

Returning

We carry a center that is always returning.

We all stray from the moment in particular ways. If we meet someone and begin a new relationship, it isn't long before we're walking hand in hand, while wondering if we will sleep together; and if and when we do, we are wondering if we will live together; and if and when we do, we are wondering if we will have children—and on and on.

This happens with fear and pain as well. In [Cancer] diagnosis, I feared surgery. In surgery, I feared treatment. In treatment, I feared stronger treatment. In [cancer remission] recovery, I fear recurrence.

No one can avoid this straying, but our health depends on the breath that stops us from straying further. No matter how far we've gone, it is the practice of returning to whatever moment we are living now that restores us, because only when fully in each moment can we draw strength from the Oneness of things.

- Center yourself and feel the moment at hand.
- Note the vitality of energy that appears when you stop focusing on yourself.
- Breathe steadily and feel yourself stray. Note how that vitality lessens while straying.
- Breathe through your straying and re-enter the moment at hand.
- Note the resurgence of vitality.

Nepo, M. (2000). Pg. 79. *The Book of Awakening: Having the life you want by being present to the life you have.* Conari Press, CA.