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ouseholder's
Self-Awareness

Dedicated to All the Householders Who Hold the World Together

Note

This little teaching is a gift. It is a set of directions on how to practice the ideals of meditation which includes the duties and responsibilities of a spiritual path. It is a brief booklet with help in mind for the householder. It points out some possible values and principles of living a spiritual household life.

The very poor as well as the very rich and all those in-between may find the duties of a spiritual householder useful. The station in life does not diminish or improve the difficulties of a householder. Age, gender, size has no advantage. Perhaps this acknowledgement comes as a surprise or it may make you happy since no matter what your household is like, you are included. It may be a relief to know that most, if not all, householders need help when it comes to spiritual practice.

Know the Duties

You may feel stagnant and sluggish or perhaps inactive in your spiritual practice. This is something that may occur from time to time. It is best to address this sluggishness as soon as possible. What you need to do is to make an upward resolution.

An upward resolution is sowing the seeds of the household. Make a resolution to sow the seeds of household duties and this may uplift you. Seeds are easy to understand especially in springtime when nature reminds us of the growth that comes from sowing seeds. Before it gets too much warmer you may use this time to sort out the seeds of the household. The seeds are the duties of holding the house together. It is much like looking through seed catalogues and deciding on what plant might do well in your soil. Note the duties that will do well to maintain your household.

You have duties, all householders have duties but the duties vary depending on the type of household you have. Some have children others do not. Some live in a partnership some do not. Some live in a single household. But all have duties and responsibilities of the house.

Main Duty

The main duty of any type of householder is not to become lazy or avoid work. And it's important not to belittle any work that you do in the household. Householders need to be confident and strong as a householder since the entire world depends on householders knowing and doing the duties of a householder.

If you do not keep the duties and responsibilities of your household, things start to fall apart. First you will be affected by things falling to pieces and then your neighbors and your community will be as well. If you don't mow the grass or shovel the snow, you fail to do your duty. If you don't wash the dishes, you fail to do your duty. Things start to bust up and your household and others begin to feel things cave in.

Your household is important.

It's essential that you, the householder recognize that your house is important.

Feeling Trapped

Often householders feel trapped by the household. This may be due to the ignorance of household duties and the importance of households. There is sometimes a sense of constriction and friction that is a problem. Vastness and space are the antidotes to this feeling of constriction. You begin to think you are the only one trapped in a household. The whole world lives in a household. And knowing this truth helps to free the mind. Households are different, and there is variation but everyone lives in a household.

Sometimes a householder feels trapped and the mind is narrow and self-centered. There is a concern only for your 'household' and worse yet only for 'me' in the household. Reminding yourself that 'me' is dependent on others whether they are in your household or not is a beginning; this beginning supports your spiritual practice since spiritual practice leads to a realization of no separation.

The householder is encouraged not to underestimate the household life; spiritual realization is possible as a householder. In some sense everyone is a householder whether you are in a monastic household, an educational household, a criminal household or various types of family households.

The Bigger Picture

Broad thoughts about your household helps you see the household within a neighborhood, among friends, relatives in a community which expands outward. Seeing your household helps you understand the scale of households much like the breath practice. We all rely on the breath and we all rely on householders in households.

Households, whatever shape or form they take, are universal phenomena. And it is the duty of the householder to consider the welfare of neighbors, friends, relatives and community. It is part of spiritual practice for everyone. The more the householder is able to expand the view the more the groundwork for confidence in the Big Self is a reality. The Big Self lives in households all over the world.

Take Stock

It also is a duty to review the creation of your household. It is your expression. Human beings are creative beings; investigate the household you create every day. Is it one of love and generosity or one of contention and upheaval? Your household requires a look and in this way you can determine whether what you create is a spiritual household.

It's important to work with whatever feeling and observation that arises and contemplate it along the lines of your spiritual practice. One way to do this is to attend to you as part of the household and examine what you see and feel. It requires a willingness to do what is required in the household so someone else does not have to do it. The blessing of a single household depends on you to

know what you must do and do it. If you don't do it, it does not get done. It is required in a single household not to resent the work.

Self-Aware Self-Concern

Households require that we are not self-concerned but self-aware. In order to be self-aware you need to decide what you want to discover in the household you create.

Gratitude

Gratitude for the household prevents irresponsible actions and self-centeredness. Respect and honor for the household you put together also helps. If these basic feelings are not there, the lack of them is your practice. Dishonesty, aggression, misuse, abuse, claims against others, jealousy, envy, hate, meanness, miserliness, divisiveness and cruelty are created by you. There is a spiritual taking stock that may be required in order to create a spiritual household.

Silence

Less talk and more work without complaint helps.