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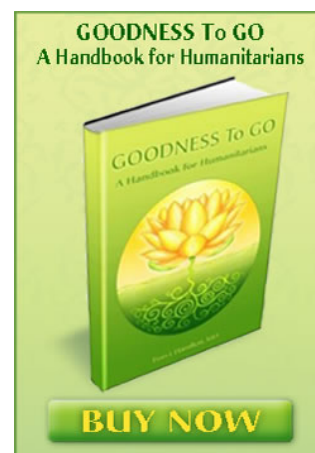
Dear Friends of Goodness To Go,

Aah! Spring Break with Grace by the Gulf of Mexico! Nature's beauty inspires me to deepen my practice of being fully present to the gifts of each moment. To unplug from technology, to feel the flow of resonant breath and walk through sparkling waves and blue sky breezes are replenishing gifts. I've also been contemplating, **"What does it mean to be mindful?",** especially now as spring begins and terror blasted through Brussels in the midst of Holy Week.

Research reports that most of us devote half of our waking time to ruminating about something other than the activity we're engaged in, and that "a wandering mind is an unhappy mind." Habits of mind, such as distraction, grow in tenacity and can make us feel stuck – or move us toward freedom and joy. 'Mindfulness' is more than stopping to smell the roses, noting tension in our bodies, or listening with focused awareness. This art of opening up and letting go is an enduring discipline that leads to inner freedom, enthusiasm, and the creation of a meaningful life. Cultivating a positive habit requires great patience and gentleness as we begin anew again and again. Practice being present and *staying* present. The power of peace, creativity, and choice lives in the now. We *can* break free of contracted, agitated states of mind.

"Realize deeply that the present moment is all you ever have...The Now is the only point that can take you beyond the limited confines of the mind," Eckhart Tolle reminds us. Our global book circle has moved into Section Two of Goodness To Go entitled ***Empower the Mind***. Chapter 14, **Mindfulness – Being One with Each Moment**, introduces pathways to *being here now*, to making friends with the mind, and trusting its clarity, resilience, and discernment.

Sometimes a 'yes' begins with a 'no'. Your clear and gentle *no* to limiting beliefs and to wasting energy in rumination is empowering. Committing your *yes* to strengthening your ability to focus and center your attention enriches your life



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supports the cultivation of a golden mind able to rest in the natural goodness of your heart. This is a perfect time to purchase copies to benefit yourself, friends, and libraries as well as girl empowerment programs directed by **Child In Need Institute** in Calcutta, India where my daughter Grace Shanti was born.

Global Grace Notes



Hi! My name is Grace Shanti and I'm *really* glad to be on Spring Break with time to sleep in, collect shells, write stories, and hug palm trees! It's good to relax and unwind. I often tune the strings too tightly, especially when I feel pressured by intense exam schedules. It's good to step back and look at my life from a bigger perspective, and I've been asking myself, "**What really matters?**"

Of course, to realize what's most important to me means that I give the process time and attention. Sometimes drawing or exercising helps, and I've learned that my mind needs to be rested and hydrated! Have you heard the phrase 'monkey mind'? Instead of letting monkey mind energy jump all over the place, I'm slowly learning to make use of its curiosity. In Asia, this is the **Year of the Monkey** and I've been thinking about the heroic, devoted monkey in Indian stories named Hanuman who's strong, creative, intelligent, and wise. I want a mind like that!



Studying World History can be discouraging. Thankfully, I'm learning to train my mind and redirect my attention to more helpful states of mind. The health of people and this planet really matters to me. So does social justice. And love and peace and happiness. Remember – ***Kindness is always possible.*** And have fun! (P.S. Mom's birthday is tomorrow, and a donation to CINI is her favorite present! You can mail your tax-deductible check to 3062 4th Street, Boulder, CO 80304.)

Mobilize Your Goodness – Light Tomorrow with Today

"Most of us believe that there a few more conditions that need to be met before we can be happy. If we keep running away into the future, we cannot be in the present moment where there is transformation," wrote the beloved Buddhist peace activist Thich Nhat Hanh. During times of crisis, it's especially beneficial to stay centered in the heart and offer our blessings for the upliftment of all people.

Every time we remind ourselves to cherish the



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clearer. One practice is to choose to **pause and consciously connect with our breath, mind, and heart** before beginning a daily activity such as eating, making a phone call, or opening a door. Marvel at the power in the flow of your breath. Rest in the pause between breaths. It's an art to let go of thoughts about the past or future and welcome the present with open, peaceful awareness. Wisdom traditions teach that the heart and mind are sacred, and that **the longest journey we'll ever take is from our head to our heart**. Mindfulness is uniting the mind and heart in the present moment where the power of our integrity and generosity resides. Then we're able access, enjoy, and skillfully share our innate goodness.

As your steadfast practice of mindfulness deepens, you'll enjoy some of the profound gifts of being one with each moment. A happy, purposeful life does not mean it's purpose-*driven*, so remember to go at your own pace with gentleness. **What really matters to you?** The cultivation and contribution of your unique gifts is an ongoing process that is energized by creative curiosity and light-mindedness. Ask, "**What is a small, specific, scheduled step that I could make this week to leave the world a more harmonious and compassionate place for all beings?**" Now is the best time to serve. The world calls for our compassion in action. As I celebrate my birthday, gratitude is flowing to you for *you*!

Celebrating integral service,

Fran I. Hamilton, M.D.

P.S. Thank you for spreading the word about Goodness To Go through your social networks. A portion of proceeds from your purchase of the Handbook benefits CINI's transformational girl empowerment programs.



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