

Practice Notes: Harmony, Balance and Homeostasis

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October 01, 2025

Keywords: mindfulness, homeostasis, harmony, balance, embodiment, mindfulness meditation, liberation, breathing, wholesome qualities, walking meditation

So to say a few words about the practice, as most of you probably know, the core practice we do is mindfulness. And sometimes that's presented in its own terms, that, you know, mindfulness is always good, and we should just try to be mindful all the time, and that's the goal and purpose for, like, meditation, mindfulness meditation, is just to be mindful. But one of the issues with that is that the mindfulness then might not be really well rooted in something. It doesn't have roots in us. And so it's easy, the analogy that's sometimes used, it doesn't have an anchor in the water. And a boat that's not anchored will drift away by the wind or the currents or the waves or whatever.

It's all too easily. So sometimes when you have practice mindfulness, it's good to be well-rooted so you don't wander off. And sometimes a different purpose rather than just being mindful is helpful for that. So one of the purposes for mindfulness is to come into harmony, homeostasis, and or balance in ourselves. It's all too easy to become imbalanced. It's all too easy to become so stressed, so preoccupied, so caught up in our thoughts and ideas or fantasies that we come out of harmony with ourselves.

We're not in touch with ourselves, not aware of ourselves. A lot of our energy, attention goes into certain parts of our body, often in the head. It goes into the places where there's a lot of tension and the places where there's no tension that are kind of offline, not really noticed. Right? And in modern world, I think a lot of people have a huge part of their psychophysical being offline, you know, not engaged, not present. And mindfulness meditation is meant to include all of ourselves so that we can come into harmony.

All the different parts of us can come into harmony. All the different parts of us can come into kind of balance or homeostasis. And just that is wonderful. And, you know, it just can be really healthy and healing for people to do that. But it's also the foundation for then, with

that balance, to then take the mindfulness practice further for the higher purposes of this practice. And some of the higher purposes is to use that homeostasis, that harmony, in order to grow a lot of the really wholesome qualities of being that we can grow.

We can grow in goodness, in a healthy kind of personality, out of that balance. We can also set the conditions for the deep insight into liberation, which Buddhism is kind of the central aim of Buddhism. But to try to be mindful by itself just to get liberated, might be way too big of a jump. And liberation itself is not really such a good anchor or root to keep us here. But this idea that, oh, I'm being mindful, I want to be in my breathing, I want to be present in my body, I want to avoid kind of spinning out in my thoughts so much because spinning out is not where harmony is found. That's where disharmony is found.

The embodied harmony is found of being embodied. And then if we are practicing this embodiment with the mindfulness, feeling what's here, sensing what's here, even if it feels unbalanced, just feeling in an embodied way moves the system to balance. You don't have to be the balancer. So as you do this today, the practice here, you might want to see if the idea of harmony, balance, homeostasis can be a little bit of orientation that keeps you more fully in the present moment and supports the mindfulness to be an embodiment as you go through the day. And doing something regularly and simple, like a regular walking meditation back and forth for the 45 minutes, that tends to create more harmony and balance, in a bigger picture than just wandering around the neighborhood.

And so that's one of the reasons we do this simple activity of sitting and this posture or this chair posture, and stay with the rhythm of our breathing, because that also, the breathing and being mindful of breathing, is a means to help create harmony or homeostasis for us. So let's see what happens if that means anything for you, whether that orients you and guides you through the morning. So thank you very much.