Release - and Not Picking Up

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Aware and receiving. Maybe you're already aware, already known, as there's a momentum to awareness and wisdom. Awareness and wisdom simply receive and understand—experience, understand the conditioned nature of experience, the unreliable nature of experience, the impermanent nature of experience.

And sometimes the understanding is the dukkha nature of experience. Sometimes that's experienced as unreliability, nothing worth holding on to. Sometimes it's experienced as understanding, feeling the dukkha, feeling the dukkha of the clinging. This is not a mistake. We notice our relationship—the subtle ways we try to avoid or want to get away from, or search for some place to land where there is no suffering. And that very process is also dukkha. But we can see that. Such deep habits, not personal habits, but human habits of clinging.

And sometimes we experience the letting go, the release, the ease. When the mind understands the way clinging is participating in the suffering, when wisdom understands that, it lets go. Sometimes we experience that letting go, the release. That ease, that peace, that release can be very pleasant, in part because of the contrast. And we can appreciate that release, understand that it is a letting go.

And sometimes there can be a very subtle clinging to that too—that sense of the release being the aim, that experience of release being the aim. So in a subtle way we may start looking for that release.

There's a letting go aspect of freedom, a letting go of craving. One definition of the third noble truth: freedom is the ending of craving—giving it up, relinquishing it, freedom from it, non-reliance on it. Another way to understand freedom is the absence of greed, aversion, and delusion, the absence of craving, the non-arising of craving.

Sometimes initially our experience of that freedom from greed, aversion, and delusion is the sense of letting them go, of the release from them. There's also the possibility of understanding that the mind is not picking up the craving, not relying on it, not picking up, not latching on.

At first this can perhaps be experienced as a sense of not being interested in. Awareness and wisdom, not interested in picking things up, not interested in clinging. Sometimes that feeling of disinterest, maybe even boredom—this is in the flavor, some of the flavors as we become disenchanted with experience. It's not so interesting anymore. So we might have that sense of disinterest. That can be known.

And at a certain point, interest and disinterest just don't seem relevant. Neither interest nor disinterest. Just experience arising, ceasing, not worth clinging to. Just experience not being picked up.

And then after a time we see the habits of tending to pick up come back. We feel the dukkha of that. Again, sometimes even more clearly we feel the dukkha. Not a mistake. And so we just notice experience as it is, aware of this, aware of the relationship—just experience tumbling on.

So notice what happens there. Is there discomfort? Is there a sense of running up against habits of mind, habits of culture? Again, just noticing that, and trying to remember the guidelines we've created around a pretty broad container of silence around the center.

You all have a lot of momentum in the practice. In that momentum, the practice can get even simpler.

So carry on.

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