

Practice Note: Mindfulness as Fullness

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Words about the practice, as I was meditating just now before, I was struck by the huge divide there can be in our lives between when we feel connected to ourselves, connected to here really well, and when we are disconnected. One of the ways to be disconnected is to be spending too much time in thinking. Too much time, we say colloquially in English, in the head. So we've caught up in our concerns, caught up in our preoccupations, our fears, our fantasies, our desires, and just spinning. Some people can describe that as the mind just spinning out of control with all these thoughts we have. Sometimes it's fueled by the way that people are on devices these days.

My kind of theory is that there's something about being on a device, even reading email or being on a website, that it's mostly being processed through this above the head, above the neck kind of operating system, and through the eyes and the ramifications it has on the mind and thoughts and ideas and concerns. That fuels and continues the spinning out. What it does is disconnects us from our bodies. To be deeply connected is to be connected through our bodies. Some of the most wonderful things about human life—love, joy, peace—are embodied experiences. It's hard to experience them if you are just from the neck up in your thoughts and ideas and past and future.

One of the ways we practice with this is that when you find yourself primarily involved in thoughts, whether it's words or whether it's images or visions of different things that you might have, if you find that's going on, don't dismiss it, don't push it away, don't try to immediately let go of it. Rather, spend some time to feel your way to recognize how it keeps you divided, how it keeps you divided, not so connected to yourself. So you learn about it. You take a moment to be mindful of what that's like. Just that, as you feel it, as you sense it, that's the beginning of maybe caring about yourself in relationship to it.

Maybe the very awareness of it evokes a kind of care, a concern, a love, a compassion that is part of this return to a more whole, connected kind of way of being. Because as we connect to ourselves more deeply, then that's where we can care. In the end, mindfulness is a process of care, a process of compassion, of love, of kindness, goodwill. That's what the benefit is of becoming connected in a deeper way to ourselves. So when you're disconnected, bring your attention to that and recognize how it is a form of disconnection, how you're not so connected to the whole. That very studying it is the beginning of becoming whole.

So may those words be supportive for you here this morning. Thank you.