

### Section Three – Tools, Exercises and Practices (excerpt)

...Section Three offers practical some tools and exercises that can support you to become a better you. These tools and practices touch on the emotional, spiritual, mental, and psychological aspects of change and will challenge the way you have traditionally looked at change. Discomfort may surface. You might question whether or not a better you is worth the work. Change is all about becoming comfortable with your discomfort. This is your challenge, your choice.

The Buddhist monk and author, Thich Nhat Hahn, speaks of the Buddhist expression, "no mud, no Lotus" as it relates to change this way:

*"It's like growing lotus flowers. You cannot grow lotus flowers on marble. You have to grow them on the mud. Without mud you cannot have a lotus flower. Without suffering, you have no ways in order to learn how to (grow). That's why my definition of the kingdom of (growth) is not a place where suffering is not, where there is no suffering..."*

Becoming a better you is not and cannot be a mental or intellectual exercise alone. You know that already. True growth requires a focus on the body, the spirit, and the heart along with the mind.

True growth, true change, and true happiness are an "inside" job. The mind alone, with its thinking and reasoning capabilities, will never get you there.

Just as it is impossible to grow the lotus without the mud, it's impossible to know light without knowing dark. The challenges of becoming a better you require that you get in touch with and explore the darkness, the mud, and the uncertainty that accompany change. Becoming a better you is all about being in harmony with what you think, say, feel, and do. You cannot think about change and not "do" change and expect to change, to be different. Again, you know that. The first step is deciding what that better you looks like. The second, third, fourth . . . steps involve action, activity, do-ing and be-ing. The idea of change is as small as the tiny brain molecule that contains it. Action is what gives it the energy to expand and explode into the reality of a better you.

Finally, a better you is not the you who currently exists. The readings, tools, and practices in this section will take you from the current you to the vision of a better you and then to the actuality of a better you. The "you" you are intended to be.