

Sayadaw U Tejaniya quotes on Seeing  
from The Daily Tejaniya, curated by Doug McGill, Rochester Meditation Center

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We are so used to thinking that meditation has something to do with having our eyes closed, that we are not used to the idea that we can be aware of seeing. It may be a new idea that with our eyes open we can be aware. When you are seeing, know that you are seeing. It is very important to practice in this way.

5/10/21

Every time you are aware of something, remind yourself, "This is nature." Let's say you are walking and you are aware of sights, sounds and thoughts. Then remind yourself, "Seeing is nature. Hearing is nature. Thinking is nature."

3/29-30/21

We tend not to understand what seeing is. The instant tendency of the mind is to think of what it is seeing—a statue of the Buddha, the floor, a cushion. But the seeing is a different thing. Seeing is a very, very obvious object. Just acknowledge that you are seeing.

Seeing and thinking have similar natures. Just as we want to notice not *what* we are thinking about, but rather *that* we are thinking, we want to be able to observe and learn about the process of seeing, in particular in relation to liking, disliking, and ignoring.

12/13/20

When a car passes by, what differentiates the meditator from the non-meditator? The meditator knows both that the car passed by and knows the experience of seeing, feeling, hearing, and interpreting the experience, thoughts, or thinking mind, and so forth (some or all, as the case may be). The non-meditator just knows a car passing by.

9/21-9/27/20

We tend not to understand what seeing is. The instant tendency of the mind is to think of what is being seen—"I see a picture of the Buddha," "I see the floor." But seeing, that's a different thing. In general, like when you are walking, you're not necessarily looking at anything. But, seeing is happening. You can choose to be conscious of it.

Try practicing sitting meditation with your eyes open. Seeing can be one of the objects of meditation, it's a very obvious object. Seeing is happening. Can you choose not to see when your eyes are open? The recognition that seeing is happening might come again and again; that's all you need to do.

We all know how to be aware of hearing, right? Does that seem easier? Why have we never noticed seeing? If we are not proficient at being aware of all our sense doors then we can't really say that we are completely proficient at meditation.

Seeing and thinking are very similar in nature. When we think, we get involved in our thoughts very easily. We identify with them and with our thinking. It's the same with seeing. When we see, when we have our eyes open, immediately our attention is with the concepts outside. It is the mind's habit to take those as objects and to be "out there," rather than to be aware of the seeing.

In the practice of being aware of thinking, you make yourself conscious that you are thinking. You remind yourself, "thinking is happening, thinking is happening," again and again, until you can view thinking objectively, and not identify with the thinker. You can apply the same pattern to seeing, reminding yourself, "seeing is happening, seeing is happening." In this way you are able to step away a little bit and stop identifying with the see-er.

Our minds are used to focusing. We are very skillful at it because we do it all the time. The problem is that we don't recognize that we are focusing. We are trying to meditate but we don't really understand what meditation is.

Instead of trying to understand how the mind is working, how the mind is paying attention, we go out to objects. We look at the objects and think this is meditation. The mind is expert at taking concepts as objects, so it focuses on them, and we forget what we are supposed to take as meditation objects. So, don't look at anything. Be aware of seeing, and be aware of your awareness.