The Wandering Mind

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In our practice, it's often helpful to recognize certain patterns of experience that recur and then to explore those, getting familiar with them, beginning to recognize them, recognize the conditions in which they occur, how they come together, how they fall apart. We can learn a lot by observing phenomena that happen to us over and over again. Each time we see a familiar pattern, it's like we get a different perspective on it. We learn a little bit more about our minds.

Tonight I'd like to explore a particular pattern that we all share in spades, one that happens to all of us quite frequently: the pattern of the mind wandering out of the present moment. The wandering mind.

This is actually a pattern that we can be interested in, we can explore, we can learn something about. But it's often a pattern that we think is something we just need to dismiss in order to get back to the present moment. I'd like to share with you some of my own exploration around this pattern, some of the things I've learned, some of the things I've understood, and hope to encourage you to make your own exploration.

In this sharing, I'd also like to point to the fact that I'm just picking one pattern here, one particular pattern that we may not necessarily think is so interesting to explore. I want to encourage you that whatever pattern is common for you, whatever pattern is familiar for you, it is well worth exploring. There's so much that you can learn. With so many patterns in my own mind, I kept thinking, "Well, when I get past this one, that's when the practice will really start." What I've come to see is that it is through these very patterns, through understanding and exploring these very things that seem to be in our way, that our practice deepens.

The wandering mind is a term we often use for the mind that loses touch with present moment experience—a wandering out of the present moment. That's kind of the way we think about it, or almost the way it feels at times. There are many different ways this pattern manifests.

Some of the more frequent ones, especially earlier in our practice or earlier in settling into a retreat, involve active reflection, active thinking. The mind picks up on a theme and starts thinking about it—about the past, about the future, planning or remembering, or even describing the present moment.

Then there's the flavor of the wandering mind that is more of a charge out of the present moment. There may be some kind of emotional reactivity coming up, and the thoughts hook into that emotional reactivity and just run away into a pattern of frustration or anger or wanting or loneliness. Whatever the emotion is, often there can be a charge of thoughts related to it—a kind of mind storm.

There's another flavor of this wandering mind that is much less charged. It's more of a drifting out of the present moment. The energy perhaps is a little low, not quite connecting with experience, and the mind just floats out of the present moment. You may notice this in thoughts that don't have much particular meaning to you. They may be dreamlike, or they may be just strange words floating through your mind. Often this is a manifestation of the energy being a little bit lower.

And then there's another flavor that is a kind of spacing out. It doesn't necessarily have much thought connected to it, but the mind loses touch with present moment experience. We find ourselves almost in a zoned-out space. Again, probably not much charge to that, and in fact it may feel kind of pleasant, but there's not much connection with the present moment.

These are just a few of the flavors I've seen of ways the mind can leave the present moment. But a general quality of all of these is basically a state of very low or non-mindfulness. That's actually what's happening: the mind is in a state of low or non-mindfulness. The mind doesn't actually wander anywhere; it doesn't go anywhere. The state of mind shifts, and mindfulness is not arising in the moment. That's the flavor of what we traditionally or typically might call the wandering mind.

There's not much we can do when the mind is wandering. When we're lost in it, very little can be done about that. We can't make ourselves come out of that wandering. When we're in a lost state, we cannot willfully choose to have mindfulness re-arise. It has to re-arise on its own. Fortunately, it will re-arise on its own at some point. And when mindfulness re-arises, at that moment we can begin to explore our experience again.

I'd like to explore this phenomenon of the wandering mind from both sides of where we wander. The easiest place, the place I'll start with, is the places where we can wake up. Then I'd also like to explore the ways we wander, the ways that the mind starts to wander. There is so much we can learn by observing this process of the mind.

We learn about our own minds through this process. We learn about the personal patterns of our minds, how we get caught in certain patterns of thought. We get familiar with the flavors, the habits of our mind, the familiar ways it gets caught. One of the things we learn about is our personal proclivities, what we tend to get stuck to. We recognize this by recognizing the flavor of what we are waking up into when we come back, when mindfulness re-arises.

We also learn more deeply from this phenomenon that the mind is basically out of control. We sit down to meditate, we have the intention to be present, we choose an object perhaps, we bring our attention to the breath, and we have this intention to stay present. But our choice doesn't seem to hold much sway over our mind. The mind just does its thing and at some point will wander off. We have very little control over the fact that the mind wanders out of the present moment.

There is some ability, when we are mindful, to choose mindfulness. It's not us doing it, but the processes of

our mind do have some small amount of choice in what happens when we are present, when we are mindful. I'll talk a little more about that part in a few minutes. So there's very little control we have over the mind wandering out of the present moment, but there is some degree of choice that can be made at that point. We have no control over how long our minds wander. We have no control over when that moment of mindfulness will spontaneously re-arise.

We often think of these things as problems, that we don't have control over our minds. We feel like we should be able to not have the mind wander. But this process actually points to a very deep truth: there's very little control. Our minds are out of our control. And if we explore this, we see that this is actually a pointer to the Buddha's teaching on not-self.

He pointed to this in the second discourse that he gave. He pointed to this aspect of being out of control. The processes of our mind and body are out of control. I'll just read you a section of this. He talked about the processes of body, of form, of feeling, of perception, of intention, of consciousness as all being out of our control. He restated it for each of these aspects. I'm going to read it with respect to consciousness:

"Consciousness is not self. If consciousness were the self, it would not lend itself to dis-ease. It would be possible to say with regard to consciousness, 'Let my consciousness be thus, let my consciousness not be thus.' But precisely because consciousness is not self, it lends itself to dis-ease. It is not possible to say, 'Let my consciousness be thus.'"

How many of us would choose, if we could, to say, "Let my consciousness be thus"? That would be wonderful. But consciousness does not lend itself to that.

We usually explore our experience, we often meet our experience and navigate our lives, navigate our world through a perspective of me, of mine, of I—the sense of self. Because we have this view of self, because we're seeing things from this perspective of self much of the time, it influences how we perceive our experience. We may not see things that don't conform with that belief or that view. We have the view, the belief of self, and so much of what we perceive, what we recognize, how we take it in, confirms this belief for us. We don't always notice things that don't confirm it. The wandering mind, the out-of-control nature of our experience, is just such a piece of evidence for not-self. This simple experience of the wandering mind can really point us to a very deep truth if we can take it in.

The exploration of the wandering mind can also support an understanding of cause and effect. We see something that triggers a memory. We start thinking about that memory and we're lost. This is a pretty common way to wander out of the present moment—through some sense experience that we start thinking about. This is a cause and effect process, a pretty simple process. There isn't anyone responsible for it, there isn't anyone here doing it. It is a process of mind, a natural process. In recognizing something, the associative nature of memory creates this effect of a memory arising. If we're present for this process, we can see this cause and effect relationship unfolding. We see, almost eerily, that it is just happening. It is simply a process unfolding—again, underscoring, giving us

evidence for this teaching of not-self.

Through the exploration of the wandering mind, we can learn things about our personal patterns of mind. We can begin to recognize the out-of-control nature of the mind. We can begin to understand something about cause and effect. We can also begin to learn something, appreciate something about awareness itself, about mindfulness itself—begin to get familiar with the experience of what it is to be aware.

The easiest place to start this exploration, at least in my own experience, is in the moment when mindfulness re-arises. That moment when we remember, "Oh, I've been lost in thought," or "I've been spaced out, or disconnected from experience." Mindfulness has re-arisen.

Often in that moment there can be a little bit of judgment—sometimes subtle, sometimes really obvious—just a little bit of a sense of, "That's not what I was supposed to have been doing. I sat down to meditate. I sat down to be present. My mind was off. That wasn't what I was planning." And so we can have a little bit of that judgment come in when our mindfulness re-arises. You're all familiar with this.

But when we can really recognize and accept and truly acknowledge the out-of-control nature of the mind, we begin to see there's no point in judging the fact that our mind has wandered. Causes and conditions arose that made the mindfulness go away. Causes and conditions arose to make the mindfulness come back. In the moment when mindfulness comes back, it's already back. There's nothing to come back to in that moment. Mindfulness has already re-arisen.

Can you take an interest in that moment? What is that about?

One of the things about that particular moment that I find really interesting is the fact that mindfulness has re-arisen spontaneously. It didn't take any effort at all for that moment of mindfulness to arise. We so often find this practice of awareness, of mindfulness, to involve a lot of efforting and doing. And that moment when mindfulness comes back is a pointer to the possibility of an easeful quality of mindfulness.

Our usual instructions in that moment when mindfulness re-arises—the kind of familiar instructions we explore—are to notice what you're waking up into. Often it's thinking. Mindfulness has re-arisen. What are we aware of in that moment? Thoughts perhaps: planning, worry, judging, fantasizing, ruminating, arguing, describing. Whatever it is, acknowledging whatever it is that we have woken up into.

Sometimes I like to suggest that thoughts are pretty potent forces in our minds. They have a creative power that is quite amazing. So when we've gotten lost in thought, when our minds have gone off in thought, often they have not just created the world of thought but they've created a whole complex of emotions and body sensations as well. So when you wake up into thought, what has been the impact of that thinking on your experience? Taking a moment to recognize that. And to recognize that mindfulness is here already. There's nothing to come back to. If you can be aware of what you've woken up into, that is enough, if you're practicing mindfulness.

Of course, if you're practicing concentration, in that moment of coming back into awareness, recognizing that moment of awareness, the choice there can be, "Oh, I'm back. Okay, let me come back to my object of concentration." So that's the moment when we have some choice in our experience.

It can be really helpful to notice if there has been some kind of emotion that's been created because our mind has wandered off into thought. There's been a kind of charge out of the present moment—the mind going off into a pattern of frustration or desire may have generated the feeling of frustration or desire. So taking that in, recognizing, "Oh, that is part of the impact of that experience."

These things are helpful in terms of recognizing what we've woken up into. And as I mentioned yesterday morning in the reflection, sometimes when our mind wanders out of the present moment, it can wander into beautiful emotions, wholesome emotions. It might wander into thoughts of dear friends that you've spent time with recently, and the feeling that's been generated by those thoughts is mettā. Or perhaps the mind has wandered off into an offering that you made, and the joy and the generosity of that offering may be the impact of those thoughts. So sometimes the wandering mind can wander us into beautiful qualities as well. And in the waking up, it's really helpful to recognize those qualities.

Then we can explore the feeling tone—the pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral aspect of our experience—when we wake up. If the mind has charged off into

worry or frustration, the feeling tone is probably unpleasant. If the mind has wandered into fantasy, the feeling tone may be pleasant when you come back.

One thing I've found particularly helpful in this exploration around feeling tone and the wandering mind is recognizing that the very drifting itself—sometimes in that low energy state when the mind just drifts out of the present—can often be a very pleasant state in itself. Sometimes it's almost the pleasantness itself that we've gotten lost in. The mind has gravitated, in that low energy state, toward that pleasant experience and simply gotten lost in it.

So in the waking up, experiencing that pleasantness can bring energy into the present moment. We get the benefit of feeling the pleasant that the mind had gravitated toward, but now with awareness.

These explorations are looking at almost the content of what we wake up into—looking at the thoughts we wake up into, looking at the feelings, the emotions. What is present as we come back into awareness?

But there's another side of this waking up that I'd like to explore with you, and that is the recognition of the familiarity we can develop with the experience of mindfulness itself as mindfulness comes back. For me, this exploration has been about seeing if I can touch into the very moment that mindfulness returns.

At one point during a three-month course, this became my practice. I could see the mind wandered out of the present moment a lot, so I started getting interested in how soon I could notice that I was back. Initially, as I explored this, it felt like there was a kind of lag. When I consciously recognized that

mindfulness had returned, it was as though there had been a little bit of fuzzy mindfulness preceding the clear recognition—the clear recognition of "I'm back."

Sometimes it feels a little like climbing out of mud. There's a little bit of mindfulness, and then we sink back into whatever we've been lost in. A little bit of mindfulness, and we sink back. A little bit of mindfulness. And at some point, mindfulness kind of recognizes itself. "Oh, I'm back. Here I am."

In that moment, what is the feeling? What is it like to be aware? When mindfulness re-arises, it's a great time to explore what it feels like to be mindful. We can't really know what it's like when we're lost—mindfulness isn't there to take that in. But in the moment when mindfulness re-arises, there's a lingering memory of what it was like just before, when we were hazy, disconnected, not present. And in this moment, there is the clarity of being aware again. We begin to get a sense of that clarity, of what it is to be mindful.

This feeling of mindfulness is actually quite familiar in a way. Once we start to recognize it, it's there in so much of our experience. We just don't notice because we're more interested in what we're aware of and not so interested in the awareness itself.

Our meditation practice gives us tremendous opportunity for this exploration. In a day, hundreds, maybe thousands of times, we have this moment when mindfulness returns. For myself, this exploration—getting interested in the re-arising of mindfulness, getting interested in mindfulness itself—was really helpful in letting go of judgment around the wandering mind. It didn't matter how many times my mind wandered. Every time it happened, I had this opportunity to notice this distinction and get a little more familiar with this feeling, this sense, this experience of mindfulness itself.

This familiarity with mindfulness serves you, because this moment of remembering, this moment when mindfulness re-arises, actually happens to us more than we consciously recognize. We get a very brief moment of recognizing something in the present, and then we move into recognition of that thing and start thinking about it or doing something with it. We very quickly move from recognition into response.

We're in the bathroom and hear a faucet dripping. There's been a moment of awareness—maybe not conscious mindfulness, but a moment of awareness of that phenomenon. And the mind immediately, very naturally, goes to take action: turn off the faucet. In this simple way, we are designed to respond to what we experience. But we're not so familiar with recognizing that we have become aware, that we have become mindful.

So this familiarity with the experience of mindfulness—with what it is to be mindful—begins to point mindfulness out to us more and more throughout the day. It's a very helpful exploration, one that encourages us to recognize more of these spontaneous, effortless moments of mindfulness, which happen a lot. And when those moments arise, when mindfulness returns, the processes of our mind have some choice. We can then choose to cultivate mindfulness more consciously.

We count on these spontaneous moments of mindfulness for the process of meditation to even begin. So the more we can recognize how frequently they happen, the more we can connect with this lighter touch to mindfulness and connect with our intentionality—be present when we are already mindful, bringing our attention more clearly to experience.

Then there's the exploration of the wandering mind, of looking at where the mind wanders out of the present moment. That place where we are aware and the mind kind of loses touch with what we're paying attention to and either drifts out or charges out. We can actually see this start to happen. It is possible to watch the mind begin to get familiar with the beginning of the wandering. It's a harder place to explore; it's much easier, much more obvious to us, the moment of waking up. The moment where the mind starts to lose touch with the present moment is a subtler experience. But a little bit of understanding about how this process can happen can raise some interest in this.

How does the mind wander out of the present moment? The Buddha actually has a very clear description of this in the suttas. He says it starts with sense contact. There's the eye, there's the sight, there's the contact, there's the eye consciousness—the meeting as contact. And with the contact there's feeling; what one feels, we perceive, we recognize. What we recognize, what we perceive, we think about. What we think about, we tend to start mentally proliferating about.

This happens to us all the time. We're sitting in meditation and there's a sound—a creaking floorboard. So there's been that sense contact, the sound, the recognition of the sound: a creaking floorboard. And then there may be some thoughts about it. The building's getting a little old. The floor didn't used to creak. Maybe I should offer some dana so they can fix the floor. I wonder if they really can fix the floor. They probably have to tear up the whole thing and shut down the whole retreat center. And the mind is off.

From sense contact, this is a very common way for our mind to wander out of the present moment. Mindfulness is not present for some part of this process—that's when the mind wanders. So we can watch this process happening. We can begin to recognize how this process unfolds.

Now, it's not that we can force ourselves to see this process. Actually, my own experience and exploration of this level of investigation is that usually it begins to be more apparent as the mindfulness gets more continuous. It's not something I can do. It's not something I can decide: "Oh, I'm going to look at how that process of perception leads to thought, leads to papañca, leads to that mental proliferation." But the more continuous, the more present we are, the more we can begin to see how these processes work.

I've worked with people on other retreats describing this process, and it doesn't necessarily resonate in the moment or it's not something they can see in the moment. But then a few days later suddenly they're recognizing, "Oh, I see—this is how the mind does this." So it's kind of like just putting this information in the room may help you to be able to see a new process in your minds.

This is seeing cause and effect at work. We see sense experience. We see a memory arise based on that

sense experience. We see the thoughts arise based on that memory. We see perhaps an emotion created based on that. So we begin to see how things unfold: cause and effect, cause and effect, cause and effect. And at times it can really just be like dominoes falling. Not me doing it, but just one thing triggers the next, triggers the next, triggers the next. When the mind is more continuous, it can watch this process unfolding and gain a sense of the not-self nature of these processes of mind.

We can also wander out of the present moment on a feeling tone as well. I talked about wandering out based on perception leading to thought—some recognition of something. That's a really common way for our mind to leap out of the present moment. Concepts arise in the mind and we think about concepts. But we can also wander out of the present moment just based on feeling tone, without concept being involved necessarily. I mentioned this a few minutes ago: the mind kind of moves into a pleasant state and then just drifts into pleasant. Not so much thinking about it, but just the feeling of pleasant.

We can get lost in pleasant. You're paying attention to the breath, the breath gets really comfortable, the comfortableness gets really pleasant, and the mind just kind of drifts off into a pleasant zoned-out state. Not particularly thinking, but also not particularly present.

So we can see that the mind can wander out of the present moment when it gets hooked to a feeling. Another exploration I've had around wandering out based on feeling tone—and this is an interesting one—is when feeling tone gets kind of neutral. I've recognized in my own experience that when there's not much feeling tone happening, that can be a place where our habits are ready, where our patterns of mind are ready to just jump in.

For example, on one retreat I was starting to experience quite a bit of neutral experience—a neutral feeling in the body, a lot of calmness in the mind—so not much of either pleasant or unpleasant experience, just really balanced, calm, quiet body. By that point I had learned enough to have the idea in my mind that when things get neutral, maybe, just maybe, something really good will happen. That the neutrality itself is kind of like a doorway to something. And so a little bit of expectation would arise—a little bit of "Ooh, is something going to happen?"

And when nothing happened, the mind hooked into its habitual pattern of "Oh, I'm a failure. I can't do this right. I'm no good." The mind went from neutral experience, where not much was happening, to picking up on its habitual pattern—essentially self-hatred in this case. So being interested in how the mind does what it does around neutral experience is important. It's a very common place for the mind to leap into. It's like there's not much else happening, and the familiar patterns are very likely to pick up when there's not much going on.

We can also notice another exploration around the mind beginning to wander: we can begin to notice when the mind starts to lose a little bit of contact with what it's paying attention to. For instance, you're paying attention to the breath, noticing the experience of the breath, right with the breath. At some point you might begin to recognize that the mindfulness and the breath are right together, and then you might

notice there's a little less contact between the breath and the mindfulness. The mindfulness is still present, but it's just not quite as connected to the breath—the mindfulness has let go of the breath a little bit.

On one retreat I could see this. I could see the mindfulness start to let go of the breath. When I noticed that, since I was paying attention to the breath, I noticed there was a little less clarity of the mindfulness, less clarity of the experience. So I began recognizing, "Oh, the mind isn't as clear with the breath—come back." I did that, and the mind kept letting go, and I'd think, "Come back, come back a little bit more closely."

After this happened three or four times, I finally recognized: well, the mind has let go of the breath, but I'm mindful of that. Let me see what the mind is doing, rather than having an agenda to bring it back to the breath. Let me just see. If I'm mindful of the mind leaving the breath, let's see where it goes. And the mindfulness opened into a kind of new, broad, more spacious awareness that was very new for me.

So being interested in where the mind is leaving the experience is valuable. Now, there were kind of two choices there. When you're aware, you can choose where to direct the attention, but you can also choose to follow the awareness, to stay present with what the mindfulness is naturally orienting to—watching essentially what the mind is naturally doing.

There are some conditions that lead to the wandering mind. The obvious ones are the defilements arising, thoughts reflecting on the past, reflecting on the future, thinking about the present. These are the obvious ways. But the mind can also wander for some other reasons.

I really want to put this out there because early in my practice, or at some point in my practice, I thought that if my mind was wandering, it meant that I needed to be doing something more—that I had obviously stopped being properly aware if the mind started wandering. But there can be times in practice, particularly if you've noticed there's been a period of pretty steady mindfulness, a period of time where the mind has been fairly present for the breath or present for experience—whether you're doing concentration or open awareness—just present without a lot of wandering. And then suddenly you notice the mind is starting to wander.

In my experience, it often doesn't mean that suddenly I've lost the effort. It sometimes means that the mind is settling into a new level.

For example, sometimes as the mind starts to relax and let go of the outer layers or familiar layers of patterns of mind, it's like the normal structures of our mind start to fall away. Sometimes there can be some deeper things that have almost been repressed by those normal structures. And when those structures have fallen away, it's like there's room for things that have been buried to begin to come up.

So this does happen to us. It's like we drop through a layer and another layer reveals itself. It's not that we've gone backwards. It's not that we've suddenly messed up. It's simply that the mind has opened up to a new layer of things that hadn't been so obvious before.

Or another way this can happen: the mind begins to get concentrated, settles into concentration, but the energy is not quite balanced with that concentration. The mind then almost slips or sinks into dreams, into a kind of dreaminess, into nonsensical thought. Again, this doesn't necessarily mean that you're doing anything wrong. It's like a little bit of energy imbalance.

For myself, in that kind of space, I've learned that it's often actually not a very great energy imbalance. If you're sitting there in meditation, fairly concentrated, and dreamlike images are arising, and you're not actually falling asleep, the energy is just slightly off. What I've found is that it takes just a very little bit of bumping up the energy to have it come back into balance. Maybe simply opening the eyes or straightening the spine a little bit—some very small adjustments. Earlier in my practice I would think, "Oh, my mind is wandering. I really better try hard." And that would just send me into restlessness, because I was over-applying the effort. So often that place of low energy where the mind starts moving into dreaminess requires just a little bit of energy added to the system.

Then there's another interesting phenomenon that I find happening particularly with mindfulness, with awareness practice. As the mindfulness gets more continuous, I've noticed this several times in several different forms: there's a certain time where you're really recognizing, "Wow, the mind's pretty continuous. Mindfulness is pretty continuous. Really right there with experience, moment after moment after moment." And suddenly the mind starts wandering again. What's going on?

When that happens, can you get curious about it? Get curious about what's actually happening there, because what I've seen often is that as the mindfulness gets more continuous, it's kind of like the mindfulness begins to gravitate toward subtler experience. We can have an idea or an agenda about what we're paying attention to. It's as if our mind gets used to paying attention to experience at a certain level—we're used to experiencing this flow of body sensation, this flow of energetic experience, these kinds of ways thoughts appear. The mind gets used to that, and it's almost like part of our practice mind has this filter that says, "This is what we're seeing, this is what we're recognizing, this is what we're noticing."

But the mindfulness, being more continuous, is actually starting to gravitate toward something a little different—a subtler level of body sensation, a more refined recognition of thought. Because we have this kind of agenda or idea about what we're paying attention to, there's a mismatch. These are places where, when there's been a continuity of mindfulness and the mind starts to wander, I generally step back and ask, "Well, what is the mind actually paying attention to here? What's happening?" And I'll often see that the mindfulness has naturally touched into a subtler level of experience that I almost hadn't been aware of, that I hadn't recognized consciously.

So I'd like to encourage a curiosity about the wandering mind. There are so many different ways, so many different reasons that the mind wanders. And not always is it because we're not applying our effort enough. In fact, sometimes when the mind wanders, what I've begun to appreciate—especially on long

retreat, like so many of you are here for a long time—on retreats of this length, when the mind starts to wander, it can often be a kind of hallmark that there's been a shift in the practice. Maybe one that you've not consciously recognized. Can you open up and recognize what is happening now?

Now, if you've been spacing out and going for walks and talking on the phone and doing that kind of thing, and you start noticing the mind wandering, well then it may be that your mind has gotten restless and agitated and you need to bring the attention back more closely. But if you've been practicing and suddenly, after a period of relative stability, the mind is wandering a lot, get curious about it. There's so much to learn.

Now I'd like to finish by saying that I've talked about many different ways I have explored this phenomenon of the wandering mind—things I've learned, things I've recognized. And what I'd like to say is that I'm not suggesting here that you try to do or try to see things in the way that I've expressed them.

Mostly what I'm hoping is that you'll be interested in this phenomenon of the wandering mind and become curious about it. Look at it for yourself. Maybe having heard something of my own deepening of practice through this exploration, it might help you to have a lighter attitude about the wandering mind, a more curious attitude.

If I've encouraged that, I feel this has been a worthwhile exploration.

And anything at all that comes up for you can be explored with this kind of attention—whether it's ordinary experience, feeling just like normal, everyday life, or whether it's self-hatred, frustration, anger, hostility, the wandering mind, states of bliss. Whatever is happening, that is where the unfolding of your practice is. Explore that. Meet that. Be with that.

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