

# **Awareness, Effort, and Right View**

## **Sacramento Insight Meditation**

February 27, 2020

### **The Nature of Awareness**

Notice the difference between what is knowing and what is being known. Notice that they have different roles and different natures. *To know* versus *to be known*. Awareness *knows*; objects are known.

The mind needs to be directed. Once you have set a direction for the mind, it will continue in that direction. This is a natural quality of the mind. If you leave the mind undirected, there will be chaos.

There are two means by which unskillful mental qualities are uprooted. One is that you simply become aware of them, and they naturally disappear. In this case, awareness does the work. The other way is that understanding arises about whatever unskillful root quality is present. In this case, wisdom does the work.

Practitioners often forget to investigate and to ask questions about experience in order to learn. But mindfulness is meant to facilitate understanding. You have to use wise thinking to decide how to handle things. You cannot limit your practice to continuously being aware. That's not always enough.

\*What is happening in the mind and what is happening in the body right now? How is one mental state related to another mental state? You want to be interested in the nature of this mind and body. Hold concepts and story lines to the side.

### **Awareness with Right Effort**

\*Don't force something to happen. This goes against nature. You can't get something just because you want it or you work for it. There are two things that can move us forward: how much we do and how skillful we are. Pay attention to applying skill and to right effort—these deserve our attention.

The awareness we are seeking is unprompted. We are not digging for it. We are simply residing in the ebb and flow of nature itself. See if you can notice this.

Interest brings energy to the mind naturally, without straining, focusing, or exertion. It requires no individual effort, and so we can bring interest continuously without getting tired. Observing like this gives us energy and joy.

When doing the work of continually being aware, you do not need to know every detail of your experience. Just be aware and know what you are aware of. The quality of mind that becomes most prominent by practicing in this way is awareness itself. That is what we are trying to cultivate.

We cannot focus on awareness. Why? It has no location. So once you understand awareness, there is no need to focus. Instead, just ask often, "What am I aware of?" "What is my level of awareness?" This will support and develop continuity of awareness.

\*Let things unfold naturally. Your job is to watch, know, learn, and gain experience. As you watch an experience continually, you will begin to recognize patterns. Later you will see the whole picture. The value of meditation becomes more apparent with dedicated practice over long stretches of time.

**Awareness, Effort, and Right View**  
**Sacramento Insight Meditation**  
February 27, 2020

**Awareness with Right View**

Watching the unskillful qualities of mind is more important than watching the skillful qualities, because if you can keep the unskillful qualities at bay, the skillful qualities automatically come in.

Tension never takes hold in the mind alone. If there is tension in the mind as a result of the unwholesome roots (greed, hatred, delusion), then it will be reflected in tension somewhere in the body. Consciously relaxing these physical tensions is a kind of meditation.

Never get discouraged when you lose awareness. Every time you recognize that you have lost awareness, be happy. The fact that you have recognized that you lost awareness means that you are now aware. Just keep looking at this process of losing and regaining awareness and learn from it.

Life is a reflection of the quality of mind. If you really understand the mind, you understand the world. You gain this understanding by observing and learning. You don't need to believe anything you don't intellectually understand. Just keep investigating. Just keep learning from your personal experience.

\*Daily life will be full of ups and downs when greed, anger, delusion and all their relatives come on strong. How do you approach such situations? The first step is to accept whatever is happening in the mind as it is. Accept that this is just the nature of the mind. Unless you accept, you will be fighting defilements with defilements.

\*There is a temporary end to suffering, and there is an ultimate end to suffering. We have to pay the price accordingly. Some things come easily and are cheaper. We will have to pay a higher price for something more valuable.

from "Relax and Be Aware: Mindfulness Meditations for Clarity, Confidence and Wisdom." By Sayadaw U Tejaniya, Shambala Publications, December 2019

Except those marked with \*:

from "Collecting Gold Dust" by Sayadaw U Tejaniya. This book may be downloaded free at:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bMVtHlEQ0sj4OobCG7eP7FfsmrjJm6N9/>