

The Decision

.....source unknown (adapted and modified by Amy Fox)

There was once a 92-year-old woman who lost her husband after 70 years of marriage and on this particular day, she was moving into a nursing home— her new home after her husband's death.

After waiting patiently for several hours in the lobby, she was told her room was ready. She smiled sweetly. While gingerly maneuvering down the hallway with her walker, she was provided with a visual description of it including eyelet curtains that had been hung on the window.

"I already love it," she said with enthusiasm.

"Mrs. Jones, you haven't even seen the room...but just wait," the nurse said.

"That doesn't have anything to do with it," she said. "Happiness is something you decide on ahead of time. *I already decided to love it.*"

The nurse was intrigued by this and wanted to know more.

"I make a decision every morning when I wake up" the old woman explained. "I have a choice: I can spend the day in bed recounting the difficulty I have with the parts of my body that no longer work or I can get out of bed and be thankful for the ones that do. Each day is a gift, and as long as my eyes open, I'll focus on the new day and all the happy memories I've stored away just for this time in my life."

As they made their way down the hallway she continued, "Old age is like a bank account—you withdraw from what you've put in. My advice to you would be to deposit a lot of happiness in the bank account of memories."

The old woman and the nurse approached the room and when the nurse opened the door, the old woman exclaimed that the room was just as beautiful as she thought it would be.

Just as the nurse was getting ready to leave, the old woman shared the five simple rules she used to be happy:

- Free your heart from hatred. It will only weigh you down.
- Free your mind from worries. Worries take up unnecessary space and rob you of you joy.
- Live simply and you'll find beauty in all things.
- Give more and you'll receive more in return.
- Expect less and be open to life turning out better than you had imagined.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & PROMPTS

OPENING CLASS

Life is like a bank account and each day whatever we deposit from our day is what we hold onto– it's what colors the life we live.

Each time you take care of you and others in your life, you make positive deposits into this account.

What do you need from your practice today?

Start to deepen your breath here...

DURING CLASS

After Telling the Story

We can only withdraw from what we put into our practice and our life.

What are you putting into your proverbial bank account? Happy memories? Resentment? Gratitude?

Come back to your breath. Create space for all the good in your life.

CLOSING CLASS

This week, may you cultivate happy memories and gratitude. May you fill your life with the things that make your life richer and fuller.

EXTRAS

The great German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche would describe his formula for human greatness as Amor Fati, a love of fate. His formula was simple: Treat every moment– no matter how challenging– as something to be embraced, not avoided. To not only be okay with it, but to love it as if you choose it.

Loving what is refocuses our energy on what we can do and if it's out of our control, then Amor Fati reminds us that our time and energy is better spent on the things that really matter.