



## January 2021 - Pandemic Edition No. 2

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### Dear Readers,

Greetings! Let's start out this Newsflash with something on the lighter side after all the struggle and darkness we've been through this past year – my favorite poem by Mary Oliver:

#### ***Why I Wake Early***

*Hello, sun in my face.  
Hello, you who make the morning  
and spread it over the fields  
and into the faces of the tulips  
and the nodding morning glories,  
and into the windows of, even, the  
miserable and crotchety–  
best preacher that ever was,  
dear star, that just happens  
to be where you are in the universe  
to keep us from ever-darkness,  
to ease us with warm touching,  
to hold us in the great hands of light–  
good morning, good morning, good morning.  
Watch, now, how I start the day  
in happiness, in kindness.*



Thank you, Mary! And don't get me wrong, I'm not against darkness. We humans and all other living beings need it to rest, restore and regenerate. The past year has brought much loss, pain and uncertainty for so many of us. Now there is some light at the end of the tunnel: vaccines, political change and a renewed commitment to the health of our planet, to social justice and the values of equity and inclusion. Much work needs to be done now. By all of us. As the incredible U.S. Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman reminded us at the end of her "inauguration poem":

*The new dawn blooms as we free it  
For there is always light,*

### What's Coming Up at Interglobe

#### **Midweek Mindfulness Meditation**

Free & open to anyone!

Take a break from your daily routine and join this free meditation session every Wednesday from 12 to 12:30 p.m. EST. Send [email](#) to receive Zoom link.

#### **[MindTamers](#)**

A 4-month online program focused on mindfulness and meditation in a supportive community.

February 2 – May 18,  
2021 (meets 1<sup>st</sup> and  
3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the  
month, 11-11:50 a.m.  
EST)

**[Mindfulness Meditation  
Teacher Certificate  
Program \(MMTCP\)](#)**

*if only we're brave enough to see it  
If only we're brave enough to be it*

(See bottom for the full text.)

May we all be brave enough to see the light and be it this year and beyond! And may we all be able to focus on the “5 Cs” that my colleague and friend Natasha Aruliah from Vancouver uses to describe 2020: Community/Connection, Compassion/Caring, Commitment, Courage and Collaborative Action.

With gratitude and anticipation,  
Rita



I'm doing it! I'm starting a 2-year training program led by renowned meditation teachers Jack Kornfield and Tara Brach. Stay tuned for updates.

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### [Mindfulness at Work](#)

A 4-week online program starting February 11, 2021 (4 Thursdays, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. EST/12:30-2 p.m. AST).

This is my 2<sup>nd</sup> time offering this course. CEU-approved. Dalhousie University, College of Continuing Education.

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### [Personal Leadership: Leading the Self Before Leading Others](#)

An online Foundations program (Four 2-hour sessions over a 2-week period plus a 1-hour “sustainability check-in” one month after conclusion of the program).

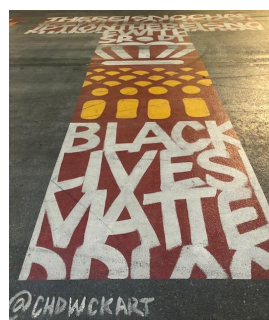
This will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> time I'm offering this class after two successful runs last year. CEU-approved. Dalhousie University, College of Continuing Education.

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## My Journey with White Supremacy, Part 1

“The opposite of racist isn’t “not racist.” *It is “anti-racist”.* -- Ibraim X. Kendi (Author of: *How To Be An Anti-Racist*)

When I reflect on last year and what changes it has brought for me personally – other than the obvious ones of not traveling for work anymore and moving all my



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## Quotes and Sayings

"So I say to you, walk with the wind, brothers and sisters, and let the spirit of peace and the power of everlasting love be your guide."

-- John Lewis

facilitation, coaching and consulting work online – what stands out is the start of an intentional self-awareness journey into exploring what it means to have white privilege in a white supremacist world. "Finally!" you might say. Yes, I'm a slow learner – having for so long waved the "I grew up in Europe/not my issue" flag. After the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and so many others, I found myself finally waking up and feeling ready to commit to doing the lifelong inner and outer work of anti-racism. For real.

For me, doing my inner work is far more important than the outer work at this point. Yes, we need to do both – and without taking action there won't be much visible systemic change in our racist world. However, it all starts with how I see myself – and the world. Therefore, learning as much as I can about white supremacy and how I relate to it is my number one priority. I examine my actions when I become aware of having made a racist remark or used racist language or made a black colleague uncomfortable by using a micro-aggression, tone-policing, or some other type of racist behavior (there is no end to it).

I try to speak up when I see other white people doing it – and often fail at it. And when I fail because my "white fragility" kept me from speaking up, especially around clients and sometimes even close friends, I stop and reflect to see how I can "make up" for not taking action in the moment. It's never too late to speak up as a good friend recently taught me – so I address the racist remark or action after the fact. I still feel woefully incompetent at doing this work – and that's ok. For now, I keep working my way through the book *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla F. Saad with my fellow book group sisters (3 white + 1 brown).

**What else can I do to become an anti-racist** (not in any order of importance and open-ended):

- listen to, make space for, include and really "see" black people, indigenous people and people of color\* (without seeking them out in order "help me"/make me feel better on my journey, which is not their job),
- go out of my way to support businesses owned by black people, indigenous people and people of color,
- be hyperconscious of my use of racist and exclusive language and "call myself on it."
- call out others on their racist actions or language (or: "call them in" – a sometimes more effective approach where someone is not called on their racism publicly but in private),
- keep learning, learning, learning – any chance I get – by reading, listening and reflecting on my own actions and words, and perhaps, most importantly...
- cut myself some slack: this is lifelong work and I don't have to rush it; I have to stay on it though and always pay attention.

*\* I avoid using the acronym "BIPOC" because many people who are part of these "subgroups" feel it's not helpful to put them together under an umbrella term due to the differences in their history, background and the context they live in.*

"Finding out what connects us, reveling in our differences; this is the process that brings us closer, that gives us a world of shared values, of meaningful community."

-- bell hooks

"Compassion is an action word with no boundaries."

-- Prince

"Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you."

-- Ruth Bader Ginsburg

"Isn't it funny how day by day nothing changes but when you look back, everything is different?"

-- C.J. Lewis

"Doubt is an uncomfortable condition, but certainty is a ridiculous one."

-- Voltaire

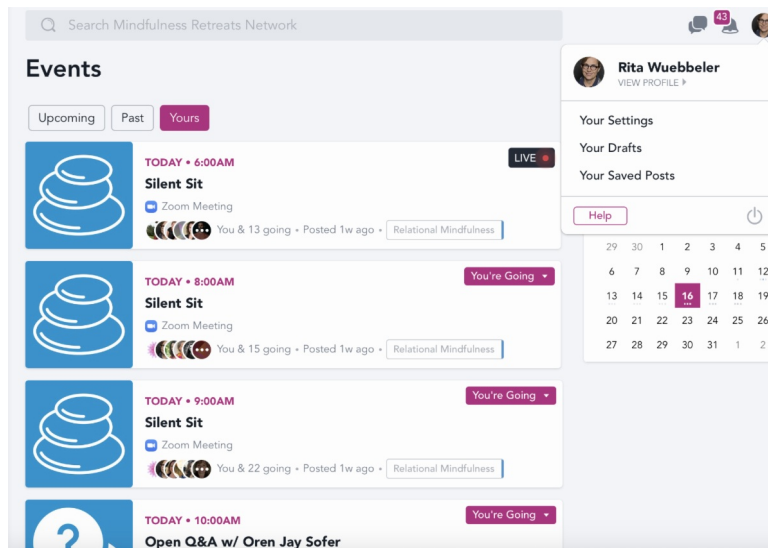
"It is not our purpose to become each other; it is to recognize each other, to learn to see the other and honor them for what they are."

-- Herman Hesse

"What we have before us are some breathtaking opportunities disguised as insoluble problems."

-- John W. Gardner

## Bringing Mindfulness Home: How to Spend 6 Days Circling Your Dining Room Table



## What Clients are Saying About Our "Mindfulness at Work" Course

"I really loved this class, thank you. I'm glad I made time in my crazy schedule to prioritize it as it helps me focus for the week. I wish more people could have benefited from it. It really made me think as we discussed our impact statement and how to make small changes."

-- Regional Sales Manager

"This course has already made a difference in the way I approach work and life ... [It] gave me more tools and resources to face adversity."

-- Police Officer

"This was an absolutely wonderful course and so very necessary in 2020.

In crazy times, it's essential to remember to slow down and to attend to things properly, to be mindful. The interactions with the Instructor, Rita, and the other class participants was much more engaging than I would have anticipated via Zoom. I would highly recommend this course if you're finding yourself lost in an increasingly chaotic inbox, never-ending meetings, and ever higher piles of work, or if you just want to find ways to improve your practice and be here, now."

-- IT Department Head

"The teaching throughout this course was about stopping and thinking,

One of the prerequisites for starting my 2-year long Mindfulness Meditation Teacher Certificate Program (MMTCP) next month is to have completed a 6-day silent retreat. Since in-person retreats are not possible at the moment, a new "industry" of online retreats has sprung up all over the world. After some searching, I registered for one offered by an organization called [Buddhist Geeks](#) on the topic of "Relational Mindfulness" the week before Christmas.

I must admit I could not avoid the build-up of a certain amount of skepticism prior to the retreat. How was I going to handle not using my phone, not being on social media, not checking email, not speaking with my partner and friends (not to mention clients), staying in my own home for 6 days, and meditating with 90 other people online? Well, I did it and it was a transformative experience!

Here's what I learned:

**A silent mindfulness retreat at home has many benefits.** Sure, you have to do your own cooking. You do your walking meditation around the dining room table. You only see your co-retreatants on tiny Zoom tiles. AND: you are able to "translate" your mindfulness practice to daily life. And isn't that what's all about? Practice while you wash your dishes, take out the trash, make your bed. Practice, practice, practice. I even got some windows cleaned – mindfully!

**Being alone is a gift.** I'm not known for spending a whole lot of time by myself. However, doing it on a retreat in my own home felt very special – like I was my own best friend. I also faced some "stuff" that came up being on my own, which was painful. However, in the end, it helped me grow.

**Routines, routines, routines.** Routines have always helped me find stability and comfort – and establishing them during this retreat helped me deepen my practice. Sitting in the same chair for my early morning meditations. Taking a nap after lunch. Going to bed at the same time. Some things I have kept up since the retreat; others I haven't.



**Being part of an online community.** After the initial “how in the world is this going to work???” doubts, I fully embraced the online part of this experience. The platform that we used was easy to navigate and provided just enough connection points (message board, Q&A) that you felt part of something bigger. Two daily meetings in smaller groups and one dharma talk for the whole group with breakouts offered us a certain degree of connection with one another, if we wanted. Just listening was ok, too. And the fact that there were people from all around the world, including from Tasmania, Chile, Sweden and Singapore sitting in meditation with you was inspiring and heart-warming.

I came out of the experience feeling more grounded, calmer, more peaceful, more intentional, more self-compassionate and much more dedicated to my practice. I now sit for 25 minutes every morning and it comes easily. Of course, most of these feelings began to wane and dim after a few days – and: I am able to remember them and return to them – and my dining room table is always there inviting me to practice.

In addition to the online retreats offered by Buddhist Geeks, I also recommend checking out the options at [Spirit Rock Insight Meditation Center](#) and the [Insight LA](#), among many other choices.

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## Our Online Life, Part 2

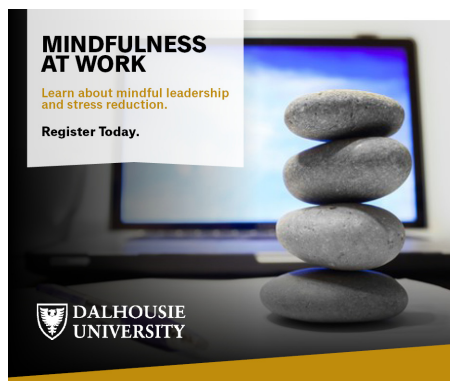
“There is no such thing as ‘Zoom-fatigue’. There are only badly designed online learning events.”

-- Matthias Richter,  
President, The Thiagi  
Group

Lots has been written about effective online meetings, presentations, conferences, workshops, webinars and other types of online gatherings. The topic still captures my attention and since “online” most certainly will stay with us from here on out, I want to share a few more thoughts about it.

### Here’s what I appreciate even more about our online life:

- I love the fact that in our online world, **access to audiences around the world is almost unlimited** (barring bandwidth issues, which still exist and need to be considered) and we’re able to connect with people (and they with us) whom we otherwise would never have been able to reach. For example, I regularly have people from North America, Europe and South America in my weekly drop-in meditation session. Life is just richer and more interesting this



before reacting, rather than just react when faced with challenges, as 2020 has been a unique challenging year. You walk away with tools, techniques and strategies to be more mindful, not just at work, but also at home.”

-- VP of Operations

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## What Clients are Saying About Our Coaching Services

“Working with Rita as my executive coach enabled me to assess and understand the components that define my leadership style so that I could improve in my role with my organization as well as with our external stakeholders. The coaching sessions enabled me to have a heightened sense of awareness and skill set to be more intentional in the application of my strengths and approach to working through my weaknesses.”

-- Sr. Director

“Rita created a safe environment during our coaching sessions,

- way.
- Related to this, I have seen the **creation of true and sustainable global online communities** – such as the “[Global Peacemakers Toolkit](#)” and “[Conscious Practioners Multilogues](#)” that my friends and colleagues Nadine Binder and Jeremy Solomons are offering on a monthly basis.
  - I don’t get to fall asleep at the wheel having to always **be in learning mode re: online facilitation**, and I get to collaborate with cool colleagues and learn from them.

### Here’s what we have to pay attention to even more:

- People are more willing and more used to being online. It’s normal now. People turn their cameras on. And: they are much **more discerning about the quality of online offerings**, especially since there are so many free opportunities. This means **we as facilitators have to “up our game”** and constantly stretch ourselves and expand our repertoire to engage, inspire and help people connect in these online spaces.
- While online meetings and learning events can certainly be highly effective and even create a new level trust among participants, **certain team tasks can end up being less productive or effective** simply because in online interactions, non-verbal elements like a shrug, a nod, an eye roll or a certain facial expression might not get noticed. This is particularly challenging when a team is designing and developing complex products and services, is having difficult conversations or is navigating all-out conflict. This doesn’t mean these things can’t be done online. We as facilitators just have to be aware of the potential limitations and try and work around them as best as we can.
- Finally, it seems like we’re still having to **educate our clients about the “cost” of online work**. It takes many more hours to design and much more effort to deliver an online learning event than an in-person program. Every minute and every move online has to be carefully planned and executed. So, asking for adequate compensation for online work (at least equal if not more than in-person work) is important and only fair. Yes, as a facilitator you might save on traveling time – but the client’s savings will be exponentially higher not having to fly groups of people to meetings and workshops.

Sidenote: Two suggestions I took away from a recent workshop on Live Online Learning Events, or “LOLAs” conducted by Thiagi:

1. Avoid the term “virtual” and use “online” instead since “virtual” connotes “not real” – and these online events are VERY real.
2. Avoid the term “face-to-face” to distinguish “in-person” from online delivery since we’re still “face-to-face” even on a screen.

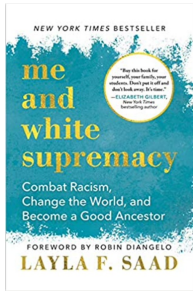
Here’s an excellent article on [The Reality of Online Facilitation + 5 Best Practices](#) published by the Search Inside Leadership Institute.

allowing me to talk and share freely without fear of judgement during our time together. This created the trust needed to explore professional and personal themes in depth. I feel that I was guided to achieve clarity around personal priorities and given tools to use when navigating future challenges. I feel that in completing the coaching engagement, I am more confident, have a broader perspective and I know myself better as a leader, therefore understanding what I do best and future areas that will need improvement.”

-- Sr. Director

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## Resources



### ANTI-RACISM

[\*Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World and Become a Good Ancestor\*](#) by Layla F. Saad (please purchase your books at your local bookstore) – my current favorite resource on learning about white supremacy and white privilege (book + workbook)

[Greater Good Magazine: Anti-Racist Resources](#)

### LIST OF BOOKS – HISTORY

[Katie Couric: Ten American History Books Every American Should Read](#)

### LIST OF BOOKS – FAVORITES OF THE YEAR

[Greater Good Magazine: Mind & Body: Our Favorite Books of 2020](#)

[Thrive Global: 15 Books That Brought Us Meaning and Joy](#)

### MEDITATION PRACTICE

[Mindful.org: Top 10 Guided Meditations of 2020 from Mindful.org](#)

### FREE COURSE

[Change Your Behavior with Tiny Habits](#) – FREE 5-day course offered by my favorite expert on habit development, BJ Fogg, Founder and Director of the Stanford Behavior Design Lab and author of: *Tiny Habits – The Small Changes That Change Everything*

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## And to end on a hopeful note...

### The Hill We Climb

Amanda Gorman, U.S. Youth Poet Laureate

Written for and recited at the Inauguration of President Joseph R. Biden and Vice President Kamala D. Harris on January 20, 2021.

*When day comes we ask ourselves,  
where can we find light in this never-ending  
shade?*

*The loss we carry,  
a sea we must wade  
We've braved the belly of the beast  
We've learned that quiet isn't always peace  
And the norms and notions  
of what just is  
Isn't always just-ice  
And yet the dawn is ours*



before we knew it  
Somehow we do it  
Somehow we've weathered and witnessed  
a nation that isn't broken  
but simply unfinished  
We the successors of a country and a time  
Where a skinny Black girl  
descended from slaves and raised by a single mother  
can dream of becoming president  
only to find herself reciting for one  
And yes we are far from polished  
far from pristine  
but that doesn't mean we are  
striving to form a union that is perfect  
We are striving to forge a union with purpose  
To compose a country committed to all cultures, colors, characters and  
conditions of man  
And so we lift our gazes not to what stands between us  
but what stands before us  
We close the divide because we know, to put our future first,  
we must first put our differences aside  
We lay down our arms  
so we can reach out our arms  
to one another  
We seek harm to none and harmony for all  
Let the globe, if nothing else, say this is true:  
That even as we grieved, we grew  
That even as we hurt, we hoped  
That even as we tired, we tried  
That we'll forever be tied together, victorious  
Not because we will never again know defeat  
but because we will never again sow division  
Scripture tells us to envision  
that everyone shall sit under their own vine and fig tree  
And no one shall make them afraid  
If we're to live up to our own time  
Then victory won't lie in the blade  
But in all the bridges we've made  
That is the promise to glade  
The hill we climb  
If only we dare  
It's because being American is more than a pride we inherit,  
it's the past we step into  
and how we repair it  
We've seen a force that would shatter our nation  
rather than share it  
Would destroy our country if it meant delaying democracy  
And this effort very nearly succeeded  
But while democracy can be periodically delayed  
it can never be permanently defeated  
In this truth  
in this faith we trust  
For while we have our eyes on the future  
history has its eyes on us  
This is the era of just redemption  
We feared at its inception  
We did not feel prepared to be the heirs  
of such a terrifying hour  
but within it we found the power  
to author a new chapter  
To offer hope and laughter to ourselves  
So while once we asked,  
how could we possibly prevail over catastrophe?  
Now we assert



*How could catastrophe possibly prevail over us?  
We will not march back to what was  
but move to what shall be  
A country that is bruised but whole,  
benevolent but bold,  
fierce and free  
We will not be turned around  
or interrupted by intimidation  
because we know our inaction and inertia  
will be the inheritance of the next generation  
Our blunders become their burdens  
But one thing is certain:  
If we merge mercy with might,  
and might with right,  
then love becomes our legacy  
and change our children's birthright  
So let us leave behind a country  
better than the one we were left with  
Every breath from my bronze-pounded chest,  
we will raise this wounded world into a wondrous one  
We will rise from the gold-limbed hills of the west,  
we will rise from the windswept northeast  
where our forefathers first realized revolution  
We will rise from the lake-rimmed cities of the midwestern states,  
we will rise from the sunbaked south  
We will rebuild, reconcile and recover  
and every known nook of our nation and  
every corner called our country,  
our people diverse and beautiful will emerge,  
battered and beautiful  
When day comes we step out of the shade,  
aflame and unafraid  
The new dawn blooms as we free it  
For there is always light,  
if only we're brave enough to see it  
If only we're brave enough to be it*

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## Helping People Bridge Differences Effectively and Mindfully

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