Allowing What Has Come to Be

Andrea Fella · Notable Dhamma Teachers — Andrea Fella · 45:19

Are you aware? Our practice is so simple. Aware with what is already arising, what is already here. Being with this human experience. Opening to what is here.

We're opening to the unfolding of the conditions of our lives. The nature of things as they have come to be. Opening to what is already happening. Awareness receiving what is already happening.

This opening to is an allowing. Allowing what is here. Accepting what is offered. The offering of our conditions revealing themselves.

One teacher, Zen teacher Daishin Morgan, points out that this acceptance, the acceptance of things as they are, is not about agreeing or disagreeing with the experience. It's about fully acknowledging this is the experience. Clearly meeting, knowing this is the experience. That is the quality of acceptance. Accepting, allowing what is already happening.

And yet this perspective of accepting and allowing what has come to be, clearly recognizing this is what has come to be—it's not a perspective of passivity. In fact, it really creates conditions for us to in the next moment respond skillfully. In our practice, a skillful response is often continuing to witness, continuing to be with. And yet even in our formal practice, there are times that we may recognize a skillful means is useful, or a question and investigation.

This practice is a wisdom practice, wisdom based. The teachings are wisdom teachings. We talk a lot about noticing things as they are. Recognizing the impermanent, unreliable, not-self nature of experience with any experience. Exploring a perspective of allowing, curious about the attitude and even allowing. If a perspective of wanting something to happen has arisen, we allow that and we are curious about that. How has that been shaped?

The teachings are very much in the wisdom vein, and sometimes people ask, what is the place for metta in this practice? In my experience, the metta is lived in this practice. The allowing perspective, opening to allowing what is already here to be here—in the feeling of the practice, that feels like love.

If we were sitting in front of a friend and we were having trouble, when the friend was just willing to listen and be with us, not trying to fix us, not trying to make suggestions or figure things out for us, but just willing to be with us fully, most of us would feel that as love. Feeling very cared for, very seen, that feeling of being seen.

And this is what this practice does for us. We see ourselves fully, completely. All the messiness, all the

confusion and delusion, all the wanting, all the beauty. It's all welcome with awareness and wisdom. No part rejected. And this simple practice allows this, opens to this feeling of care for ourselves. Wisdom and love grow together.

Just simple. What's this? Opening fully to our experience as it has come to be. Noticing relationships to what has come to be: wanting, not wanting, and beliefs, ideas about what is happening. Those attitudes based in greed, aversion, and delusion. This practice begins to weaken those tendencies of greed, aversion, and delusion. There's more capacity for allowing, more capacity for acceptance of what has come to be.

And that place of opening to this is what is here, opening to things as they have come to be without reactivity to what has come to be—that is equanimity.

If I was completely okay with what is happening, why would I do anything? But that's not the way it seems to work. Because as greed, aversion, and delusion fall away, the wholesome qualities gain strength—qualities of wisdom, love, compassion, patience, interest, joy. And these qualities also have a kind of agency. They act in the system.

We're familiar with the way aversion acts based on wanting to get rid of things. Greed acts based on wanting to have things. Delusion acts based on what it believes. And so we begin to see that it's not necessarily a "me" doing that. We see that this is the conditioned and conditioning nature of those qualities of mind. Anger tends to construct anger, tends to create more tension in the heart and mind.

The wholesome qualities also have an activity to them. Again, not "me" doing it. The nature of love seems to be to connect us. The nature of compassion, to alleviate suffering. The nature of curiosity, of interest, to explore in a wholesome way. The nature of wisdom is to recognize suffering and to release suffering—this is the wisdom that we're cultivating here.

So these qualities of mind do things. And when there is equanimity, these functions of mind, these capacities of mind get stronger. Wisdom begins to act, wisdom begins to guide the practice, wisdom begins to choose and navigate our lives. Compassion acts—this movement to alleviate suffering.

And so the place of equanimity is not a place of passivity. It's not necessarily a place of self-doing. But we can be present with the way our wholesome qualities carry us.

Sayadaw U Tejaniya points to this as a kind of shift in the practice—from when we're making a personal kind of effort, and we have to start there, where it does feel like we're involved in the choices of practice—to certain times when practice becomes more effortless. These are times when wholesome qualities are guiding the practice. Sayadaw calls this "Dhamma effort"—wisdom taking the lead instead of an idea coming from beliefs and views that we have.

We have to start by aligning with wise view and making choices based on wise view. The teachings unfold through exploring how to skillfully have a sense of agency and sense of self that aligns with wise view,

that aligns with ethics. And as we do that more and more, the need for that sense of self weakens.

I'm so happy to be here with you. I really appreciate your sincerity, your care, your commitment. It's a rare thing in this world, what you're doing. Thank you.

Transcriptions produced locally using Swiss low-carbon electricity. Corrections and rewriting by cloud-hosted AI.