

## WISDOM ARISING FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF NOT-SELF

### Guy Armstrong - Foundations of Worldly Happiness vs Liberation

Past karma may have shaped our present, but it is our will expressed now that sets our future course. Through Dharma practice we are shaping our character, which shapes our life. We can choose how we want to shape our life.

If we aspire to ordinary worldly happiness, the way to that is through wholesome acts especially of generosity, virtue, and loving-kindness, which are the three bases of meritorious action (Pali: *punna*).

If we aspire to liberation, which the Buddha called the highest happiness, these three bases are important but not sufficient. Generosity, virtue, and loving-kindness can be done from a place of self. Wholesome acts can be used to support the construction of a more polished, beautiful self-image. Such acts can lead to happiness, but until we have seen through self, we are still creating new karma and continuing the rounds of becoming, or samsara.

### Piers Moore Ede - Whenever Possible, Basic Procedures Are Complicated

The narrow *galis* [literally channels, the ancient narrow streets of old Benares / Varanasi] hum with commerce. All business is a form of theatre here: food is flipped with comical panache; chai is poured from an absurd height into glasses for it to cool. Whenever possible, basic procedures are complicated by elaborate movements of the hands, exaggerated shaking of the head or a downturned mouth. *Masti*, love of life, trills into every second of time, so that food is savored more loudly, complaints are more vociferous, spiritual practice is more intense.

### Practice Recommendations – A Sense of Separation

Can you feel the sense of separation?	Physical, emotional, psychological
What does it feel like?	In the body & In the mind
When do you feel it?	Conditions, situations, patterns
What happens when you feel it?	Thoughts, emotions, speech, behavior

## Short & Long Term Practice Perspectives On Emotions

Dalai Lama & Thubten Chodron

Approaching The Buddhist Path

We are emotional beings. Our feelings of pleasure or pain provoke different emotions, and our emotions motivate us to act. Some of our emotions are afflictive and unrealistic; others are more realistic and beneficial.

As a result, some of our actions bring more pain, while others bring happiness. Learning to differentiate destructive from constructive emotions so we can subdue the former and nourish the latter is a worthy endeavor on a personal as well as a societal level.

While both Buddhism and psychology seek to help people have more happiness and fulfillment and decrease their unhappiness and misery, they differ somewhat in what they consider positive and negative emotions.

Some psychologists and scientists I have spoken with say that a negative emotion is one that feels bad and makes the person unhappy at the time it is manifest in the mind. A positive emotion makes the person feel happy at the time it is manifest.

In Buddhism, what differentiates positive and negative emotions is not our immediate feeling of happiness or discomfort but the happiness or suffering that is the long-term result of those emotions. That is because the long-term effects of our actions are considered more important than their short-term effects, which tend to be fleeting in comparison. If, in the long term, an emotion produces unpleasant experiences, it is considered negative; if it brings happiness in the long term, it is positive.

Buddhism explains that virtuous (positive, constructive, wholesome) emotions lead to happiness in the long term, while nonvirtuous (negative, destructive, unwholesome) emotions lead to suffering.