

Practice Note: Freeing the Bird

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January 22, 2025

Keywords: reactivity, meditation, letting go, analogy, triggers, preoccupation, mind, peace, openness, practice

It's about the practice. A few times in my life, I've had a bird fly into a room where I was at. And then the idea was to help the bird out. And we'd open the door, open window. And sometimes it's been successful relatively easily, but often it's been a challenge. And it seems like every time we tried to help it out, guide it out, it would fly up higher, above the door, above the window, and it was, you know, across the room.

And it seemed like all our efforts to help, you know, just made the bird more agitated and was not helping. And occasionally the way to do it was to keep the door, window, open, and leave the room and just leave it alone. And it would eventually calm down, eventually would fly around and find the opening. Imagine if the one-room house you're in, the bird flew in, but rather than just one door and a couple of windows, all the walls were doors that opened up. So every wall could open up wide. And so the bird's in there, but you just open everything up.

And it's only way, you know, it's just completely now open all four walls out to the great outdoors. And then you leave the bird and, you know, it's no problem. Just, you know, flies out to every direction it goes. It's free to go and fly out and be happy. So imagine that whatever thoughts, reactivity, emotions, any kind of things that get triggered inside of you as you sit here and meditate... Imagine it's a bird that's gotten stuck inside the room.

And you might open the door, you might try to let go of it or do something. But every attempt to do that, just, you know, it makes it more agitated, more reactive, more energized. And the task is, that's better, is to open all the doors of your mind, make it really wide. And open it up so that it can fly away, can be free and go. So rather than reacting to anything that, rather than reacting to your reactivity, it's just another bird. Just open, just open.

So that's what birds want to do. They want to fly free. Most of your reactivity, most of your preoccupations, most of your triggers, most of the things that you get caught in, Don't get caught anymore. Don't react to reactivity. Just open the doors. Just open wide. Make space so everything can fly out. So if that analogy works for you, may it bring you much peace for your mind and heart. Thank you.