

Musings on Mindfulness, Leadership & Nature

Dragonfly Vision

October 2026

“the nature of metal”



'tis the time of pumpkins by b

We have crossed over, and entered the fall, full of its own seasonal weaves and textures from crinkly and dry to smooshy and wet. Endings and beginnings, darkening and cooling, harvests on land and water, gratitude, moving on to new places, perhaps moved to letting go like the leaves from the trees. A time when it is not unusual to feel an accentuated sadness and grieving as we move from the rich warmth and sun of the summer Yang time of the year into the beginning of Yin time in fall with its character of dark and cold, mix of dry and wet, transitioning into the depths of winter, whatever they bring this year. There is a nature oriented view from ancient times in Asia, that is often woven into Yin yoga, that associates the fall with the element of metal, which has intrigued, and moved me to muse. Especially as my thoughts of metal tend to lead me to think so much more of ‘human creations’ of cars and buildings, phones and tools and weapons of all kinds that can so easily harm the natural world, losing track that the roots of metal lie deep in the folds of nature’s processes, as we the ‘metal workers’ are simply a creature of nature as well.

Once upon a time as we walked, foraged, hunted or grew crops, we observed and noticed - learned to see the colours and shininess of native metals of gold and silver and copper; yellows, darkish greys, patinas of green and reddish brown. Metal that we would learn to shape into decoration, tool and weapon. Learning to ‘hammer’ a substance into a shape. Resulting perhaps, in feeding or accentuating our attraction to ‘bling’ - the shiny and sparkly, shaping what we have come to deem ‘valuable’ in our cultural stories.

Eventually we added fire, whether brought by Prometheus or Raven, the giant Logi, Okramon, or Agni to our working of metal. Their mixing accelerating one weave of the story of the human species that supported our rise to shaping the world, shifting us into the time of the Anthropocene, one tiny slice of time in the life of our ever evolving planet. Metal shaped by heat bringing to mind that classic Pulitzer Prize winning book by Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel* that offered a hypothesis of 'how', both directly and indirectly, their control by eurocentric settlers opened the door to conquering and colonizing the Americas, and many other cultures around the world. Taking me back to my own brief summer as a historical animator portraying early 'settler history' in New France, working as a blacksmith learning to use hammer, fire and iron to create a simple nail. Coming to understand experientially why the 'essence of metal' is so easily connoted with meanings of strength, endurance and perseverance. While my right arm got strong that summer, pounding and shaping the red hot iron blanks, I also came to understand metal's ambiguity seeing how easily it could be made into tools to build or weapons to destroy, along with accelerating the expanding impacts and consequences of our choices.



The metal webs we weave by b

Making that nail also demonstrated the inherent range of creativity of the process along with noticing the rhythms made possible by the use of the hammer and the machines it would be used to invent, spinning me back to a memory of teaching a Sunday night Yin yoga class at Moksana studio just as an outdoor heavy metal music festival was finishing up its weekend run across the street (perhaps you were there??). The powerful emphatic, at times distorted, pulsing rhythms and sounds

reverberating through our space contrasted strongly with my usual attempt to weave layers of gentle music and long periods of silence into the practice seeking to support the yin potential to quiet the mind and heart and find peace. The wild expressive beats and tempo moved me to adapt and reweave. Not to say that the music of metal does not have its own potential as a path of mindfulness for some, nor would I say that powerful music might not be used for yin, just beyond me in that moment. Reflecting, responding, I came to slowly realise and share with our group, how the 'chaos' of metal throbbing through their hearing may in so many ways mimic the often discordant fullness of our thinking minds and our feeling hearts including our attempts to understand and control. That learning to at times or, maybe even always in parallel, to simply notice and name, embrace or accept and subtly shift to something 'like yin', or whatever other mindful constructs to craft compassion and wisdom one might use, could be a way to work with the metal-shaped tempest of life.

Possibly seeing our practice of working with external and internal chaos as by a blacksmith of Yin! Learning to more easily navigate what lies internally by softly and pointedly applying the hammer with an 'oh so gentle' touch to refocus again and again on sensations rising from edgecrafting as we move through the flow of our yin practice where each pose is its own mini-meditation, pausing in stillness for a few minutes of time. Further deepening our ways to focus, with non-judgement and compassion, skills of listening to body, heart and mind even as I had begun to develop literacy in 'reading' the colours of the metal within the fire; black to red to orange-yellow to white. Learning when to apply force and when to pause. Knowing too, that like the blacksmith, working with the fluidity and strength, perceptions of unchangeability of our inner world, identities and patterns, stories and whatever is arising, will take perseverance and endurance, stroke upon stroke, using both the ways of heat and cold. Accepting as well, that the strongest stroke of the hammer may be simply getting to our mats or cushions to practice yet again; or remembering that gorgeous tool of simply taking a few breaths, maybe longer on the exhale whatever challenge is unfolding in the moment!

If 'Yin practice drawn' in the way of "b" to practice and play, perhaps work the 'iron' of the fascia and body, mind and heart within;

Wednesday night Yin Space, livestream yoga has begun again. It is an all levels gentle evening Yin yoga class. Livestreamed only to integrate the intentions and energies of all who participate in that moment of time. Structured to be accessible financially, from sliding scale to 'just practice'. Still one and a half hours of commitment, though you are always encouraged to listen and play 'your' edge of practice, if that doesn't get you there right on time, or moves you to leave early, still welcome. If you have not practiced with me before in this way please contact me...you are welcome to join to see if it is useful, even if only to listen.

This season each month there will be a free one hour **Metta on Mondays** Yin Yoga class. *They will 'run', or perhaps more true to say they will 'slow and still':),* from 7-8pm PST or 10-11pm EST offering a time of pause in the beginning of the week, and a reminder that 'yin is always possible, no matter how busy we might get. Introductory, beginning with some movement then settling into the flow of 'long quiet still' postures of Yin Yoga. We will finish with a short "metta - loving kindness" meditation. Mondays are chosen to align with, and support some global day of solidarity and awareness. This season we began in September with International Day of Peace on Monday September 21st. In October we will acknowledge **World Teachers Day** on Monday October 5th. Honouring *both* the teachers *without*, including people, natural world, vision of spirit, to the important one that lives *within* us!

Offerings of Dragonfly Vision

Mindfulness, Leadership & Nature

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Yin Space, - Livestreamed Wednesday night Yin Yoga classes

Wednesday Evenings

7:00-8:30 pm PST/10:00-11:30 pm EST

Monthly *Sliding Scale 30.00-40.00* (includes 4 to 5 classes)

Drop In *Sliding Scale 10.00-13.00*

OR....just pay what you can (just practice!)

Please do not let financial obstacles block you from a practice that serves you.

Metta on Mondays - free once a month Yin Yoga class focused on adding energy to Global Memorial and Celebration Days. An introductory gentle Yin Yoga practice ending with a metta loving kindness meditation for all beings, and folks choosing this work of 'be the change' in the world.

Monday October 5th - World Teachers Day

Time: 7:00-8:00 pm PST 10:00-11:00 pm EST

Note: I will send email invites to all who have practiced with me in *Yin Space,* before. If you would like to join or know of another please contact me beforehand.

The signs of fall are there; honking Canadian geese, pumpkins piled in front of stores, local apples in markets reminding me of childhood stories of climbing trees to pick, and savour their aliveness. The busy intensity of the beginnings of school and

post summer work is creating its own unique seasonal chaos factor. All this against the backdrop of increasing darkness, longer nights and shorter days and increasing cold and often wet, perhaps woven with a touch of dryness or less humidity. A sadness pervades in a way too - a letting go of the delight and pleasures of summertime...the falling leaves. Yet, there is also a spaciousness in spending more time inside adapting shorter, wetter days and nights including noticing the potential for different opportunities in all that.

Interesting too to see how we have entered in a season, the fall, that according to the Chinese philosophy integrated into Traditional Chinese Medicine is associated with the element of metal. A substance whose working often evokes an image of blacksmith heating and hammering iron into adornment, tool, or weapon, illustrating the wide range of choices of use. A substance whose symbolism of heated working and forming, or spinoff inspired creativity of throbbing, heavy metal music, is not necessarily what we may associate with Yin yoga, still offers ideas that we might use in our practice. In a way learning from the entwinement of Yin and Yang, each within the other. Applying our will like a 'soft hammer' in a persistent and persevering, gentle tempo as we learn to sit softly for minutes in a pose, or on a meditation cushion engaging with mind and heart that while quiet at times, can also move like hard core metal music; must get things done, must make money, or more relevantly to the music of metal, must challenge the system. Each hammer stroke, an action to return us from distractions of mind in the pulsations of action of constant planning or obsessing on something, worrying or daydreaming, to focus again and again on the sensation of edge or breath.



Yin Space, Est:Fall 2020 by b & all

This is a time too that many remember or share gratitude, for what they have gathered from the earth, for the energies and small actions that we and the many continue to take in the world to move it towards compassion and care. Gratitude that we know of a variety of ways and practices that may nourish a loving kindness and a mindfulness be it a few breaths, our mat or cushion, a noticing of nature as we walk

to get something done, 'listening'... to, and being with important beings in our lives, getting the dishes done again! Gratitude for the mutual weaving of *Yin Space*, as we enter into the, more obvious, Yin time of the year yet again. Recognizing and acting upon the useful process of 'letting go' of what no longer serves even as the trees release their leaves no longer needed for the upcoming season of winter.

Finally, as others have used their powers of observation and deduction moving through the external world to locate the 'bling' of metals in order to find or create great wealth, we might turn those skills inward to observe internal 'sparkles' of sensations, patterns, or epiphanies in our bodies and minds. Learning to move through our internal landscapes scanning, noticing, creating space and ways to see, listen and understand, to transform. Sparkles leading to our own becoming. Sparkles showing us the 'truth of the wealth' that lies within each of us.

in weaving,

brad

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I am grateful to be able to live and share these ancient, and evolving practices of mindfulness, leadership and nature from the traditional territories of the Attawandaron, Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, and Lūnaapéewak Peoples (and present day nations; Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee-Delaware Nation), in London, beside the river Thames, Deshkan Ziibi.