



THE MINDFUL EYE

Learning to SEE anew

By Dr. Fernando Senior

How often have you seen others or experience in yourself a moment where you are looking, but not really seeing or noticing? Hearing, but not really listening? Reacting to events rather than choosing to act consciously?

In his book *Full Catastrophe Living*, Dr. John Kabat-Zinn reminds us that mindfulness, which is a moment-to-moment awareness, is cultivated by purposefully paying attention to things we ordinarily never give a moment's thought to. He describes it as a systematic approach to developing new kinds of control and wisdom in our lives, based on our inner capabilities for relaxation, paying attention, awareness and insights.

Mindfulness practice is often associated with meditation practice, such as silent sitting or walking meditation. The truth is that every moment, from washing our hands, to driving a car and answering the telephone allows us the opportunity to observe and make conscious choices that will nurture the seeds of happiness in ourselves and in others.

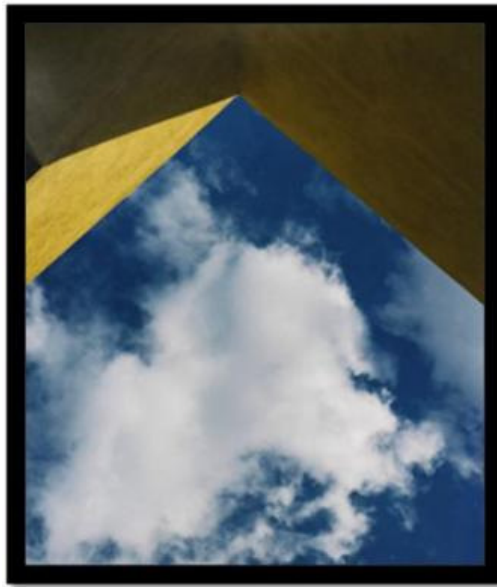
Yet, another appealing, entertaining and educational approach to cultivating mindfulness is through the popular art of photography. After all, what better way to faithfully and impartially document what we are actually able to see (or fail to see)? What better way to make use of a camera than to use it as a tool for personal growth?

The term Contemplative Photography is used to describe a type of art that evokes or invites the viewer to experience a contemplative moment documented by a photographer. But more importantly, we can also use the term as an invitation to any individual to use his/her camera as a loyal

companion in an intimate exercise in mindfulness. In other words, contemplative photography combines the practice of meditation with the art of photography.

If you were to make an appointment with yourself to exercise your ability to see anew, you would surprise yourself of all you would be able to really SEE, even in your own living room or

back yard. I invite you to choose to find peace when your eyes only want to see retribution, to find joy in the midst of pain and to find beauty where there appears to be none. Doing so gives you a choice of the type of world you wish to see and live in.



Dr. Fernando Senior offers workshops in Contemplative Photography. Visit his website at www.themindfuleye.com to learn about the next offerings. Contact him to bring this workshop to your community or to organize an online group.