Thank you everyone for your presence and generosity in sharing of yourselves last night.

In working with difficulties, we will start by looking at the ways we flinch or try to move away from discomfort.

Some are more skillful than others, but all share the same purpose: to move away from what’s painful, to pacify or make ourselves feel better.

We all brainstormed our various methods, including:
- Busy distraction
- Yelling
- Zoning out
- Watch TV, computer
- Procrastinating
- Leaving
- Getting quiet
- Daydreaming, fantasy
- Change the topic
- Try to fix and make it better
- Shopping
- Eating
- Filling time with other people
- Reading
- Avoiding situations or people
- Inner head conversations: justifying, re-hashing it over and over, blaming, rationalizing, etc.

They all serve one of these strategies for managing suffering:
- Distraction
- Avoidance
- Substitution
- Procrastination
- Control
- Denial
- Rationalization
- Pacification

Please notice what happens when you feel discomfort or emotional stress. What avoidance strategies do you use?

As you approach this, do not try to change or fix anything, just see what your habitual responses are. Come back to class prepared to share what you find. What’s your top ten? How do you turn away, trying to make it more bearable.
The premise is that in order to unravel the frozen energy knots around unresolved places and get the life energy back and move through them, we have to accept them and be willing to feel them - as we are able to. These flinching mechanisms are the ways we do not accept them, or we feel overwhelmed by them.

What are the ways we don't feel what we are feeling?

Class one: how do we avoid our feelings?