

Reflection Questions

on "Awakening to the Dharma" by Joseph Goldstein for the UU SpiritLife conversation on April 20, 2024

- 1. Personal Reflection on Mindfulness:** How do you currently practice mindfulness in your daily life? Reflect on moments where mindfulness has influenced your perspective.
- 2. Understanding of Dharma:** What does the Dharma (or Truth) mean to you after reading this essay? How does it compare to your previous understanding?
- 3. Conceptual Perception vs. Direct Experience:** Discuss instances where you might have confused concepts with experiences. How can you apply the practice of seeing things as they are, rather than through the lens of concepts?
- 4. Self and Non-Self:** Reflect on the essay's discussion of selflessness. How does the notion of a 'self' or 'I' influence your perception of experiences? How might the recognition of Non-Self be cultivated?
- 5. Integration of Deep Experiences:** Share a personal story of a deep experience (spiritual or otherwise) and how it changed your daily perspective or actions.
- 6. The Path to Awakening:** Discuss the idea that simple, mindful actions are the path to awakening. Can you identify such actions in your own life?
- 7. Buddha's Teachings on Perception:** Reflect on Buddha's teaching: "In the seen, there is just what is seen, in the heard, there is just what is heard." How does this apply to your understanding of experiences?
- 8. Challenges in Spiritual Practice:** What are some challenges you face in maintaining a spiritual practice in everyday life? How do you overcome these challenges?
- 9. Integrating Retreat Experiences into Daily Life:** For those who have attended meditation retreats, how do you integrate the insights gained into your daily life?
- 10. Continual Learning and Practice:** How do you view the ongoing process of learning and practicing spirituality? Share your approach to continual growth.