

Letter from New York City

I have a job during the week. Last Tuesday evening I went to the meditation center I've been going to since 1989. I arrived a little early so I went to our café area to have coffee and maybe chat with someone I know.

As I went to sit down, I wanted to sit with a couple of people I knew, but it would have been difficult to maneuver over to the chair. I could sit down where it was most easy to get to, but it was next to someone I see all the time, but never talk to. I had been in a really negative mood for days and was hoping to sit with people I knew, but here was this other situation.

I sat next to the person I never talk to because it was the most convenient place to sit. I made a decision to be friendly and engaged him in a conversation. I asked him how he was and he soon told me he had eleven cats. I told him how I loved cats and until recently I always had at least one cat. As he talked, I consciously looked into his face and into his eyes. I was sure I could see his amazement and disbelief that we were having this pleasant conversation at all. Honestly, I was amazed myself at how it was going.

When it was time for our program to begin, we said good by and went to the meditation hall. Moments afterward I realized that interaction had completely changed my mood. I felt much lighter and open.

So, this is what it is like for me in New York City as an artist. Sometimes it is about doing or seeing a painting that just knocks me out. Sometimes it is about others telling me how much they like my work. Sometimes it is about having my work shown. But mostly, I think it is about relationship. Relationship can turn everything around through an unexpected encounter.

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