

Guest House Meditation



The Guest House – by Rumi

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
As an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

1. Sit in a comfortable position, close your eyes and take some deep breaths as you relax into this exercise.
2. Imagine your inner world as a large house with many rooms and a large front door.
3. When you feel ready, open the front door and welcome in the “guests” who have been waiting outside.
4. Observe each “guest” and identify who has come to call on you today: Is it sadness? Regret? Envy? Anger? Fear?
5. Note any positive visitors who have come, as well, e.g. laughter, hope, gratitude, peace.

6. Allow each guest to enter and find a place inside.
7. Greet all of your “guests” and invite them to stay as long as needed.
8. Sit quietly and observe your guests as you continue to take deep breaths.
9. Make note of any strong reactions occurring or emotions arising. Commit to looking at them, if not now, then at some time in the future when you feel strong enough.
10. End the meditation by opening the door again and allowing your guests to leave freely.
11. When you feel ready, open your eyes and write in your journal about this experience:
 - a. Which guests arrived at your door/
 - b. Were they willing to come in? If so, how did you feel when they came into your house?
 - c. How did they behave – were there any problems or disturbances that arose?
 - d. How do you feel now after doing this exercise? Was anything “cleaned out” of your house?
 - e. What else do you need to look at? What were your guides showing you today?