterious and great.” – Jack Kornfield*

*“What you do when you meditate, is you let yourself sit with heartbreak.” – Jack Kornfield*

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### **Chapter 3.4: Overcoming Anger, Fear, and Frustration: Connecting with Nature, Living from Your Light, and Trusting the Bigger Picture**

In this chapter, Jack outlines how we can begin to work with our anger, fear, and frustration through various methods and perspectives. Speaking to the unquestionable power of the cycles of nature and the cosmos, he invites us to begin to trust the bigger picture, connect with nature, tune into the helpers, tend our own light with nobility and dignity, and relax into the reality that we are all truly in this together.

- Anger, frustration, and fear—how to diffuse, overcome, and uncover the roots
- Connecting with nature, offering small gestures of kindness
- Trusting the bigger picture, the vast cosmic view
- Carrying your light with nobility, respect, and dignity
- Tuning into who is really helping, and the possibility of a New Underground Railroad
- Trusting that we will get through this because we are in this together

*“Do you know why you get afraid? Do you know why you get angry and upset? It’s because you care.” – Jack Kornfield*

*“There’s something about trusting, about trusting a bigger vision. You’re called in the darkest and most difficult times to remember who you are and to treat one another from that place of dignity and respect.” – Jack Kornfield*

*“We will get through this, and we will get through it because we do it together.” – Jack Kornfield*

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### **Chapter 3.5: You Are the Imaginal Cells of the Butterfly: Holding the Vision and Creating a Wise Society Through Each of Our Hearts**

In this powerful summing chapter, Jack begins with a powerful story showcasing how we can live with nobility and stand up for what matters to our values. Circling back on the transformative

caterpillar-to-butterfly wisdom, he illuminates the striking realization that: you are indeed the imaginal cells of the butterfly, and you hold the vision for the beautiful wise society which will be created through each of our hearts.

- A powerful story of living with nobility and standing up for what matters to our values
- Recognizing that you are the imaginal cells of the butterfly of the world's transformation
- Holding the pure vision of a wise society based on respect, compassion, wisdom, dignity, and love
- Fully embodying the Buddha's universal teaching of, 'Hatred never ceases by hatred, but by love alone is healed.'

*"You are the imaginal cells. You are the ones who are called to hold the vision of a wise society where people respect each other, where we care for the vulnerable, where we understand the universal teaching that 'Hatred never ceases by hatred, but by love alone is healed.' This is you." - Jack Kornfield*

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### **Chapter 3.6: Guided Meditation Practice: Uncovering Freedom as Your Birthright: Responding to the World with Mindful Loving Courage**

In this chapter, Jack peels back the veil to uncover the true purpose of meditation and spiritual practice—coming into freedom here and now, just where we are. Leading a guided meditation helping us witness the play of our human existence from the loving awareness that we truly are, Jack invites us to uncover true

freedom as our birthright. It is from this place that we can respond to this world with wise loving courage.

- The true purpose of meditation and spiritual practice
- Be Here Now
- Coming fully into the reality of the present moment
- Becoming mindful loving awareness itself
- Witnessing the play of our human experience
- Uncovering freedom as your innate birthright
- Experiencing the present moment as loving awareness
- Responding to the world with mindful loving courage

*“The point of meditation is to come into the reality of the present. This is all we have actually, this moment. The past is a memory, the future is fantasy. What’s alive is just now.” – Jack Kornfield*

*“Come into this present moment with mindful loving awareness, notice the play of our human experience, and discover we can take our seat with a compassionate and gracious heart with a freedom that is your birthright.” – Jack Kornfield*

*“This breathing with mindful loving awareness is not avoiding the world. There's turmoil, difficulty, problems, and suffering, and concerns we all share. This is a centering of yourself, a quieting of the mind, a softening of the heart, so you can be fully present before you respond to this world, before you respond wisely with courage and compassion.” – Jack Kornfield*

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### **Chapter 3.7: Reading Materials and Journal Prompts: Tipping the Scales To Compassion: Becoming a Makeweight of Hope**

Dear ones,

**There's a wisdom that we know and carry: hatred never ends by hatred, but by love alone is healed. This is the ancient and eternal law.**

Human beings periodically go through wars and depressions, and we will no doubt go through global crises again. We may actually be in the middle of one now. But that does not mean we should abandon our hope.

“To be hopeful in bad times,” writes Howard Zinn, “is not just foolishly romantic. It's based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, and kindness.

What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives. If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something good. But if we remember the times and places—and there are so many—where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act, and the possibility of sending the spinning top of the world in a fine direction.”

**Take the long view—set your heart's highest intention amidst all the cycles of birth and death. Setting a deep intention creates a beneficial force for a wise society. It becomes a rudder through difficult times.**

The word vipassana means to see clearly, to look with clear eyes. In times of confusion, believe in your own observation, your honest wisdom. Believe in science when it's good science. Believe in heart.

As it says in the Kalama Sutta: Do not follow what others say. See for yourself this is harmful, this is beneficial. Then follow what is good.

Don't be afraid. Have the clarity and courage to not avert your gaze. Yes, times can be difficult for us all. Did it never occur to you, the texts say, that suffering will come to you as well? We're in this together, this human realm subject to joy and sorrow, gain and loss, praise and blame. This is our place to practice and bring our best selves.

**As times become turbulent, it's up to each one of us to tip the scales to compassion. You can become what's called a makeweight.**

In the old days, when you went to the market, they'd hold up a two-sided balance scale. You'd put the papaya or the rice on one side, and on the other side, you'd put big metal weights until they almost balanced. Then they would add the last tiny weights, called makeweights. Often, they're quite beautiful—created in the form of little animals, like ducks or other shapes.

And when you add the last makeweight, the scale tips, and balance is found.



**It doesn't take a lot for us to add our goodness—to serve, to care, to support, to awaken. You can be the makeweight that tips the scale to compassion.**

How? Join sacred others. Take refuge in the Buddha, the teachings, and the community—cultivating resilience, grounding, fierce love, and deep wisdom. In these times where it is so easy to let ourselves get isolated, community helps give us purpose and strength.

There are a thousand ways to find others—create affinity groups, join service organizations in your neighborhood—whether you're political or social, whether you join with organizers or artists, whether you're feeding people at the soup kitchen or dancing for liberation with drag queens—reach out and say, “Let's do this together. Let's speak up. Let's support one another.”

There are a thousand small ways to tip the scale to compassion. And now is the time.

With metta,  
Jack

**Journal Reflections:**

- *What are some small things I can do each day to become a makeweight of hope for myself and those around me?*
- *What is my unique gift? If I don't know, what are some ways I can uncover it? If I do know, what is holding me back from fully sharing it?*
- *Use your imagination and become an imaginal cell for the butterfly of the new society—what does the beautiful world look like?*

- *What are small steps I can take to create this in the world around me in my daily life?*