

Body Wisdom

The Western model of the spiritual life is a life of goodness and conscience, led by the intellect – a top-down model of a disciplined life of principle. This lifestyle is then in conflict with bottom-up bodily instincts and emotions. It is possible, however, to find a middle way between these two: the transformation of even our basest instinctual drives, through a spiritual practice that simply and calmly opens up to the realities of the body, rather than grasping or rejecting it.

In this cool space, physical sensations are now felt as inherently unpleasant, and thus let go of and transcended. This new perspective overthrows the old one where feelings were seen as pleasant and were sought after. Instead of the heat of emotion we experience the coolness of release. So sensations become a bottom up source of *samādhi* and wisdom – of spiritual energy, so to speak. We find a spiritual practice that feels good, actually even better than our old life of desire.

I offer this for your reflection.

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