

The Modern Mindfulness Movement

The mindfulness movement is gaining popularity and entering more and more into modern life. As it does so it is changing, adapting the principles and practice of mindfulness to fit modern materialist society. Central to this change is the more and more accepted view that our minds are not under our control. This is being cited as a rediscovery and affirmation of the deep psychological or spiritual truth of not-self taught by the Buddha. The modern man quickly agrees that the way forward is to accept the mind the way it is and get on with life.

This is a tragedy. The greatest possible potential of our human lives, enlightenment, lies within our minds. The mind cannot be directly or internally controlled or fixed, this is true, but it can be tamed and trained in relation to the world of which it is a part. When this relationship comes right then the mind will come right. The first step of this process, as luck would have it, is the acceptance of our lack of direct control. So at least the modern mindfulness practitioner gets off to a good start. It can be a huge relief to let go and stop trying to control the mind. If we are wise, however, we see the content of our minds as the result of our contact with the world and we try to modify our lives. We are generous and kind and start feeling a lot better. We willingly take on moral precepts.

In this way mindfulness takes us beyond ourselves. We discover the joy of truly letting go into a bigger, far more beautiful reality.

I offer this for your reflection.

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