

An Answer For All Questions

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

There was once a King who called upon all of his wise men and asked them, “Is there a mantra or saying which works in every situation, in every circumstance, in every place and in every time? Surely, there must be one answer for all questions– something which can help me when none of you is available to advise me?”

All the wise men were puzzled by the King’s question. They thought and thought and after a lengthy discussion, the eldest adviser suggested something which appealed to all of them.

They went to the king and gave him something written on paper, with a condition that the king was not to see it out of curiosity– only in extreme danger, when the King finds himself alone and there seems to be no other way, only then he can see the answer.

The King agreed and put the the small piece of paper under his diamond ring.

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Sometime later, a neighboring army attacked the kingdom. The King and his army fought bravely, but lost the battle. The King had to flee on his horse. The enemies were following him and in the distance he could hear them getting closer and closer. Suddenly the King found himself standing at the end of the road– a road that led to a rocky valley that was thousands of feet deep. If he jumped into it, he would surely die...and if he went back the way he came, the enemy would surely kill him.

It was at this time that his diamond ring reflected the light of the sun and he remembered the message hidden in the ring. He opened the paper and read the message. The message was: **"THIS TOO SHALL PASS"**

The King read it over and over again. Suddenly something struck him- Yes! This too will pass. *Only a few days ago, he thought, I was enjoying my kingdom. I was the mightiest of all the Kings. Yet today, all that is gone. Today, I am trying to evade the danger of my enemies. This too shall pass.*

With this, calm came upon his face and as he looked over the edge of the cliff he marveled in the beauty of his kingdom. Minutes passed and it was only then that the King realized the noise of the horses and the enemy coming was receding. They had moved into some other part of the mountains.

With this newfound opportunity, the King reorganized his army and fought again. He defeated the enemy and regained his empire.

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When he returned to his kingdom after victory, he was received with much fanfare. The whole capital was rejoicing and with this the King said to himself, "I am the bravest and greatest King."

Suddenly his diamond ring flashed in the sunlight and reminded him of the message. He opened the note and read it again: **"THIS TOO SHALL PASS"**.

Humbleness fell over the King and he realized that this victory and success, will pass as well.

He realized that the defeat was not his, the victory was not either. Whatever is, is simply what is in moment and this too shall pass.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & PROMPTS

OPENING CLASS

One of the greatest yoga axioms is, "All things are impermanent".

Allow yourself to arrive in this moment. See if you can witness the flow of your natural breath, the reminder of the ever-changing nature of life itself.

One of the best things we can do when we're facing a challenge or feeling overwhelmed is remind ourselves that nothing lasts forever. And in those moments, sometimes the only thing we can do is come back to our breath so that we may arrive in the present moment.

DURING CLASS

The word, *equanimity* means to "stand in the middle." Equanimity isn't about being non-reactive where everything is how we like— it's about standing in the middle of the challenge and simply noticing what's coming up for us and remembering in these moments that nothing in life is permanent.

Nothing in life is permanent— no matter how challenging or great. Everything passes by and we are witnesses of all this. Life comes and goes. Happiness comes and goes. Sorrow comes and goes.

Where can you lean into the moment as it is? This too shall pass...

CLOSING CLASS

You have survived all setbacks, all defeats and all sorrows. All have passed away. The problems in the present, they too will pass away. Because nothing remains forever. Joy and sorrow are the two faces of the same coin. They both will pass away. And when we can understand this and remain equanimous, we can enjoy the present moment or at least be in it knowing it won't last.

No matter where you find yourself this week, may you remember: This Too Shall Pass.

EXTRAS

The phrase "this too shall pass" is often used to describe the transient nature of life. It means that everything is temporary and that nothing lasts forever. This includes both the good and the bad times. The idea is that we should not get too attached to anything because it will eventually end.

While this may sound like a negative way of looking at things, it can actually be quite empowering.

When you remind yourself that nothing lasts forever, it can help you to appreciate the present moment more and accept it for what it is. It can also motivate you to keep pushing forward and not worry so much, knowing that these tough times will eventually come to an end.