

Creating SafetyA Friendly Host
Russell Delman June 2014

"How scary, entering the classroom for the first time. Will they make fun of me? Will they hurt me? Am I safe?"

"Knocking at the door, an anxious, shy look in her eye. Not knowing- would the one who opened the door be welcoming?"

"Stepping on the crowded bus, few seats remaining, he catches the eye of a passenger who has her suitcase on the seat. Will she make room for him?"

Our lives are full of these moments. Are we welcomed, rejected or simply unacknowledged? So much turns on these interactions. Whether we are a child or elder we seek inclusion. We all have these very sensitive antennae, quivering with information about the friendliness of our environment. Our nervous system, being deeply social and always concerned with safety, listens fervently to these cues.

In my opinion, this exact same process occurs with our **inner life**. The thoughts, feelings and sensations that arise are like guests, wondering, "will I be welcomed", "is this a safe place" "is this a friendly host"? IF safety is the first and primary concern of the nervous system, which I suggest it is, then becoming a friendly host for all that arises in your inner world is a most important thing.

Hosting the moment . . .

I like to imagine that I am hosting this moment. The moment comes, a rich plethora of everything- sun-light, shadows, pulsing excitement in my chest, car horn blasting, bird chirping, person talking, smiling face, uncertainty lingering, an itch, a mosquito buzzing, a phone ringing, thirst, swallowing-on and on and on. What is it like to be a friendly host for all the visitors that come?

For me this is a beautiful way of describing a central element of The Embodied Life- *how to be a welcoming presence for all that arises?* I call this **Presencing**. It is learning to be a friendly host for all that comes into our world. Inner world and outer world become one world-, which is none other than our living experience. Being friendly does not mean liking or approving of, it means relating to "what is" as our ground. This is the aikido of everyday.

Imagine- this moment and everything in it are your True Life. You are living in the actuality, right now, right here, so obvious yet so elusive.

Being a friendly host helps enormously to encourage us to come alive to the reality of our living experience. Buddha suggests that we can trust this moment. Even though "bad" things happen, we can learn to find our safety as well as our joy and peace and love itself in this present moment. Where else will we find it?