**21 Days Of Self-Compassion with Ramaa**

 **Notes from Week 1**

**Our Basic Natural Self**

Who we truly are:

"...*three qualities that have always been with us but perhaps have gotten buried and been almost forgotten. These qualities are natural intelligence, natural warmth, and natural openness. When I say that the potential for goodness exists in all beings, that is acknowledging that everyone, everywhere, all over the globe, has these qualities and can call on them to help themselves and others."-*Pema Chodron

**Our Ego Self**

A extensive program\* of reactions and choices kept in place by mindless repetition of our patterns and stories.

(\*a series of coded software instructions to control the operation of a computer or other machine.)

**Denying Self-Compassion: The Stories We Tell Ourselves**

"I *should* be feeling bad. I should have known better."

"I deserve to feel horrible."

"Guilt keeps me on track."

"Self-compassion is enabling, not correcting.”

“Others have it worse than I do. I should be feeling grateful.”

**Taking Down The Walls**

*“Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it."* – Rumi

*“Rather than going after these walls and barriers with a sledgehammer, we pay attention to them. With gentleness and honesty, we move closer to those walls. We touch them, and smell them and get to know them well. We become familiar with the strategies and beliefs we use to build these walls: what are the stories we tell ourselves? What repels me and what attracts me? Without calling what we see right or wrong, we simply look as objectively as we can. We can observe ourselves with humor, not getting overly serious, moralistic or uptight about the investigation. Year after year, we train in remaining open and receptive to whatever arises. Slowly, very slowly, the cracks in the walls seem to widen and, as if by magic, bodhichitta is able to flow freely.”* -Pema Chodron

**Our Homework for this week: A Sitting Practice**

Set your timer for 10 minutes.

Start by getting in touch with whatever is bothering you about yourself, a loved one or the world in general.

(It could be a present situation, a past memory, or a worry about the future.)

Feel your discomfort/pain without sinking into victimhood (powerlessness) or seeking to fix the issue at hand.

When you mind wanders to thinking or rationalizing, bring yourself back to feeling.

Now ask the question: where am I feeling the discomfort/pain?

Breathe slowly and intentionally, sending love to the places that are hurting.

Remain this way for the duration of your session, then taking a deep breath, bring yourself back to the moment.