

Reflections on foundations for Mindful Living

Embracing Heart-Mindful Approaches

PREAMBLE

The original reflections on Mindful Living I developed as a handout for those learning Autogenic Training (mainly in groups) during the 2000s; and is based on the Mindfulness Attitudes described by Kabat-Zinn in his 2004 (10th anniversary edition) of Full Catastrophe Living. At around that time I attended a conference in Glasgow in which he was one of the speakers.

In 2011 this was adapted for the website as:

- ❖ D 1: Reflections on foundations for Mindful Living (2011)
and this remains present.

More recently, I have become a Mindfulness Now teacher, and the original handout has been modified and updated to embrace more recent perspectives on the subject, which now include ten Mindfulness Attitudes. However, it is I think best to see these as flexible concepts that can be extended and / or changed over time. This is in keeping with impermanence and the flow of being; and indeed, during the writing of this second web article, the ten have become a Baker's Dozen.

Our attitudes to Mindfulness are closely inter-linked with Positive Mental Representations [de Rivera 2017e], the subject of companion article:

- ❖ F 3, Mental Representations and Their Effects on Well-Being (February 2025).

Let us briefly recap the essence of Mental Representations, as it is an underlying theme of mindfulness; whether consciously so or otherwise – no matter.

Our Mental Representations at any moment can be positive / wholesome; negative / unwholesome; or neutral. These mental representations have an effect on our body and physiology; and these in turn then have an effect on our present moment mind state / mental representations. This means, in short:

- ❖ Distressing Mental Representations affect our body; our body becomes distressed / more distressed / tense; and this in turn adversely affects our present mental state.
- ❖ Wholesome Mental Representations also affect our body, allowing it to be; to feel safe; to socially engage with ourselves and others. The result of these changes in our body state is that, in turn, they can gladden our mind and state of being.

Developing and working on the Mindful Approaches discussed in this article will enable us to increasingly be in the flow of Wholesome (positive) Mental Representations.

Extrapolated from de Rivera 2017e
With thanks and gratitude

In conclusion, the Mindful attitudes in this article become Wholesome Positive Mental Representations when we embrace them.

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Glossary entries are generally notated in the main text thus; for example:

Innate Goodness;
Mental Representations

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Furthermore, I thank many of those involved in Mindfulness Now / UK College of Mindfulness Meditation; especially Sharon Conway (now Nielsen) – Lead Trainer, Edinburgh for the Mindfulness Training Course at the Botanical Gardens, Edinburgh in the Autumn of 2022 – and her subsequent supervision and support for the Submission Documents to become a Mindfulness Now teacher. Also, particular thanks to Tony O'Shea-Poon and the two wonderful on line workshops he ran in February 2023 and April 2025 on Mindfulness and Buddhism.

Lastly, and not least, all those students of AT I taught over the decades; and more recently, Mindfulness Now Students. In addition, and axiomatically, all those in the References section.

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As previously, also great thanks to Michael Ross, one of my brothers; and Annie Sturgeon, a now retired Autogenic Therapist, for their help and advice in proof-reading. This is a longish article¹, with a gestation period dating back to 2023; and a work in progress since then. I am aware that there are some inconsistencies hidden within; however, I feel the time has come to accept these – and let it go forth in its present form. As usual, any errors or omissions remain, of course, my responsibility.

Ian Ross – September 2026
East Lothian, Scotland

Caveat / disclaimer

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information given in this article is accurate and up to date. However, the author will not be liable for any loss or damage of any nature occasioned to or suffered by any person acting or refraining from acting as a result of reliance on the material contained within this paper.

¹ Please note, although the article per se has 62 pages. The Appendices, Thematically Related Articles, Glossary and References cover pp 37 to 63.

PRELUDE

The foundations of Mindful Living can be traced back to the teaching of the Sakyamuni Buddha well over two thousand years ago. There have been countless changes in the world since then; and yet the speed of change is now as fast, or faster, than ever before in human history. Some view this as a sign of great progress; others consider what is happening at present to our precious Mother Earth indicates a profound loss of way for humanity – and even more – the flora and fauna of our one Earth and its biosphere².

The roots of this loss of way can be seen in several ways, including:

- i. As a result of the Industrial Revolution [Schumacher 1973: Small is Beautiful]. See also forthcoming companion article:
 ✿ D 14: Reflections on Small is Beautiful, Erroneous Notions, and Innate Goodness.
- ii. The Unmaking of the World (catalysed by the West) during the last few centuries³ as a result of increasing analytical and Left Brain approaches, at the expense of the experiential Right Brain modalities which embrace the beautiful, the sacred, and inner truth [McGilchrist 2009; 2021A and 2021B].

Schumacher's perspective has subsequently been developed and deepened by Satish Kumar, manifesting in his decades as editor of the Resurgence Magazine (now Resurgence and Ecologist), and his several books on ethical and earth matters – all from a Heart-Mindfulness orientation [e.g. Kumar 2013; 2026].

Iain McGilchrist's deep insights and grasp of matters are reflected in his "The Master and his Emissary – *The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World* [2009]; and his subsequent two volume: "The Matter with Things – *Our Brains, our Delusions and the Unmaking of the World.*"

Mindful approaches are rooted in the experiential, the sacred nature of life and being – and can thus act as antidotes to the above trends. Through practice, we may begin to hear The Sound of Silence [Hanh 2015; Muktananda 1995].

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² A critical even if frequently ignored aspect of life on and in the atmosphere of our planet. See Biocivilisations – Slijepčević 2023

³ And interlinked with (i. above) and the Industrial Revolution.

PART I: Introduction

Research over recent decades has shown that mindfulness practices can be of benefit to almost all of us, including those suffering from recurrent depression (Segal 2002; Williams 2007). Mindfulness has been defined as:

Paying attention:

- in a particular way,
- on purpose,
- in the present moment,
- and non-judgementally.

Kabat-Zinn 1994; p 4

Origins of the word
Mindful:
Smṛti: Sanskrit
Sati: Pali
“Mind-Heartfulness”
See below.

Meditative type practices, including Autogenic Training (AT), greatly help us in developing Mindfulness⁴; and at the same time help us to develop the skills required to respond appropriately to whatever happens / occurs in our lives⁵.

Jon Kabat-Zinn originally focused particular attention on *seven* concepts / attitudes which I have found of value. A member of an Autogenic group around 2010 suggested compassion, and so in Figure 1.1 on the next page, are *eight* suggested foundations of Mindfulness. Before that, let us look at:

The Essential Meaning of the word Mindfulness

Words are there to convey meaning; yet sometimes the meaning has become lost. This can be the case with “Mindfulness”.

Mindfulness that is not heartfelt
is not mindfulness.

So why do we use the word Mindfulness?

The concept of mindfulness has its origins in Buddhist philosophy: the Sanskrit word for mindfulness is *smṛiti*. This literally means “remember” or “remembering”. Thich Nhat Hanh says:

Mindfulness is remembering to come back to the present moment. The character the Chinese use for ‘mindfulness’^{HM} has two parts: the upper part means ‘now,’ and the lower part means ‘mind’ or ‘heart’.

- The first miracle of Mindfulness is to be present and able to touch deeply the blue sky, the flower, and the smile of our children.

Hanh 1998 p 64-65^Y

(Bullet point added)

^Y Hanh then goes on to describe the other aspects of Mindfulness in his chapter on “Right Mindfulness” (pp 64-83).

The Chinese character in Hanh is included within the text; it is here shown in the box on the right^{HM}

to give it space.

HM
念

⁴ Meditative type practices are linked with specific pre-frontal cortex functions that correlate with Mindfulness. See e.g. Siegel 2007 Appendix III pp 337- 362; Siegel here also reviews the research basis for this.

⁵ “Between the stimulus and the response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.” [Frankl? 1946; see also website www.atdynamics.co.uk in Autogenic Dynamics Section B18: The Space to Choose – reflections on the gap between the stimulus and the response.]

Our western translation of *sati* gives it a misleading cognitive and left hemisphere bias: mindfulness that is not heartfelt is not mindfulness. The term would perhaps be better rendered as “Mind-Heartfulness”; or Heart-Mindfulness – or left un-translated. This understanding of Heart-Mind-fulness overlaps with the Chinese concept of Jen. See Appendix 5 p 45.

Jon Kabat-Zinn’s perspective interlinks with the above:

“When you hear the word ‘mindfulness’, if you’re not also hearing the word ‘heartfulness’, you’re not actually understanding it.”

Jon Kabat-Zinn

Source: <https://www.sloww.co/jon-kabat-zinn-quotes/> on 13 XI 2025

As indicated above, this article has had quite a long gestation; and when I returned to working on in June 2026, after a break of over one year, I realised that I had lost sight of my approach to non-judgement, which, as will be seen, reflects on an approach to Non Judgement that embraces unconscious dynamics of judgement – refracted through the Polyvagal Theory [Porges 2011]. This approach perhaps helps us to beware of all our judgements; within a non-judgemental framework!

Figure 1.1 outlines Kabat-Zinn’s original Seven Mindfulness Attitude, plus that of Compassion discussed above.

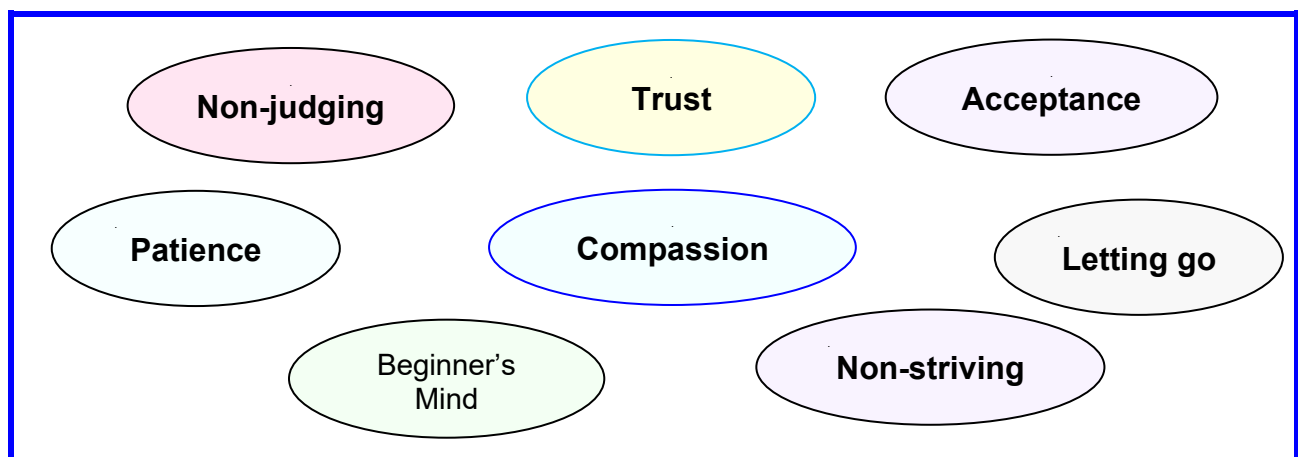


Figure 1.1
Original Seven Mindfulness Attitudes outlined by Kabat-Zinn [2004]
with the addition of Compassion

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However, in Kabat-Zinn’s more recent writings, he mentions others including Gratitude, Generosity, and Compassion [Kabat-Zinn 2013]. So in this article we will include all of these ten key approaches, as illustrated in Figure 1.2 on the next page.

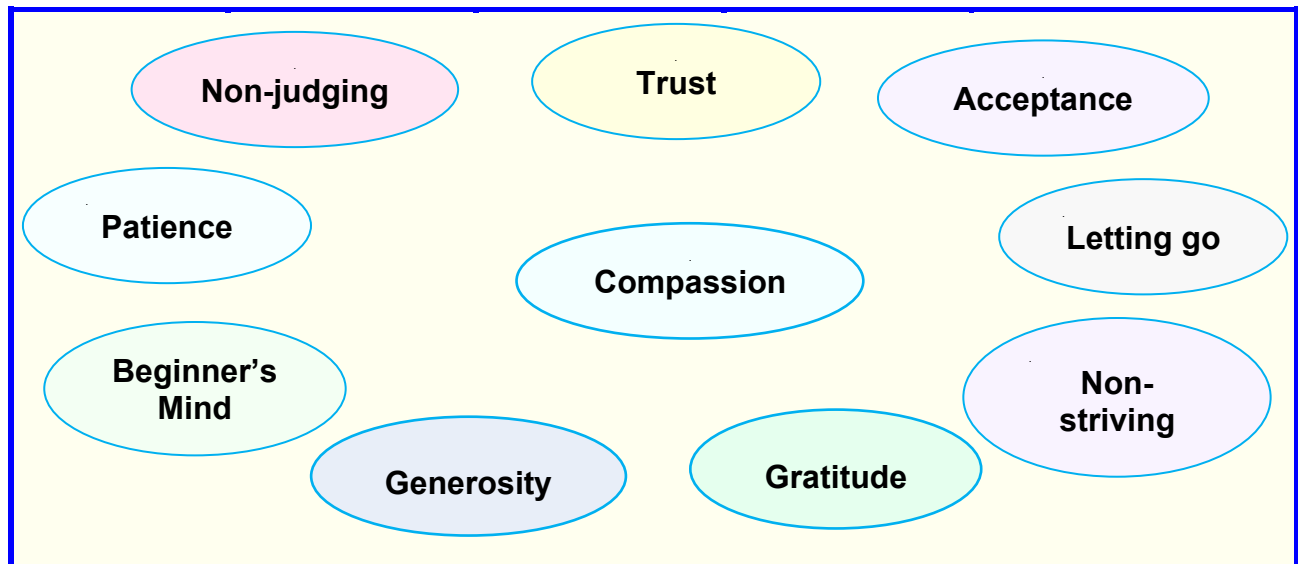


Figure 1.2
Ten Key Components of
SATI
Mind-Heart-Fullness

Sources include: Kabat-Zinn 2004; 2013;
And Mindfulness Now Course, Edinburgh Botanical Gardens Autumn 2022

All of these attitudes / concepts inter-relate with all the others. In this sense they Inter-Are. Following Thich Nhat Hanh's teachings, we could say that one of the most fundamental aspects of Sakyamuni's teaching was the concept of Inter-Being. Having been reflecting on these matters for several years, it now seems to me that a unifying aspect of Mindfulness Approaches / Attitudes is [Inter-Being](#), and from this naturally arises, for example, Compassion.

In view of this we will return to this concept of Inter-Being in due course.

We will now look at the above Ten Key concepts in turn, with specific reference to related stories / poems included in AT group courses at the Leith surgery 1990s to 2018. Applying and adopting these ten concepts in our daily lives can be a very wholesome practice when done mindfully.

Let us return briefly to Kabat-Zinn's definition of what Mindfulness is:

- ❖ Paying attention: in a particular way, on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgementally.

Kabat-Zinn 1994; p 4

Paying attention is crucial; meditation when regularly practised enables us to pay attention more thoroughly. It is purposeful: in the sense of consciously paying attention on purpose, in this present moment right now; and without judgement – of ourselves or others. It is of great interest and significance that Luis de Rivera devotes a whole chapter in his Autogenics 3.0 to Attention Management Training [de Rivera 2022 pp 41-49].

- ❖ See also companion article: C 15: Attention; Autogenic Training; and Mindfulness (schedule for Winter 2026).

We will return to the matter of non-judgement in due course.

PART II: MINDFULNESS APPROACHES

Let us start with Trust.

1) Trust

It is very easy to go through life accepting some external authority for what we do – and this may be helpful.

However, this can result in us becoming non-authentic. At the end of the day, it is important that we trust ourselves, what our body is saying to us, what our feelings are saying to us – rather than, for example, trying to imitate someone we may respect. We can only *be* the unique person we are – thus imitation can lead to non-authenticity.

“It is far better to trust your own intuition and your own authority, even if you make some ‘mistakes’ along the way, than always to look outside yourself for guidance. If at any time something does not feel right for you, why not honour your feelings? Why should you discount them or write them off as invalid because some authority or group of people think or say differently?”

Kabat-Zinn, 1990, p 36

Kabat-Zinn, 2013, p 25

Trusting in this way can be seen as having an “Internal Locus of Control”. Always seeking the ideas / teaching of others (even when this goes against what we feel in our hearts), is associated with having an external locus of control⁷. The essence of this type of trust is exemplified in *Sakyamuni Wisdom*.

Believe nothing because a wise person said it.

Believe nothing because it is generally held.

Believe nothing because it is written.

Believe nothing because it is said to be divine.

Believe nothing because someone else believes it.

But believe only what you yourself judge to be true.

Gautama Buddha, Kalama Sutta
(Harrison 2015; p 6; ^{Zz 50})

⁷ Some of the dynamics of Locus of Control are discussed in the companion website article:

❖ F 3: Mental Representations and Their Effects on Well-Being – based on the work of Luis de Rivera
(Also see glossary of F 3: Locus of Control and Agency) p 41.

2) BEGINNERS MIND

There is a wonderful introduction to the concept of the beginner's mind in "Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind":

"In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities; but in the expert's there are few. The goal of practice is always to keep our beginner's mind...."

Suzuki 1970

In Mindfulness practice, and in life, it is helpful to keep our "beginner's mind", and this can allow us to see things with the freshness that we experienced as a child, and without the accumulated (and at times unconscious) baggage that we can so easily become attached to with the passage of time. With our beginner's mind we can feel the wonder and richness of this moment: this very moment. This can be akin to the freshness and unencumberedness of a child's view of the world.

*** **

Returning to Kabat-Zinn:

The richness of the present-moment experience is the richness of life itself. Too often we let our thinking and our beliefs about what we "know" prevent us from seeing things as they really are. We tend to take the ordinary for granted and fail to grasp the extraordinariness of the ordinary. To see the richness of the present moment, we need to cultivate what has been called "beginner's mind," a mind that is willing to see everything as if for the first time.

Kabat-Zinn, 1990, p 35

Kabat-Zinn 2013 p 24

"Too often we let our thinking and our beliefs about what we "know" prevent us from seeing things as they really are". This is similar to an expert who can miss something fundamental, as she or he is no longer able to see matters with fresh eyes.

❖ See B6 on web: Perceptions, flowers, and reality.

The practice of mindfulness embraces cultivating several key attributes / attitudes with diligent attention and work – a life-long work in progress, as it were. This diligent attention is similar to cultivating a garden – to bring forth, for example: kale, garlic, onions, leeks and apples.

An open, 'beginner's mind' allows us to be receptive to new possibilities and prevents us from getting stuck in the rut of our own expertise, which often thinks it knows more than it does**. No moment is the same as any other. Each is unique and contains unique possibilities. Beginner's mind reminds us of this simple truth.

Kabat-Zinn, 1990, p 35

Kabat-Zinn 2013 p 24

**This is partly because expertise tends to be associated with language and linear thinking: the danger is that it only deals with matters that are not original, but as they have been "re-presented" to the left hemisphere (from the right hemisphere): representation is not the same as being present in this original 'Right Hemisphere' moment [McGilchrist 2009; 2022].

** A further lovely /

** A further lovely example is given by Bessel van de Kolk when he started his first year working at the Massachusetts Mental Health Centre (MMHC) with Elvin Semrad, who discouraged doctors in their first year of psychiatry from reading psychiatric textbooks.

“Semrad did not want our perceptions of reality to become obscured by the pseudo-certainties of psychiatric diagnoses”.

Van de Kolk 2014 p 26

A little earlier in the book (The Body Keeps the Score) Bessel van de Kolk comments:

“ Elvin Semrad had taught us to be sceptical about text books. We had only one real textbook, he said: our patients.”

Van de Kolk 2014 p 11

*** **

3) PATIENCE (2.3)

We cannot expect to change habits of a lifetime overnight. However, even after only a few weeks of regular AT or Mindfulness practice, we often find that subtle changes are coming about.

If we are to keep physically fit, we know that we have to exercise regularly – not just once a month. The same is true with Mindfulness / Autogenic Training / Reflective and Awareness Building Practices [Sewell 2022]: to keep our mind mentally and emotionally healthy, we need to practise on a daily basis.

“Patience is a form of wisdom. It demonstrates that we understand and accept the fact that some things must unfold in their own time.”

Kabat-Zinn, 1990, p 34

Kabat-Zinn 2013 p 23

We can gradually adopt a patient attitude to life and ourselves⁸. If we are patient, we can experience Being.

“The challenge for all of us is to see life as a verb, not a noun” [Siegel 2007 p 328⁹]. The full quote from Siegel can be found in the Glossary under “[Life is a verb, not a noun](#)”. In embracing life and living as a verb, we become like, let us say, the transformation of a “tree” into “Treeing.” In Treeing, growth and maturity take time.... The treeing nature implies these processes “to be unfolding in their own time.”

I was interested in the origins of such concepts, and on this occasion sought the help of Google Chrome AI; I was very surprised to find in recent times it appears to have been Buckminster Fuller, who actually wrote a book on this matter:

⁸ A good metaphor for patience is that of the latent butterfly struggling to get out of its cocoon: the very struggle of getting out enables the wings to become strong and unfold – and so the butterfly can emerge and fly away. If we try to help the butterfly out, it will not make this struggle itself, and so the wings will not be strong enough to fly; and so it dies. See Appendix 4: Butterflies; metamorphosis; and Autogenic Training – from metaphor to metamorphosis.

⁹ This section is partly taken from the earlier web article: D1: Reflections on foundations for Mindful Living. However, there the page number of Siegel 2007 is given as p 326; the correct page number is [328](#). Apologies for the earlier error.

"I live on Earth at present, and I don't know what I am. I know that I am not a category. I am not a thing — a noun. I seem to be a verb, an evolutionary process — an integral function of the universe."

R. Buckminster Fuller 1970

Fuller's 1970 autobiographical book titled *I Seem to Be a Verb*.

Again this gives the feeling of life being a flow; a flowing nature coursing through time.

Having rechecked this today, the same Google Chrome¹⁰ came up with Charlotte Perkins Gilman, in her 1904 book "Human Work" (i.e. well before Buckminster Fuller).
Being a tree, in the sense of Treeing, gives it great patience...

The exact phrasing, "Life is a verb, not a noun," was written by the famous American author and sociologist Charlotte Perkins Gilman. It appeared in her 1904 book *Human Work*, where she argued that human fulfilment comes from active work, expression, and growth rather than static existence.

Source Google AI 02 08 2026

Her comment "human fulfilment comes from active work, expression, and growth rather than static existence" is pertinent to the theme of mindfulness and seeing life in terms of a journey / spiritual path....

I say in recent times as actually
the idea has been present for
millennia – perhaps originating
in China – or perhaps,
more accurately still,
in the Cosmos.

In ancient China it has been
suggested that there were no
"nouns"; rather, they expressed
these in terms of verbs. Thus:

Treeing rather than Tree
Leafing; rather than leaf
Earthing, rather than earth

Alan Watts 1995 pp 1-15

Thus, for a tree, the essence of life is "tree-ing".

- ❖ Is our life one of a Human Being?
- ❖ Or is it most of the time one of a Human Doing?

In other words, are we really living and Jen-ing? (See [Jen](#))

*** **

Being a tree, in the sense of Treeing, gives it great patience...; and that patience enables many types of tree to be during the life time of many human generations.

¹⁰ Note that Google Chrome AI always seems to have this important caveat: "AI responses may include mistakes." In this sense, it makes AI quite 'human'.



Figure 2.3
“Baobab”
BAOBABING

Kruger National Park – November 2019

Radiocarbon dating indicates that these trees in Southern Africa e.g. Zimbabwe / Namibia / South Africa can live up to 2000 to 2450 years [[Adansonia - Wikipedia](#) also known as Baobab]; that is, multigenerational in Human Terms.

4/

4) ACCEPTANCE 2.4

Life is as it is; not as we would sometimes like it to be. If we are always wishing things were other than they are, we can very easily expend energy unproductively – and we may end up feeling worse.

For example, if one morning I wake up feeling a bit low, and compare that to how I felt say a month ago when I was feeling great, this comparison between how I was then and how I am now can make me feel even worse. It is important that we accept how we are right now; this does not mean that we cannot change things, but it does mean that we are not struggling to make things other than what they are.

We may find that by simply accepting things as they are right now, this will itself give us a sort of inner energy – and perhaps the motivation to change [see also *The Guest House* – Rumi 1995^{Translation} (See Appendix 6)].

“Acceptance does not mean that you have to like everything or that you have to take a passive attitude toward everything and abandon your principles and values. It does not mean that you are satisfied with things as they are or that you are resigned to tolerating things as they ‘have to be.’ It does not mean that you should stop trying to break free of your own self-destructive habits or to give up your desire to change and grow, or that you should tolerate injustice, for instance, or avoid getting involved in changing the world around you.....

✚ Acceptance as we are speaking of it simply means that you have come around to a willingness to see things as they are. This attitude sets the stage for acting appropriately in your life, no matter what is happening.”

Kabat-Zinn, 1990, pp 38 – 39

Kabat-Zinn 2013 p 28

Bullet point added

We can reflect on the possibility that the word ‘acknowledge’ may sometimes better express this concept.

In the context of an AT sequence, or a body scan meditation: if our mind wanders, we simply accept / acknowledge that it has wandered (non-judgementally), and then gently bring our attention back to where we were in the AT sequence – e.g., “Forehead cool (and fresh)”. This is part of Attention Training [de Rivera 2022 pp 41-49].

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INTERLUDE I: Embracing Radical Acceptance [Tara Brach] (within 2.4)

Sometimes we feel distressed; irritated; at other times, we may feel “not good enough.” The former indicating the B Autonomic States (“flight / fight” – SNS activation in the context of FEAR / Anger); the latter indicating the C Autonomic State (Dorsal Vagal). Both of these may reflect distressing [Habit Energies](#) that we may have picked up during our childhood; these are sometimes transgenerational.

Any discussion regarding Acceptance is inadequate without covering Radical Acceptance; which in this context is really to do with Radical Acceptance of ourselves as we are. Tara Brach’s 2023 book of this name is timely; and reflects a wonderful journey that we can take towards accepting ourselves as we are; and tapping into our [Innate Goodness](#) [Davidson 2018]. Through Reflective and Awareness Building Practices – embracing meditation – we can be flowing in a process of rediscovering a deeply settled state *within* which we feel Safe – in this way moving towards the A Autogenic (Ventral Vagal) State that enables us to embrace wholesome social engagement with ourselves and others.

Radical acceptance of ourselves can be tricky. For many in the Western World, this has been adversely affected by cultural and religious mores. In the Autogenic courses that I took in Leith at my old

surgery, many of those attending had grown up with ideas that they were innately sinful; requiring confession – and with this a sense that they were not good enough. Some of these would go on to benefit from appropriate counselling / psychotherapy. It is important that we realise this is a part of our culture; the Dalai Lama, for example, was initially perplexed by the concept of poor self-esteem in the west; the concept did not exist in Tibet. In Tibet, where he had grown up, poor self-esteem of an individual person would have been seen as reflecting a malady in the whole of society, in which this low self-esteem had arisen – Dalai Lama in conversation with Daniel Goleman [Goleman, Daniel: 2003].

The origins of these western cultural mores are deep, whether we are conscious of them or not. Let us look at Tara Brach's poetic perspective on this matter.

The Buddha taught that (this) human birth is a precious gift because it gives us the opportunity to realise love and awareness that are our true nature. As the Dalai Lama pointed out poignantly, *We all have Buddha Nature*¹¹. Spiritual awakening is the process of recognising our essential goodness, our natural wisdom and compassion.

In stark contrast to this trust in our inherent worth, our culture's guiding myth is the story of Adam and Eve's exile from the Garden of Eden. We may forget its power because it seems so worn and familiar, but this story shapes and reflects the deep psyche of the West. The message of "original sin" is unequivocal: Because of our basically flawed nature, we do not deserve to be happy, loved by others, at ease with life. We are outcasts, and if we are to re-enter the garden, we must redeem our sinful selves.....

Brach 2023 p 10

Reflective and Awareness Building Practices will help to restore self-esteem. One approach to this I have found most useful is that of Christiane Sanderson [Sanderson 2016], which has two parts. The first is to consolidate a feeling of self-worthiness in the format of reflecting on and completing the:

❖ Circle of Authentic Pride.

The second part concerns shame that is not of our making; that is not our fault; this can be addressed in an exercise of Sanderson's that I have called:

❖ Compassion and Resilience Exercise relating to "The Circle of Shame".

The Circle of Shame is taught and worked through on a one to one basis. Both of these exercise form part of a series of what I call Expressive Autogenic Resilience Training Exercises (EARTE). Further details of the above two exercises can be found on the website www.atdynamics.co.uk:

- A 13: Expressive Autogenic Resilience Training Exercises Series C; exercises C1 and C3.
- (Note the EARTE C3 is only undertaken in the context of on-going appropriate psychotherapy.)

Reframing the concept of Original Sin

Original Goodness, Not Original Sin

It seems to me that the western concept of Original Sin is an Erroneous Notion; and one that does not make sense in terms of a concept of "a loving God" / Alaha. It leads many to feel that if the concept was true, it would imply a cosmic fix that we had been created with Original Sin, which we are then meant to spend a life time overcoming.

A much more wholesome perspective was given by Matthieu Ricard at one of the dialogues between western scientist / educators / psychologists / philosophers and the Dalai Lama and his entourage at one of

¹¹ I link this with our Innate Goodness [Davidson 2018]; and our CARE, nurturing, PLAY and SEEKING neuro circuits [Panksepp 1998]. SEEKING here in terms of also seeking meaning, truth, purpose and wholeness [Panksepp 1998 p 145]

the Mind and Life meetings in March 2000 at Dharamsala, India. Towards the end of Ricard's presentation, he said:

Since the potential for actualising Buddhahood is present in every sentient being, the Buddhist approach is therefore close to the idea of original goodness rather than to original sin. The primordial goodness, the Buddha nature, is the ultimate nature of the mind....

Ricard 2001 pp 85-86

With this understanding of the true nature of our being, Radical Acceptance can flow.

END OF INTERLUDE I

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Thich Nhat Hanh suggests that we accept / recognise / acknowledge what state we are in in this present moment. Say for example, distress or irritation is arising, we say quietly to ourselves, for example:

Silent naming of feeling / emotions / distress to ourselves	Comment
Anger	These can be seen also in terms of: ○ Affect Labelling [Lieberman et al 2007; Creswell et al 2007]; or more easily as ○ “Naming and Taming” [Siegel 2010 p 246; and p 116] ○ See also B 12: Affect Labelling, Autogenic Training, and reducing Emotional Distress on website
Hallo distress; I see you are arising within	
Hallow irritation, I see you are back again.	

Figure 2.4

Naming and Taming¹² / Affect Labelling

Examples after Thich Nhat Hanh – with thanks and gratitude

Note also that if we say: "I am angry"; then the anger and ourselves are one; this can then easily result in activation of our RAGE circuits [Panksepp 1998]. If we acknowledge / recognise the irritation arising within, the irritation / distress are separate from the "me" that is experiencing them. Hence

🌀 We are naming and taming the distressing affect / affliction.

The Three Minute Exercise¹³ as described by Williams et al (Williams 2007 e.g., pp 182-185); & Segal et al (Segal 2001 pp 184; 226; 241) can be a helpful way of developing Acceptance.

¹² Note that [Naming and Taming](#) and Affect Labelling are discussed in the Glossary, p 52

¹³ Please see Appendix 2 pp 39 - 40

5) NON JUDGEMENT – 2.5

2.5A PREAMBLE to non-judgement

Where does judgement come from?

Let us look at this initially from an evolutionary perspective. Early mammals, primates, and humans had developed the capacity, unconsciously, to detect life threat, danger, or safety [Porges 2011]. This unconscious ability is called [neuroception](#).

For humans in our modern world, life threat often merges into “not feeling good enough”; this is part of the ancient Para-Sympathetic Nervous System (Dorsal Vagal) that I have previously designated as the C System [e.g.: B 28: An Experiential Introduction to ABC States of the Polyvagal Theory – *An outline of a brief practical guide developed with students of AT*].

Danger is associated with FEAR and anger (RAGE) [Panksepp 1998].

Danger is normally associated with avoiding, running away, or even attacking, and is part of our Flight / Fight system of the Autonomic Nervous System. This I have previously designated as the B State.

Safety is associated with positive social engagement; approach behaviours; and our CARE / nurturing and PLAY circuits; this I have previously designated as the A State (Ventral Vagal – the most recent part of the Para-Sympathetic Nervous System / PSNS to develop in terms of evolution).

Returning to where does judgment come from?

Figure 2.5A below summarises the types of judgements we may make refracted through the Polyvagal Theory [Porges 2011] and the A,B, and C state designation of this above.

Autonomic Nervous System State	A; B; C notation of Autonomic State	Approach or withdraw behaviours	Type of judgement / behaviours associated with this state in our present world
Dorsal Vagal (PSNS)	C	Flop; or not move; for example, a zebra being chased by a lion neurocepts Life Threat; and unconsciously drops to ground appearing dead; or as “wish to hide in cave”.	➤ “I’m not good enough” ➤ Wish to hide in a cave. ➤ Loss of self-esteem. ➤ “Give-up-itis” [Frankl 1946: Man’s Search for Meaning 1947]
Sympathetic Nervous System	B	Run away (FEAR); or attack (RAGE) – e.g. if our children are threatened by an aggressor.	Negative judgement: from, e.g.: ○ “I do not like you” to being angry with the other; to ○ “I hate you”. Anger can be justified; and can be seen as an inbuilt defence mechanism to ward off being attacked. ✚ It can also reflect our own unconscious shadow – as in “The Evil Empire” referring to another nation / country.
Ventral Vagal (PSNS)	A	Approach behaviours CARE / nurturing circuits; PLAY [Panksepp 1998]	Tenderness; Understanding; feeling of warmth towards the others; Compassion for self and other; wholesome Social Engagement.

Figure 2.5A
Autonomic States and their impact on Judgement

Comments on Figure 2.5AIn context of our present state Mental representations

- i. Our behaviour, thoughts, feelings and present moment state to a large extent reflect our [neuroception](#) at that moment; i.e. the C, B or A state that we are in develops unconsciously in response to each situation. In this sense, while we are unaware (or “not awake”) – our judgements are not “our fault”.

Neuroception is, per se, unconscious; yet results in present moment mental representation. In the words of Deb Dana:

Story Follows State
Dana 2018 p 35

- ii. If, and when, our minds are perturbed, our judgment tends to become erroneous. Hence:

Perturbed Mind.
Judgement Erroneous

Judgement Follows State
After Deb Dana

- iii. To be awake, to be truly conscious, implies that we have learned to discern at each moment what state we are in. We generally cannot do this while we are immersed / enmeshed in the B or C State (See Man on Horse anecdote below).
- iv. This implies that we have to be moving towards an A State.....at least most of the time.
- v. This is not generally possible without on-going and Life-Long Reflective and Awareness Building Practices [Sewell 2020s] – such as Meditation, Mindfulness, and / or Autogenic Training.
- vi. With such practices and inner understanding, it becomes our response-ability to beware of.....and avoid....the B and C states; this will often mean befriending them – possible when we are moving toward the A State; enlightenment is not possible if we are captured in B or C.

*** **

2.5B NON JUDGEMENT

Let us now return to the specific theme of non-judgement.

Most of the time, most of us are judging whatever is going on in our lives. This may be about ourselves or other people. For example: “I’m no good”; “He’s better / worse than me”; “All politicians are greedy”.

- ❖ While this may appear to be helpful, it can at times also get in the way of us seeing how things really are – because we are viewing everything in the light of these judgements / assumptions.

We tend to be influenced by “top down” mental judgements that arise spontaneously / unconsciously – and we may not even realise that we are making a judgement – see, for example:

🌀 website article B6: “Perceptions, Flowers, and Reality”.

In the context of a Standard Exercise Autogenic session, we can easily find we are judging ourselves – for example, that our attention has wandered, that we are “no good” at AT. In the context of Mindfulness Meditation, the same applies – i.e. we can easily get into negative ruminations / judging ourselves. These are negative / unwholesome [mental representations](#); and in Buddhist Psychology are termed the [Second Arrow](#).

*** **

2.5C Unconscious judging of others when we ourselves are neurocepting Danger or Catastrophe.

As discussed in the preamble to non-judgement including Figure 2.5A, if neuroception has shifted us into the B or C State, we will axiomatically be judging ourselves and / or others. In our journey through life we have the ability to develop [meta-awareness](#), which enables us to become aware of the Autonomic State we are in providing that most of the time we are grounded in the A State. This then allows us to discern when we may be moving towards the B or C State – and so return to a wholesome A State and not judge the other or ourselves. Note: to recap, once we are in the B or C state we will be in the State of Judging, as our Story Follows our State [Dana op. cit.].

2.5D Some Practical Remedies / Tactics to Develop:

- ❖ If a distressing thought comes up, or if we become aware of a difficult bodily sensation, we do not judge it: rather, we simply accept that it has come up, and return our focus to where we were. For example:
 - In the context of an Autogenic Sequence, this might be returning our Focus to, for example: “Solar Core Warm”.
 - In the context of a Mindfulness Meditation, returning our focus to e.g. our breathing – or where we are / were in the body scan.
 - In the context of us becoming irritated by ourselves or others, we can name and tame – for example: “Hallo Irritation, I see you are back again”; “Hallo judging mind, I see you are here again.” See [naming and taming](#).

In these ways we can begin to move beyond judgement.

There are two stories / anecdotes relating to horses which are apposite here. The first of these appears below; the second in Appendix 1: “The Story of a Horse” – which comes from Daoist teachings; there is a good version in: Watts 1975: p 31.

2.5E Zen story of a man on a horse

There is a Zen story about a man riding a horse that is galloping very quickly. Another man, standing alongside the road, yells at him, “Where are you going?” and the man on the horse yells back, “I don't know. Ask the horse.”

I think that is our situation. We are riding many horses that we cannot control. The proliferation of armaments, for instance, is a horse. We have all tried our best, but we cannot control these horses.

Hanh 1987 p 65

Source also at Vaison la Romaine September 2023 with the aid of:
<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/7499864-there-is-a-z>

Our situation in this context is – in the language of Porges’ Polyvagal Theory – because this horse represents the B or C Autonomic State, and so we are “out of control” like the man on the horse.

Reflective and Awareness Building Practice enable us to be in the A state much more of the time; or at least moving towards it; from this perspective we can learn to modulate B and C states that are arising – through the insights of the A State, and thus be returning towards equilibrium [Tudhope and Draper 2023].

See also: <https://www.newventureswest.com/real-lesson- taoist-farmer-story/>

2.5F Epilogue: An Elfman /

2.5F Epilogue: An Elfman

Let us conclude this section on non-judgement on a lighter note. Many years ago, Dr Ronald S. Illingworth wrote a wonderful Paediatric book called “The Normal Child”; it gave insights into how *varied* normal childhood development can be; and / or that the issue is one of transgenerational [Habit Energies](#). In Chapter 5, on the subject of “Height and Weight” measurements, he included this poem. It is a reminder to all of us how easy it is to fall into the trap of making assumptions / judgements.

I met a little elfman once,
Down where the lilies blow.
I asked him why he was so small,
And why he did not grow.
He slightly frowned and with his eyes
He looked me through and through.
“I’m quite as big for me”, he said,
“As you are big for you”.

John Kendrick Bangs
Illingworth 1991 p 68

6) NON STRIVING – (2.6)

In everyday life we are often striving to get things done; to pass exams; to meet deadlines. This, over time, can be very stressful. Striving can become quite dysfunctional, and prevent us from experiencing the here and now. We may sometimes imagine we would be happy if only....

“If I were only more calm, or more intelligent, or a harder worker, or more this or more that, if only my heart were healthier or my knees were better, then I would be okay. But right now, I am not okay.”

Kabat-Zinn, 1990, p 37

These are all judgements of one sort or another (see Non-Judgement above). In Meditation, both formal and informal, we develop Mindful Awareness in which we are not striving or trying to do anything: rather, we are simply focusing on this present moment: e.g., The rising and falling of our tummy as we breathe; the singing of a blackbird.

Research has shown that distressed young children, when taken out into a park or wood, become less distressed and more settled; more in harmony with life and Being. They are allowed to just be; no striving to do anything; in this way, we tune into the natural sound of nature, and our being can become one with nature¹⁴ – and beyond that, the cosmos.

*** **

All of the mindfulness attitudes discussed in this article can be seen to come under one of the Eightfold Ennobling Paths that Shakyamuni Buddha described. That is:

Right Mindfulness

¹⁴ This is natural as we are part of nature; we have emerged from the Cosmos; our Solar System; and Mother Earth. We are all manifestations of nature – our natural Being.

Thich Nhat Hanh comments that, in the context of Right Mindfulness:

..... the first aspect of meditation, shamatha, (is)

- ✿ Stopping
- ✿ Calming
- ✿ Resting
- ✿ Healing

Hanh 1998 p 66

These are a prerequisite to Non-Striving.

*** **

This non-striving attitude is important for our health and well-being (see A3 on web: “Towards a concept of happiness and well-being”); and can bring about rest, repair, and recuperation – as occurs also when we are in deep restful sleep.

Rest, repair and recuperation are generally associated with the Ventral Vagal (A) State modality of the Para-Sympathetic Nervous System [Porges 2011]; and the Dorsal Vagal in its recuperative function of aiding digestion; secretion of hormones and fundamental functions that are generally below the diaphragm.

*** **

INTERLUDE II: Non judgement and the meaning of “Right” in the context of the Eightfold Path (Way)

It is important to be clear what Sakyamuni meant by this Eightfold Path of Right View; Right Thinking, Right Mindfulness..... et al¹⁵.

The Pali word for “Right” is *samma* and the Sanskrit word is *samyak*. It is an adverb meaning “in the right way,” “straight,” or “upright,” not bent or crooked. Right Mindfulness, for example, means that there are ways of being mindful that are right, straight, and beneficial. Wrong mindfulness means that there are ways of practice that are wrong, crooked, and unbeneficial. Entering the Eightfold Path, we learn ways to practise that are of benefit, the “Right” way to practise. Right and wrong are neither moral judgments nor arbitrary standards imposed from outside. Through our own awareness, we discover what is beneficial (“right”) and what is unbeneficial (“wrong”).

Hanh 1998 p 11

Regarding Right Mindfulness, for a fuller description see Hanh 1998 pp 64-83 for what I have found to be a wonderful introduction to the meaning of “Right” in this context.

7) Letting go /

¹⁵ The other five being: Right Speech; Right Action; Right Diligence; Right Concentration; and Right Livelihood [Hanh 1998].

7) LETTING GO;LETTING BE;EQUANIMITY

It is very easy for us to keep on going over things from the past and / or what may or may not happen in the future. This can be emotionally draining and quite unproductive. Hanh has described this in terms of “pursuing the past” and “losing ourselves in the future” (Hanh 1990). So we need to develop our abilities and skills in letting go. Kabat-Zinn recounts a story about letting go; or rather, not letting go.

It is said that in India there was a very clever way to catch a monkey. A hole is made in a coconut, which allows the flat hand of the monkey to go in: two very small holes are also made at the other end, through which is threaded a wire. A banana is then placed inside the coconut, which is fixed to a tree.

In due course the monkey arrives and puts the flat hand in through the small rectangular hole – and grasps the banana. The banana within the grasped hand is now too big for the hole – the monkey struggles to get the banana out – and during this struggle the waiting monkey catchers capture the monkey.

- If we are not careful, we may become like the monkey and get caught in the web of our lives because we are unable to let go.

Adapted from Kabat-Zinn 1990; p 39.

Please note: a previous Autogenic course member was rightly concerned for the monkey in this story; in other words, she showed concern / compassion for the monkey. I agree.

- ❁ The story is a metaphor for the way we as humans can become attached to grievances / sorrows / the Second Arrow..... It is not about condoning the capture of animals.
- ❁ It is about the serious outcomes to our Well-Being if we are not able to let go (or let be) appropriately,

Such inability to let go can harm us. Say we have decided never to forgive an ex-partner or institution for wrong done to us: the question is, whom will this harm most? We become trapped, like the monkey.

Yet here, and in many other situations, letting go may not be quite the right phrase. For example, our child who has died; for her grief stricken parents / siblings to let go may not be possible for in one sense the dead child is still part of their being. Here, the appropriate skill is perhaps more:

❁ TO LET BE

What has happened is part of our new reality.
Our Assumptive World has changed for ever.
This is a vital learning;
All is impermanent;
We “can never cross the same river twice” [Heraclitus].

Furthermore, if we are not able or willing to let go of the hurt, the anger, the resentment, it is ourselves that we will be damaging..... Such a situation indicates that we have (unconsciously) become attached to our anger, hurt, and resentment: and we will not become whole again until we allow ourselves to become free from that attachment.

- ❖ To become whole, letting go of past-hurts / negativities is of great importance.....

Meditative-type practices can be of great assistance in these matters, as they stimulate crucial pre-frontal cortex functions that are associated with Mindfulness – or to use Daniel Siegel’s word: Mindsight (Siegel 2007; 2010).

❖ See also on web:

- C2: Mindsight –
our seventh sense and associated pre-frontal cortex functions;
- B24: Autogenic Switches and Well-Being.

In day to day living, to be in each moment also means that as each moment goes we let it go, and so can focus and be in the *new* present moment. The process of letting go is sometimes related to, and equated with, the state of equanimity (Hanh 1998).

❖ If we cannot let go of the past and painful memories, including loss, how can we reach equanimity?

Letting go; letting be; and equanimity can be seen as an
Interlinked Wholesome Trio

A gentle Story of Letting Go can be found in
Appendix 3: “The King and the Ring” pp 41-42
[Thanks to: Tolle 2005 pp199- 200]

8) GRATITUDE Part I (2.8)

We can give of our gratitude to others and the whole cosmos; or, on the other hand, we can be resentful – living within a negative mind state. I was once having difficulty selling our flat in Edinburgh and was becoming upset and resentful about this. I spent a week-end away with my brother Brian; during this time we each did a focused meditation, on a meditation card that we each drew separately.

The card that chose me was “Gratitude”¹⁶. To start with I was very irritated about this as it was the last thing I felt I wanted to reflect on – when the flat was not selling. However, after a thirty minute meditation on Gratitude, my whole perspective changed – and the irritation had dispersed.

*** **

I have a friend who, whenever we meet, is so positive about the present moment, the weather, the wonders of nature – that my heart lifts. We have a choice: we can see the world as being bereft of meaning and often think ill: or we can be aware with gratitude of every breath we breathe. Gratitude can flourish when we are feeling safe in the Ventral Vagal (A) State [Porges 2011; Dana 2018; and B28 on website: An Experiential Introduction to ABC States of the Polyvagal Theory].

❖ Feeling safe is facilitated by regular Meditation and Mindfulness Practice.

Gratitude and neuro-physiology /

¹⁶ i.e. I sensed this experience as being one of Jungian Synchronicity.
page 23 of 63

Gratitude and neuro-physiology relating to the Polyvagal Theory [Porges 2011]

Gratitude is a wonderful state to be in. Most of us, from time to time, go through stressful periods in our lives. During these it can be very easy to become resentful. No blame; this is part of the human predicament when we are not in a mindful state.

- Furthermore, resentment is not good for our health and can lead, for examples, to Afflictive Stickiness. This implies that we are in a distressed state within. [See B26 on web: Well-Being and Flourishing as a Skill we can Develop – based on Richard Davidson’s research].
- ⊗ As indicated above, gratitude can flourish when we are feeling safe – and are bathed in our Ventral Vagal / Positive Engagement State (with ourselves and others); that is, the Autonomic A State.

Reference:

Zak, Paul J. ; Stanton, Angela A.; Ahmadi, Sheila
2007 Oxytocin Increases Generosity in Humans
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0001128>



Figure 2.8-G
Flora of Gratitude

8) GRATITUDE Part II (2.8)

A fish cannot be without water. Without water, the fish dies. Fish and water are one; in this sense, implicitly, life only can come to be through [Inter-Being](#); and the overlapping concept of Anima Mundi. The realisation of Inter-Being can awaken our gratitude.

In recent years, research has shown that gratitude, and expressing gratitude, can be a powerful antidote to negative thinking and depression, as Alex Korb says.

Gratitude is a powerful antidote to negativity, because it doesn't depend on your life circumstance. You could be poor and starving and yet grateful for a warm breeze. Conversely, you could be rich and powerful and still be annoyed at the sound your husband makes when he's chewing. Gratitude is a state of mind – in fact, there's a gratitude circuit in your brain, badly in need of a workout. Strengthening that circuit brings the power to elevate your physical and mental health, boost happiness, improve sleep, and help you feel more connected to other people.

Korb 2015 p 151-152

Gratitude is one of the modalities explored in Series C of Expressive Autogenic Resilience Training Exercises on the website. [A 13: Expressive *Autogenic Resilience Training* Exercises Series C pp 25-30.]

As indicated above, Gratitude, as with other mindfulness practices, has been well researched. The Figure 2.8-R below gives a summary of some of the important consequence of developing gratitude – and an increased sense of gratitude. However, we need to beware. True gratitude is spontaneous; if we have an ulterior motive for our gratitude, then that can suck dry any potential benefits mentioned in this research.

Some Research Studies indicating the benefits of Gratitude		
Modality	comment	References
Improved Social Support	Study shows that increased Gratitude leads to increased Social Support – as would be expected with increased Social Engagement (Ventral Vagal PSNS – the A State) and oxytocin levels.	Emmons & McCullough 2003 Porges 2011 Korb 2015
Improved Sleep Dynamics	A number of studies have shown improved sleep quality.	Jackowska et al 2015
Depressive symptoms	Some, yet not all, studies have indicated reduction in serious symptoms of depression – including reduction in feelings of hopelessness.	Lin 2015 Korb 2015
Improved physical health	This is possibly mediated through improved levels of serotonin – which helps us to be proactive. Serotonin “improves willpower, motivation, and mood” [Korb 2015 p 15]	Emmons & McCullough 2003 Korb 2015
Increasing levels of Serotonin	Gratitude increases serotonin levels in anterior cingulate cortex o Serotonin, as mentioned above, improves “willpower, motivation and mood” [Korb 2015], and is a natural mood stabiliser.	Perreau-Linck et al 2007 (see below)
Increasing levels of Dopamine	“The benefits of gratitude start with the dopamine system, because feeling grateful activates the brain stem region and produces dopamine [Zahn & Moll 2009]. Additionally, gratitude towards others increases activity of the social dopamine circuits, which make social interactions more enjoyable.” Korb 2015 p 133	Korb 2015 [Zahn & Moll 2009]
Increasing levels of Oxytocin (some of which will be related to improved Social Support)	Gratitude embraces our connection with others, the cosmos, and for being alive. The neuro-circuits of gratitude are thus intimately connected with those of Social Engagement and our CARE circuits. “Oxytocin “promotes feelings of trust, love, and connection, and reduces anxiety” Korb 2015 p 15	Porges 2011 (with the mediation of Social Engagement through our Ventral Vagal System). Panksepp 1998

Figure 2.8-R

Some Research Studies indicating the benefits of Gratitude

Taken from Figure EARTE C5: Some dynamics of Gratitude in

A 13 article on web: www.atdynamics.co.uk

*** **

These research papers indicate that developing mindfulness is a wholesome endeavour that benefits ourselves, our family, society and the world.

Let us conclude this section with these reflections:

A simple way to develop our sense of gratitude is for us – towards bedtime – to reflect on the day and identify at least one or two wholesome experiences for which we are grateful.

Some research suggests that this may be more effective if done just a few days a week – rather than every day. This type of approach helps to prevent the practice becoming an automatic / unthinking / routine. These reflections can be even more effective if we briefly write down what these experiences were.

References: Bryant & Veroff 2007; Fredrickson 2003; 2009; and
A 13 on website: pp 25-30

INTERLUDE III: A Flower and Smile - (within 2.8)

There is a wonderful Gatha

47 Picking a Flower

May I pick you little flower,
gift from Earth and sky?
Thank you, dear bodhisattva,
for making life beautiful.

Hanh 2006 p 101

Whenever we pick a flower, we can ask permission, not only of the plant, but of the Earth and sky as well. The whole Earth and sky joined to create this flower. Our gratitude to them must be sincere. A flower is a bodhisattva that makes life fresher and more beautiful. We too, can offer others a gift by being refreshing, compassionate, and happy.

There is a well-known story in Zen circles about a flower. One day the Buddha was holding up a flower in front of an audience of 1,250 monks and nuns. He did not say anything for a long time. A man in the audience, named Mahākāśyapa, smiled at him and the flower. The Buddha smiled back and said:

☸ “I have a treasure of insight, and I have transmitted it to Mahākāśyapa.”

To me the meaning is quite simple: Be in touch with life in the present moment and look deeply in things that are happening in the present moment. The person who was not thinking, who was just himself, encountered the flower in depth and smiled.

Hanh 2006 edition p 101**
(Present Moment, Wonderful Moment)

“The person who was not thinking, who was just himself, encountered the flower in depth and smiled.” This is our experiential modality, modulated by our Right Hemisphere. So often we are thinking, analysing, and this is preventing us seeing the true nature of reality, of inter-being, and all that flows from this. See also McGilchrist 2021 The Matter with Things – Our Brains, Our Delusions, and the Unmaking of the World: (The Ways to Truth; What then is Truth – Vol I & II respectively).

Note: there is also a wonderful account of this incident / transmission in Hanh 1991 pp 337 – 339 – going deeper into this moment.

9) GENEROSITY [2.9]

GENEROSITY of SPIRIT

A few years ago, Bernie, my wife, came across a lovely story that illustrates Generosity from the South African tradition.

An anthropologist once proposed a game to some children of an African tribe. He put a basket of fruit near a tree and told them that whoever got there first won all the sweet fruits.

When he gave them the signal to run they took each other's hands, running together, and then sat down in a circle and enjoyed their fruits.

The anthropologist was perplexed, and asked them why they chose to run as a group when they could have had more fruit individually.

For a few moments, there was a stunned silence.

Then, one child spoke up and said:

☸ "UBUNTU. How can one of us be happy if all the other ones are sad?"

'UBUNTU' in the Xhosa culture means: "I am because we are."

The concept of Ubuntu indicates a generosity of spirit often lacking in the "consumer society". Generosity in the sense here is also the generosity in the time we give to others.

☸ Generosity can be an antidote to ego and self-centredness. It also implies that we can put ourselves in others' shoes, and thus relates to empathy (as usually understood in the English language) and Theory of Mind.

Some further comments:

- ❖ Those with little may well be more generous in terms of what they give.
- ❖ Giving of course is far more than giving material support.
- ❖ Generosity includes giving time and energy to others – in a Jen and Ubuntu sense.
- ❖ See also Dana Paramita – D2 on website, www.atdynamics.co.uk

Two Research /

Two Research Papers relating Generosity to Well-Being:

First:

Soyoung Q. Park, Thorsten Kahnt, Azade Dogan, Sabrina Strang, Ernst Fehr & Philippe N. Tobler 2016: A neural link between generosity and happiness NATURE COMMUNICATIONS | 8:15964 | DOI: 10.1038/ncomms15964 | www.nature.com/naturecommunications Accepted 12 May 2017 | Published 11 Jul 2017 (IR: I suggests that Well-Being is a better / more appropriate term here than “happiness”.)

A further research paper by Zak et al gives a wonderful account of our indebtedness to the Mammalian Information molecule¹⁷ oxytocin; here is the abstract:

Abstract

Human beings routinely help strangers at costs to themselves. Sometimes the help offered is generous—offering more than the other expects. The proximate mechanisms supporting generosity are not well-understood, but several lines of research suggest a role for empathy. In this study, participants were infused with 40 IU oxytocin (OT) or placebo and engaged in a blinded, one-shot decision on how to split a sum of money with a stranger that could be rejected. Those on OT were 80% more generous than those given a placebo. OT had no effect on a unilateral monetary transfer task dissociating generosity from altruism. OT and altruism together predicted almost half the interpersonal variation in generosity. Notably, OT had twofold larger impact on generosity compared to altruism. This indicates that generosity is associated with both altruism as well as an emotional identification with another person.

Zak, Paul J. ; Stanton, Angela A.; Ahmadi, Sheila 2007 Oxytocin Increases Generosity in Humans
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0001128>

Comment:

Ubuntu and Jen flow with generosity; both of these modalities will also be flowing with the Autonomic A State. It is suggested that by developing Mindfulness Skills, we will much of the time be flowing with oxytocin produced within – thus facilitating generosity of Spirit.

10 Compassion /

¹⁷ See Pert 1977: Molecules of Emotion - *Why You Feel the Way You Feel*,
page 28 of 63

10) COMPASSION 2.10

This was not in Kabat-Zinn's original list; yet it is a fundamental aspect of the ancient concept of Mindfulness which embraces ethical concepts, such as reducing suffering for both ourselves and others. When discussing Mindfulness Attitudes with an Autogenic group in Leith over a decade ago, one a member of the group suggested Compassion as a central aspect of Mindfulness; thanks to her for this important addition to Kabat-Zinn's original seven; and I have included Compassion in these attitudes ever since.

If we are anxious, distressed, or upset in any way, it can be difficult to have compassion. Families, society, and the world can only survive with CARE, Compassion, and empathy / sympathy.

- ☯ Compassion overlaps with the Chinese concept of [Jen](#); that is, Human Heartedness.
- ☯ Compassion overlaps with the African concept of [Ubuntu](#) (see Section 9: Generosity / Generosity of Spirit – p 27).
- ☯ Mindful practices such as meditation and Autogenic Training can increase positive affect including enhancing our CARE circuits [Panksepp 1998], and so our compassion for ourselves and others.

Mindfulness that can embrace our own anger / distress is a form of Compassion directed towards ourselves; in this way calming our inner distress.

*** ** *

INTERLUDE IV: Some reflections on other Mindful Attitudes (within 2.10)

It is important for us to appreciate that Kabat-Zinn has been developing his mindfulness and meditation teachings and practice over decades. We too need to be flexible – and adapt to new ideas and context. The following helps us to see Kabat-Zinn's teaching from a wider and changing perspective – and it will be noted that he here includes compassion.

In addition to these (original) seven foundational attitudinal elements¹⁸ of mindfulness practice, there are other qualities of mind and heart that also contribute to broadening as well as deepening the embodiment of mindfulness in our lives. These include cultivating the attitudes of:

- ☯ Non harming
- ☯ Generosity
- ☯ Gratitude
- ☯ Forbearance¹⁹ ☯
- ☯ Forgiveness
- ☯ Kindness
- ☯ Compassion
- ☯ Empathic joy
- ☯ Equanimity.

Kabat-Zinn 2013 pp 30-31
Flower symbols added

Figure Interlude IV
Further Mindfulness Attributes

It will be noted that several of these have been discussed above.

¹⁸ See Figure 1.1, p 7

¹⁹ See Inclusiveness below p 30

I really like this widening of the perspective of Mindfulness Attitudes; we are each unique Conscious Manifestations of the Cosmos – with the essence of [Innate Goodness](#) [Davidson 2018] within each of us. All of those qualities / modalities listed above could have been included in this review of Mindful Approaches.

[Kindness](#) is crucial for our well-being; and the well-being of society – and is wholesomely discussed by Fredrickson in Positivity pp 187-188 [Fredrickson 2009]; and in Loving Kindness (Meditations) [Salzberg 1995]. In particular, I feel it is significant that Daniel Siegel subtitled his 2010 book: Mindsight:

❖ “Transform your brain with the new science of kindness” [Siegel 2010].

In essence, this transformation comes about through Meditation / Reflective and Awareness Building Practices [Sewell 2020s]. Kindness reflects an on-going Autonomic A State, in which we are wholesomely engaging with others; and also allowing us to be kind and show compassion to ourselves.

❖ On further reflection, I have decided to include Kindness in Figure 2.12a (p 32)

END OF INTERLUDE IV

*** **

11) INCLUSIVENESS 2.11

☯ Forbearance is included in the ancient Buddhist Teachings of The Six Paramitas [Hanh 1998 pp 192-213]. Interestingly, Thich Nhat Hanh does not feel that forbearance quite describes the meaning Kshanti Paramita.

The third petal of the flower is inclusiveness, Kshanti Paramita. Inclusiveness is the capacity to receive, embrace, and transform. Kshanti is often translated as patience or forbearance, but I believe “inclusiveness” better conveys the Buddha’s teaching. When we practice inclusiveness, we don’t have to suffer or forbear, even when we have to embrace suffering and injustice. The other person says or does something that makes us angry☯. He inflicts on us some kind of injustice. But if your heart is large enough, we don’t suffer.

Hanh 1998 p 198

“But if your heart is large enough, we don’t suffer.” Such a heart will merge with [Jen](#) (human-heartedness) and [Ubuntu](#).

☯ Regarding when “The other person says or does something that makes us angry”.

We can reframe this by saying it is our internal and external response that causes our anger, rather than the other person “making us angry.”

Inclusiveness is only really possible when we are in the A Autonomic State [Ventral Vagal – Porges 2011; 2017; 2022], and are in a milieu of feeling safe within ourselves. This is the being state of Jen and Ubuntu.

Inclusiveness axiomatically interlinks with Inter-Being – see below.

12) INTER-BEING 2.12

Inter-Being is a fundamental concept in Buddhist metapsychology; and has been deeply explored by Thich Nhat Hahn. Everything and every Being in the cosmos is inter-related; our very consciousness is a mystery – whatever scientific investigations find or “prove”. Such investigations axiomatically reflect Left Hemisphere modalities; consciousness per se is experiential, and so reflects Right Hemisphere dynamics [McGilchrist 2009; 2021].

If we lack a sense of Inter-Being; of ubuntu; we can say that we are not really alive to the realities of the world, and reality itself; which is sometimes called Alaha²⁰ [Douglas-Klotz 2025 p 5]. We can also see such a lack in terms of a lack of a vital wholesome notion for Well-Being for all.

A sense of the suchness of Inter-Being is a reflection of Cosmic Reality; any understanding / conception that does not embrace Being and Inter-Being can thus be seen in terms of an Erroneous Notion. Our language is vital to our understanding and experience of the world.

“The limits of my language are the limits of my world”

Ludwig Wittgenstein

These matters are discussed in some depth in the companion article, F 21: The Full Awareness of Breathing Sutra – Part II; especially in relation to the final quadrad of Breathing Exercises: 13-16. I first came across Wittgenstein’s insight thanks to Douglas-Klotz 1999 p 2²¹.

The bottom line, as it were, for understanding and embracing Inter-Being is that we are, generally speaking, in the Autonomic A (Dorsal Vagal) State. The B state and C state both make it difficult / and perhaps neuro-philosophically impossible for us to relate in a meaningful way to the essence of Inter-Being. Thus for a future to be possible in a wholesome way, meditative and reflective practices need to become endemic in schools, colleges, families and society at large.

*** **

I have the sense that Inter-Being is the – or one of the – central aspects of Buddhist metapsychology; for this reason, in Figure 2.12a below, it becomes central.

Concluding Part II /

²⁰ Or in other traditions, for example, Tao / Dao.

²¹ Douglas-Klotz is a scholar of great erudition, and is familiar with many different languages; and the fact that some languages have different / unique concepts that cannot easily be rendered into the language / culture of other peoples.

CONCLUDING PART II

CONCLUDING PART II A

Let us embrace the above discussions in new Figure: 2.12 which, it will be seen, reconfigures the original Figures 1.1 and 1.2 regarding Mindfulness Approaches to Well-Being.

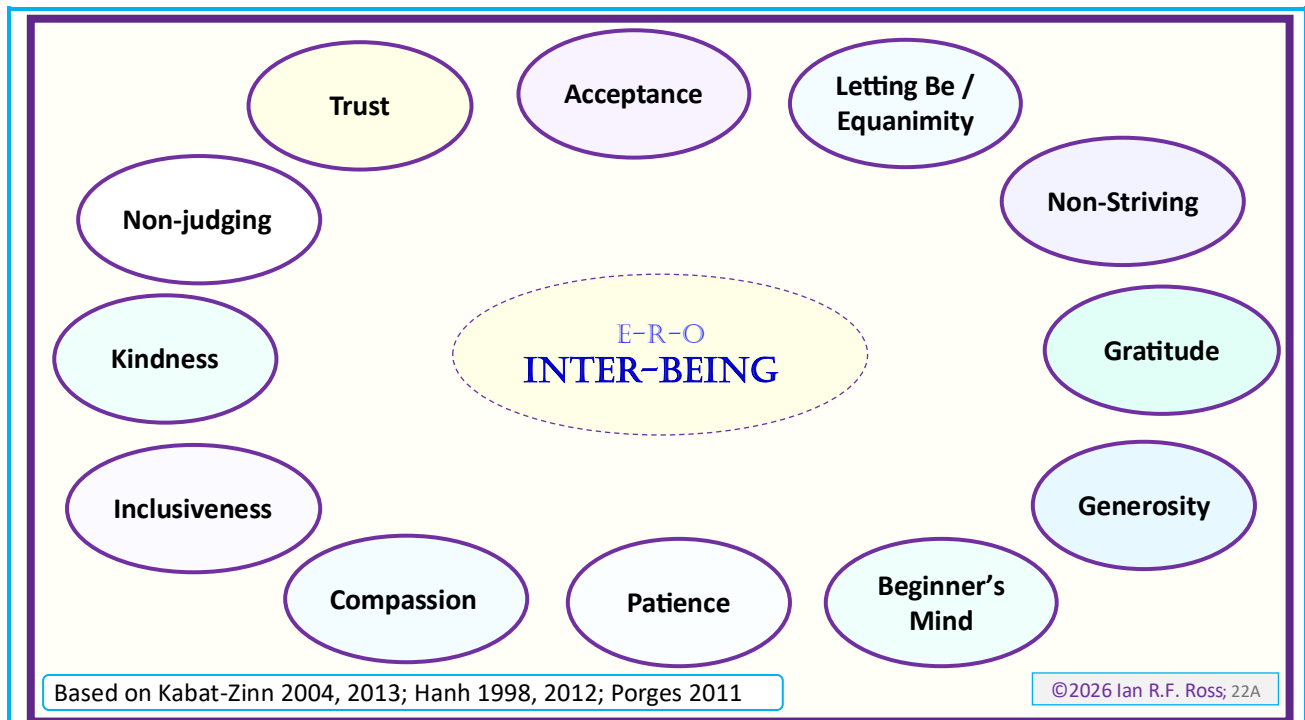


Figure 2.12a

Mindfulness Approaches re-framed flowing around Inter-Being.

E-R-O: Experiential Realisation of (Inter-Being)

Comments of Figure 2.12a

- Inter-Being is central to all of these manifestations of Mindfulness.
- From The Experiential Realisation of Inter-Being flow all the modalities of Mindfulness; we may from time to time feel moved to add other approaches.
- Inter-Being inter is with concepts / constructs such as [Jen](#) and [Ubuntu](#).
- All of these approaches flow from the state of our being; our inner being. In neuro-physiological terms, this means the Dorsal Vagal Autonomic state, notated in this article as the A State.
- Reflective and Awareness Building Practices, such as Autogenic Training, Meditation, and Heart-Mindful practice, when practised regularly, can help us to maintain the A State most of the time.
- We can recall the words of Deb Dana:

❖ Story Follows State [Dana 2018 p 35].

If our body is disturbed, our physiology is disturbed, and we will be constricted by the B or C Autonomic States.

On the other hand, in the A State Kindness, Compassion, Inclusiveness and the other modalities will flow with a smile.

Please note that Kindness is included here (as discussed in Interlude IV p 29). This means that Figure 2.12a embraces thirteen, rather than twelve, approaches; thus harmonising with the notation of the whole article: D 13 😊.

*** **

CONCLUDING PART II B

Between the Stimulus and our Response – Meta-awareness

Let us conclude these reflections by putting Mindfulness in the context of how we respond to anything that may occur in our life; whether a thought, a feeling, a sensation – or an external stimulus like a child smiling beautifully – which we can call the “stimulus”.

It so happens that during the last few years I have been seeing an AT Student who previously attended an AT course – at what was then the London Homeopathic Hospital; the particular course he was on was run by the late and greatly missed Tamara Callea. During these sessions, I have introduced him to Autogenics 3.0; and now continue to see him on Zoom every several weeks for consolidation sessions. Recently we were discussing a wonderful saying by Victor Frankl:

Between the stimulus and the response there is a space.
In that space is our power to choose our response.
In our response lies our growth and our freedom.
Frankl [c 1946]

Following the Zoom session, I looked out a Handout for him: “The Space to Choose Between the Stimulus and our Response^(DD-21). I had lost sight of some reflections towards the end of the handout.

Everything that we experience in life can be seen in terms of a stimulus that then activates in one way or another parts of our brain and being; yet in the space between that stimulus and our response, with mindfulness and [meta-attention](#) (meta-awareness), we can alter the outcome.

This usually involves acceptance of whatever is, non-judgementally; and at times this may embrace: a sense of wonder; a sense of gratitude. Heart-Mindfulness can be seen as a boat that allows us to get across the river from the shore of suffering / anxiety / toxic states / depression to the shore of well-being; only we ourselves can get to the other side – e.g. by swimming or rowing a boat ourselves – so we have to work at it [based on Hanh 1998 p 192].

Actually, moment by moment, step by step, we can be there: “....the true wisdom of life, is that in each step of the way, the other shore is actually reached” [Suzuki 1970 / 1986; p 65].

“.....the true wisdom /

Concluding Part II B *continued*

“...the true wisdom of life, is that in each step of the way, the other shore is actually reached”. We can say that this is enabled if we are in the Present Moment:

Present Moment; Wonderful Moment. Hanh 1993	
	Figure 2.12b Cover illustration of Hanh 1993 With Gratitude

All the modalities of mindfulness described above help us to develop meta-awareness. This becomes increasingly possible and likely as we develop our skills in Reflective and Awareness Practices – such as Meditation, Autogenic Training / Mindfulness. All of these aptitudes help us to flow into the A Autogenic State. Distressed states in which we will tend to be in the B or C Autogenic State will block Meta-Awareness for the time being.

Meta-Awareness gives us the freedom to choose our response.

*** **

PART III EPILOGUE /

PART III: EPILOGUE

Paying attention is crucial to Mindfulness and Meditation – as Kabat-Zinn indicates [Kabat-Zinn 1994; p 4; and p 5 above]. Paying attention is central to many / most wholesome self-development / spiritual paths. Kabir Helminski, in his “Living Presence – *The Sufi Path to Mindfulness and the Essential Self*”, says:

What we choose to give our attention to we energise²². We should accept certain impressions and not dwell on others. The more conscious we can make this process, the less we will energise those things that conflict with our well-being and values. Attention develops as the gatekeeper of all our impressions.

Helminski 1992 / 2007 p 50

In the context of Mindfulness, what we pay attention to is crucial. The question is: “Is it wholesome?” Mental Training can be put to unwholesome ends; in other words, it can manifest as un-mindfulness.

The late Tamara Callea put it this way:

“Our individual choices fall into categories which tend to either confirm or deny life in our world” If we choose negative states such as
✚ “vengeance, resentment, litigation, our future will reflect those qualities and perpetuate the suffering we are experiencing now.....” On the other hand, if
✚ “we choose forgiveness, compassion, peace, truthfulness, these choices attract futures which reflect such qualities.”

Tamara Callea 2000
Autogenic Therapist

Mental Representations

The “negative states” manifest as unwholesome Mental Representations, and change the physiology in our bodies, which then in turn exacerbate the original negative mental state [de Rivera 2017e]. On the other hand, wholesome Mental Representations such as “forgiveness, compassion, peace, truthfulness” have wholesome physiological outcomes, which in turn reinforce thecompassion, peace and truthfulness.

*** **

In general terms, unwholesome mental representations will be associated with B or C Autonomic states – these not infrequently giving rise to the Second Arrow and resultant downward spiralling distressing ruminations.

Mindfulness approaches can help us to become aware when this is happening – a form of [Meta-Awareness](#) / Meta-Attention. Wholesome Mental Representations will generally be associated with the A Autonomic State and feeling Safe; wholesome social engagement and the attributes of Mindfulness discussed in this paper.

The Heart-Mindful approaches illustrated in Figure 2.12a, when carried out diligently, facilitate Well-Being in ourselves, our families, and communities.

*** **

²² “What we choose to give our attention to we energise.” Much Geo-political energy at present is going towards Power and expanding control (and territory) over others. This is dangerous; and will be reflected upon further in the planned forthcoming article: C 16: Reflections on Einstein’s Words, Fallout, and for a Future to be possible.

Embracing Apple Juice

Let us conclude this epilogue with a beautiful account that Thich Nhat Hanh gives when he and his community of monks in France were looking after Thanh Thuy for several months – while her father sought work in Paris. The story is a reminder that Heart-Mindfulness / meditation is more to do with Inter-Being and the essence of nature; and not with any “cleverness” on our part.

Today three children, two girls and a little boy, came from the village to play with Thanh Thuy. The four of them ran off to play on the hillside behind the house and were gone for about an hour when they returned to ask for something to drink. I took the last bottle of home-made apple juice and gave them each a full glass, serving Thuy last. Since her juice was from the bottom of the bottle, it had some pulp in it. When she noticed the particles, she pouted and refused to drink it. So the four children went back to their games and the hillside, and Thuy had not drunk anything.

Half an hour later, while I was meditating in my room, I heard her calling. Thuy wanted to get herself a glass of cold water, but even on tiptoes she couldn't reach the faucet. I reminded her of the glass of juice on the table, and asked her to drink that first. Turning to look at it, she saw that the pulp had settled and the juice looked clear and delicious. She went to the table and took the glass with both hands. After drinking half of it, she put it down and asked: “Is this a different glass, Uncle Monk?”

“No,” I answered. “It is the same one as before. It sat quietly for a bit, and now it's clear and delicious.” Thuy looked at the glass again. “It really is good! Was it meditating like you, Uncle Monk?”

I laughed and patted her head. “Let's say that I imitate the apple juice when I sit; that is closer to the truth.

Thich Nhat Hanh: 1988 pp 3-4
With thanks and Gratitude

*** **

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Appendices /

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PART IV: APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: THE STORY OF A HORSE

It can be very difficult in life to know what is for good and what is for ill. Something that we may be very pleased with at the time may turn out not so well; and something that very much upsets us at the time may, in the long run, turn out much better than we imagined.

So perhaps we should not be too hasty in judging situations²³. Such thinking is central to Taoist philosophy, and is illustrated in the following story.

THE HORSE THAT RAN AWAY....

One day a farmer's horse ran away. That evening, the neighbours gathered to commiserate with him since this was such bad luck.

He said: "May be."

The next day the horse returned, but brought with it six wild horses, and the neighbours came exclaiming at his good fortune.

He said: "May be."

And then, the following day, his son tried to saddle and ride one of the wild horses, was thrown, and broke his leg. Again the neighbours came to offer their sympathy for his misfortune.

He said: "May be."

The day after, conscription officers came to the village to seize young men for the army, but because of the broken leg the farmer's son was rejected.

When the neighbours came to say how fortunately everything had turned out, he said, "May be."

From "Tao: The Watercourse Way" – Alan Watts [1975 / 1986
with thanks and gratitude

²³ This includes in the personal, relational, family, social and political domains.
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APPENDIX 2: THE THREE MINUTE EXERCISE

Source: Segal et al 2002; 2013

In the context of regular Autogenic Practice / Mindfulness / Meditation, The Three Minute Exercise is a brief exercise that can allow us to become centred whatever our underlying thoughts, bodily sensations, and feelings are at that moment.

- ❖ Research suggests that whatever our feelings, whether happy or sad, depressed or stressed, tearful or joyful, it is important to acknowledge whatever our present mental state is.
- ❖ Paradoxically, this means that when it is a negative or distressing feeling or thought or bodily sensation, we should not try to push it away or suppress it²⁴.

Acknowledging or accepting our present mental state is not the same thing as being resigned to it. So if we are feeling a bit low or out-of-sorts right now, for example, we can simply notice and acknowledge that this is the case; this involves allowing and letting be.

The three minute exercise can be helpful in increasing our ability to recognise and appreciate our present state. It can be particularly helpful when we are troubled in thoughts or feelings or bodily sensations.

The Exercise /

²⁴ In time, and with meditative experience, we may even be able to embrace it, as it were. See The Full Awareness of Breathing Sutra, Breathing Exercises 9-12 (Web site article F 21 – for example Figure A5: Part 2.3, p 29.)

Appendix 2 continued
The Three Minute Exercise**1. Awareness of present state**

- i. Adopt an erect and dignified posture, such as the Arm Chair Position (in Autogenic terms (not Simple Sitting)).
- ii. We gently focus our awareness on what is going on within, becoming aware of our thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations by asking ourselves: "What am I noticing right now in thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations?"
- iii. Acknowledge, own (register) and describe these experiences, even if unwanted²⁵: mentally put these experiences into words (for example: "A low feeling is here"; "A feeling of anger is arising"; "Sickly feeling in tummy"; "Self-critical thoughts are here").
- iv. Now notice the part of the body that the thoughts / feelings seem to gravitate towards.

2. Re-directing Attention to breathing

- i. We now gradually re-direct our attention to our breathing, becoming aware of each in-breath and each out-breath – "so that we know when the breath is moving in, and we know when the breath is moving out" [Ex Segal et al 2013 p 197].
- ii. Continue to follow the breath in this way for several breath cycles.

3. Expanding Attention to include (some of) the following.....

- i. For the last minute or so, we expand our attention to notice the whole body.
- ii. In particular, to any area where there is a sense of "discomfort, tension, or resistance".
- iii. If such sensations are present, we take our awareness there by "breathing into them".
- iv. As we breathe out from those sensations, we can:
 - Imagine the sensation *softening*.....
 - Perhaps saying something like: "It's OK"; "Whatever the feeling, it's OK"; "Let me feel it"; "feeling softening".
- v. We now become aware of our posture and facial expression.....adjusting them if we feel the need.
- vi. For the last three or so breaths we can expand the breathing to the whole body:
 - Breathe into the upper arms and down to the tips of our fingers; breathe out with a gentle longish out-breath. For the next breath we.....
 - Breathe into our legs and down to our feet and toes; breathe out again with a gentle longish out-breath. Then we....
 - Breathe into our face – perhaps allowing a *gentle (inner) smile as we breathe out*.....
 - *Finally we may like to expand our awareness to the coming moments.....and on to the rest of the day.....and gently close the exercise* (in the Standard Autogenic way).

Please note: this exercise is adapted from Segal et al 2002; 2013; with thanks; also see Ogden 2009

Some suggestions (given to my Autogenic and Mindfulness students).

- During the coming weeks, we can practise this exercise once or twice a day.
- We can also practise it whenever we feel disturbed – in body or mind.
- Once we are happy with the format and practice of the exercise, we can also practise it, for example, while out walking or waiting for a bus.

Please note caveat
given on page 4.

Please also note: this Three Minute Exercise is a good preparation for the Feeling the Feeling Meditation and Meditation on Constructive Feelings that Luis de Rivera has pioneered, in the context of Autogenics 3.0 [de Rivera 2022 pp 111-132; and 133-149 respectively. See also on www.atdynamics.co.uk: F5A; F6.1; F6.2; F6.3; and F9

²⁵ Putting Feelings into words is sometimes described as Affect Labelling (Lieberman 2007), or [naming and taming](#) [Siegel 2010 p 246; and p 116].

APPENDIX 3: THE KING AND THE RING

This story comes from the Sufi tradition.

A KING AND THE GIFT OF A RING

There was once a king who was rich beyond belief. Yet he was an unhappy king. Some days all was fine and he was happy, yet often a small upset would make him angry, upset, and disgruntled.

He realised that this was not a good way to live his life, and so he sent for a wise-man to help him.

After some weeks, the wise man arrived. The King told him of his difficulties: the wise man replied that he could help, but that it would cost the king more than his whole kingdom. The wise-man went on to say that in view of the King's distress he (the wise-man) would forgo the charge, provided that the king honoured the gift.

A few weeks later, the wise-man returned, and gave a ring to the King. The King said: "What is the meaning of this ring?" The wise-man suggested that the king read the inscription on the ring.

So the king looked at the ring very carefully, and on the inside edge he was able to decipher these words:

This too will pass

The king was now even more perplexed, and asked the wise-man the meaning. The wise-man said: "Wear this ring at all times: whatever happens, before you call it good or bad, touch the ring and read the inscription. That way you will always have peace".

The king still looked perplexed. The wise-man added: "Nothing is permanent; this ring is not permanent, and eventually will be no more. In the same way, your sad and angry moods will pass, and be no more: so too will your happy and joyful moods pass. This is the eternal nature of life and existence. Nothing is permanent. Suffering arises when we assume things are permanent. Only the present moment is eternal: so live in the present moment, and accept what is right now without anguish or judgement"

The wise-man bowed to the king, and left.

An ancient story recounted by:
Eckhart Tolle: 2005; A New Earth pp 223-228 ; ISBN 978-0-14-101782-2.
adapted by IR.

APPENDIX 3: THE KING AND THE RING *continued*

To recap the essence of this teaching:

We live in a world in which nothing is permanent: one of the causes of our suffering is to assume that life, that matter, that moods, and that flowers are permanent. All will pass. In order to be at one with ourselves and the world, it is important that we let go of our assumptions of permanence – and our attachment to thoughts, emotions, and material objects.

This too will pass

As we all will.

We could say that the essence of The King and the Ring story is to realise the permanence of impermanence in our world; and once recognised, this can lead to non-attachment.

Post Script:

There are really two sides to the truth: “this too will pass”. It can be reassuring and comforting during bad times. It can also focus our mind when life is in harmony and we are happy; for the idea of impermanence and that “this too will pass” may help us to appreciate the uniqueness of each moment, whether we are going for a walk in the country, having a swim, talking with friends, or seeing the smile on a child’s face. Hanh has written a wonderful short book: “Present Moment, Wonderful Moment” [Hanh 1990 / 1993].

Hanh, Thich Nhat: 1990 / 1993. *Present Moment, Wonderful Moment*. Rider Books; 1993; ISBN 0 7126 4737 1

APPENDIX 4:

Butterflies; metamorphosis; Autogenic Training and Mindfulness *from metaphor to metamorphosis*

There are many different versions of the story below; some of which can be found on the Internet. In the version below I have attempted to keep to the basics of the story, but have not given it a silver lining – as can be found in other versions – as such "happy endings" seem to detract from the essence of the story.

A Story

A man once came across a cocoon while sitting under a tree near his home. He gradually became aware that there were some slight movements coming from the cocoon: fascinated, he watched and waited. Sometimes the movements and inner vibrations would be quite vigorous; at other times the movements would disappear; and there would be periods of stillness.

After an hour or so, after some intense struggle, there was a quiet period of many minutes. The man, anxious for the latent butterfly within to come out and enjoy the lovely sunny afternoon, decided to prise open the cocoon to help the butterfly out.

This he did; only to find that the emerging butterfly did not butterfly; instead, the creature made a few desperate struggling movements; and then died.

This concerned and compassionate man did not realise that the butterfly can only become a creative, flying, and flowing-in-the-breeze butterfly through the struggle to emerge from the cocoon: it is this very struggle that allows vital fluids to course through the net-works of micro-channels in the wings that is the essential pre-requisite for health and flying of the butterfly.

This is a sad story; yet with a strong message for us. We all have our own path and journey to make in life; and this can of course be greatly helped and facilitated by other humans, and the flora and fauna of the world. Yet in a certain sense we each have to make the struggle ourselves, just like the emerging butterfly. Ernest Rossi, in his therapeutic work with clients which relies greatly on visualisation and inner reflection, emphasises the inner incubation work and private struggle that we have to go through in order to reach the crisis point - which can be the turning point for new insights and a re-framing of our views (Rossi 2002; 2004; Rossi & Rossi 2006).

The same is the case with Counselling; Mindfulness; Reflective and Awareness Building Practices [Sewell 2020]; and Autogenic Training. Our Therapist or Teacher can certainly be a facilitator to us; but in this she or he is more like Mother-nature in preparing the setting in which the cocoon is placed.

✿ It is only we ourselves that can become competent and skilled in Autogenic Training²⁶, Meditation and Mindfulness – through repeated practice and inner work.

²⁶ Note that the phrase Autogenic Therapy really means a form of "therapy" generated from within ourselves, by ourselves, that facilitates our development, personal growth and creativity; it can thus become a life-long friend; each session has the potential to activate our own CARE circuits [Panksepp 1998; 2012] – thus caring for both ourselves and others.

We need to remember that Autogenic means generated from within: and if we continue with this inner work, we too may be able to emerge like the wonderful butterfly, and enjoy the wonders of life, nature and the world.

*** **

Sources include:

- Dr Ann Bowden, Autogenic Therapist, Royal London Homeopathic Hospital
- Ruth Sandford: a colleague of Carl Rodgers, in an article "Loving with an open hand" (given to me by my brother Brian Heaton-Ross)
- Various versions of the story available from Google.

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Appendix 5 /

APPENDIX 5

JEN AND OUR INNATE HUMAN HEARTEDNESS

In ancient China there was a quality put above all others; this is Jen [Watts 1995], or human-heartedness. We all have the potential of tapping into Jen – and so realising human-heartedness within, because we all have CARE and PLAY circuits embedded in our being [Panksepp 1998; Panksepp & Biven; and B3 Part I and Part II on web].

Jen is perhaps best illustrated by the following story:

In a large temple north of Thailand's ancient capital, Sukotai, there once stood an enormous and ancient clay Buddha. Though not the most handsome or refined work of Thai Buddhist art, it had been cared for over a period of five hundred years and become revered for its sheer longevity. Violent storms, changes in government, and invading armies had come and gone, but the Buddha endured.

At one point, however, the monks who tend the temple noticed that the statue had begun to crack and would soon be in need of repairing and repainting. After a stretch of particularly hot, dry weather, one of the cracks became so wide that a curious monk took his flashlight and peered inside. What shone back at him was a flash of brilliant gold. Inside this plain old statue, the temple residents discovered one of the largest and most luminous golden images of Buddha ever created

The monks believe that this shining work of art had become covered in plaster and clay to protect it during times of conflict and unrest. In much the same way, each of us has encountered threatening situations that lead us to cover our innate nobility. Just as the people of Sukotai had forgotten about the golden Buddha, we too have forgotten our essential nature. Much of the time we operate from the protective layer.

Jack Kornfield, 2008, pp 11-12
With thanks and gratitude

Kornfield goes on to say: "The primary aim of Buddhist psychology is to help us see beneath this armouring and bring out our original goodness, called our Buddha nature."

Our own original nature can be distorted and / or temporarily lost in the pressures and assumptions of modern society. We may lack self-confidence, and so go along with ideas and behaviours that are not in keeping with our authentic inner self. However, we can rediscover our Jen and inner wisdom by setting aside times to be silent – and away from the hurly burly of the world [see also Meditation on Five Sounds that can Heal the World (after Hanh 2015²⁷) – F 8 on website].

²⁷ "Silence: *The Power of Quiet in a World Full of Noise*"

APPENDIX 6

The Guest House

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes,
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still – treat each guest honourably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door, laughing,
and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

RUMI

(1207-1273)

Translation: Barks & Moyne 1995
With Thanks and Gratitude

RUMI, The Essential: Barks, Coleman, & Moyne, John, et al: 1995. page 109 ISBN 0-06-250959-4

Part VI: Glossary

Habit Energies

Expanded significantly from Glossary of F 21 to embrace the transformative experience of a twelve year old Swiss boy at Plum Village.

As we grow up, we take on certain patterns of behaviour and attitudes from, for example: our parents, teachers, and ancestors. Some of these may be helpful, some may be neutral, and others may be dysfunctional. In Buddhist psychology, these are termed Habit Energies, and overlap with Procedural Learned Tendencies [Ogden 2009 pp 204-231] and Complexes [Jung].

- ✚ In the context of habit energies, the image is sometimes given of a man on a horse; the man does not know where he is going because the horse has a will of her / his own.
- ✚ The horse in this context is our habit energy [Hanh 1998 pp 24-25].
- ✚ Habit energies can influence us at an unconscious level and so lead to volitional actions that may later perplex us – that is, we can be driven by these unconscious forces.

Complexes, in the Jungian sense, are forms of habit energies. These can be passed down to us by our ancestors, and in turn we can pass down complexes / habit energies to our offspring. These may manifest in terms of Procedural Learned Tendencies. Negative habit energies can very easily be transmitted to our children, starting when the baby is in the womb. Hanh suggests pre-marriage classes to reduce such negative transmission.

Jung once said:

We do not so much have Complexes
as they have us.

Carl Jung

Are Habit Energies Permanent?

Our brains are what is called plastic; meaning they are not set in stone. They can be rewired. There is a famous saying:

Neurones that fire together,
wire together.

Hebb 1949

This implies that new learning can take place, when our attention is focused on a particular matter; the neurones circuits allowing for this start firing together, so they start wiring together; and that wiring together facilitate new learning. Meditation / Reflective and Awareness Building Practices [Sewell 2020s] do just this.

An example from Plum Village

Thich Nhat Hanh gives a lovely example of a child overcoming a transgenerational Habit Energy from his father [Hanh 2001 / 2010 pp 41-42]. A twelve year old Swiss boy and his sister had been coming to Plum Village regularly.

..... The boy had a problem with his father: he was very angry with his father because his father did not speak kindly to him. Whenever the boy fell down or hurt himself, instead of helping and comforting him, his father got angry with him. He would say: "You're stupid! Why did you do such thing?"

The boy of course wanted his father to comfort him with kind words when he was in pain. He could not understand why his father treated him this way.....and he vowed that he would never act like his father when he grew up. If he had a son, he would help him up and comfort him should he fall and hurt himself.

Hanh 2010 p 41

Part VI: Glossary *continued*Habit Energies *continued*

So the Swiss boy's understanding of the situation was good and commendable. The question is, is that enough when "neurones that fire together wire together"?; which had been happening ever since his father treated him as above. Implicitly, he was developing his father's negative energies within himself.

Hanh continues:

One day, this boy was watching his sister play on a hammock with another girl. They were swinging back and forth. Suddenly, the hammock turned over and both girls fell to the ground. His sister cut her forehead. When the boy saw his sister bleeding, he became furious. He was about to shout at her, "You're stupid! Why did you hurt yourself like that." But because he knew how to practice, he went back to his breathing. Seeing that his sister was all right and was being taken care of by others, he decided to do walking meditation.

Hanh 2010 p 41

Here the boy had realised the entrenched "Habit Energy" just in time; so because of his Practice in Plum Village during his stays there, he was already developing [Meta-attention](#). During the walking meditation, he realised what was and had been happening to him:

He saw that he was exactly like his father. He had the same kind of energy that pushed him to say unkind words. When your loved one is suffering, you should be loving, tender, and helpful, and not shout at them out of anger. He saw that he was about to behave exactly like his father. That was his insight.

Hanh 2010 p 42

In terms of Buddhist meta-psychology, the boy was realising, consciously or not, that the unwholesome seeds in the Store Conscious of his father were developing in his own Store Consciousness – and so these neurones were firing together which would cement these unwholesome neurocircuits. If he did not continue with regular Meditative Practice, he himself would transmit these negative energies to his own offspring.

His great insight that he was becoming like his father allowed him to decide that:

.....when he returned home he would discuss his discoveries with his father. He decided he could ask his father to practice with him so that both of them could transform their energy. With this (third) insight, his anger at his father vanished because he understood that his father was also a victim. His father might have received the energy from his own father. So you see, the practice of looking deeply to gain understanding and freedom from your anger is very important.

Hanh 2010 p 42

So transgenerational unwholesome Habit Energies are not necessarily permanent. Elsewhere, Thich Nhat Hanh has said that "Love without understanding is not true love" [Hanh 1998-B]. Understanding, Mindfulness, and regular Practice can be transformative for all of us.

Hanh, Thich Nhat 2001 / 2010. A Pebble for Your Pocket – *Mindful Stories for Children and Grown-ups*

Part VI: Glossary *continued*

Innate Goodness Thanks to Richard Davidson for introducing me to this concept..... [Davidson 2018]	Research indicates that young infants tend to prefer positive / helpful type behaviours, rather than behaviours that frustrate / intimidate [Hamlin et al 2007; see references; paper available on-line]. This overlaps with what is sometimes called our Original Nature, and the (ancient) Chinese concept of Jen, Human-Heartedness. ❖ If we experience a lot of fear and disharmony in our early years, this inner goodness becomes distorted / lost sight of. Yet even then, the CARE and PLAY neuro-circuits are still there, even if latent: and can be activated later in life with the development of appropriate skills through inner work, counselling, psychotherapy, and / or Reflective and Awareness Building Practices²⁸ [Ruth Sewell – early 2020s].
Inter-Being Part I	Inter-Being is a word coined by Thich Nhat Hanh, and is dealt with extensively in other web articles, especially in the Glossary of: ❖ F 14: Meditation on Inner Aspects of Autogenics 3.0 For this article, let us start by simply going back to Thich Nhat Hanh's original words:
If you are a poet, you'll see clearly that there is a cloud floating in this sheet of paper. Without a cloud, there will be no rain; without rain, the trees cannot grow; and without trees, we cannot make paper. The cloud is essential for the paper to exist. If the cloud is not here, the sheet of paper cannot be here either. So we can say that the cloud and the paper "inter are." Interbeing is a word that is not in the dictionary yet, but if we combine the prefix "inter" the verb "to be", we have a new verb, "inter-be". If we look into this sheet of paper even more deeply, we can see the sunshine in it. If the sunshine is not there, the forest cannot grow. In fact nothing can grow. Even we cannot grow without sunshine. And so, we know that the sunshine is also in this sheet of paper. The paper and the sunshine inter-are. And if we continue to look, we can see the logger who cut the tree and brought it to the mill to be transformed into paper. And we see wheat. We know that the logger cannot exist without his daily bread, and therefore the wheat that became his bread is also in this sheet of paper. And the logger's father and mother are in it too. When we look in this way, we see that without all these things, this sheet of paper cannot exist. Hanh 2012 The Pocket Thich Nhat Hanh pp 55-56	
Everything in the cosmos is inter-related. A modern take on Inter-Being can be found in Capra and Luigi, 2014. All of us humans, all flora and fauna on Mother Earth, are totally dependent on the atmosphere, the oxygen within it; the trees and phytoplankton that create the oxygen that allows us to breathe; the soil and the earthworms that keep the soil wholesome. We extend this to the cosmos as a whole when we realise that the iron in our blood that transports oxygen to every cell of our body comes from the dying moments of long extinct stars. In short, our very Being is only possible through the bio-dance of the cosmos as a whole.	
Inter-Being Part II /	

²⁸ Thanks to Ruth Sewell, Autogenic Psychotherapist, for this wholesome formulation that is much more apposite than the left brained concept of Mind Training.

Part VI: Glossary *continued*[Inter-Being Part II /](#)

Thich Nhat Hanh makes it clear that the essence of Inter-Being was in the heart of Sakyamuni Buddha. We can go further to suggest it is at the heart of all wholesome spiritual traditions, and the Reality at the heart of Yeshua's concept of Alaha [Douglas-Klotz 2025 p 5. (See also F 21 Reflections on Full Awareness of Breathing Sutra: Exercise 13-16; especially p 82 Figure 4.10.)

Be that as it may, on-going Meditative / Reflective and Awareness Building Practices can bring us to a realisation of Inter-Being. These can all embrace the Five Mindfulness Trainings, the first of which is:

Aware of the suffering caused by the destruction of life, I am committed to cultivating the insight of interbeing and compassion, and learning ways to protect the lives of people, animals, plants and minerals. I am determined not to kill, nor to let others kill, and not to support any act of killing in the world, in my thinking, or in my way of life. Seeing that harmful actions arise from anger, fear, greed, and intolerance, which in turn come from dualistic thinking, I will cultivate openness, non-discrimination, and non-attachment to views in order to transform violence, fanaticism, dogmatism in myself and in the world.

Hanh 2017 (The Art of Happiness) p 202

These themes can form the basis of a Heart-Mindful Meditation per se; involving attention and concentration.

[Jen](#)

Please See Appendix 5

❖ Jen and our Innate Human Heartedness – p 45

[Life is a verb,
not a noun](#)

See also
Part II:
3) patience (2.3) p
11

I decided to add this to the glossary late in the gestation of this article. The quote from Siegel I had originally introduced briefly in the Patience section of the web article D 1. See also Part II:3 patience (2.3) p 11

It is perhaps only tangentially relevant to Patience; in any event, the full quote is of great value in our journey through life in a Heart-Mindful way.

The challenge for all of us is to see life as a verb, not a noun. We cannot hold on to the fluid river of life, guarantee the certainty of facts, the universality of rules. We need to not only tolerate ambiguity, but learn to treasure its secrets. Being is a moving entity that never ceases to lead us down its winding path. Embracing this dynamic nature of our transient lives liberates us from the prison of our efforts to run from this reality. In mindful awareness, within the reflective hub of our minds. we can welcome this truth into our hearts, and into our collective lives.

Siegel 2007 p 328

I love this passage, and it reflects the great wisdom of Daniel J. Siegel. The fluid river of life recalls Heraclitus and "we can never cross the same river twice"; and the implications of the impermanence of all things.

We are so often running from reality; rather than embracing Reality / Alaha of the Aramaic Yeshua (see Inter-Being II above). See also F 21 and Breathing Exercises 9-12 dealing with liberating ourselves from our Afflictions / disturbing activities of our mind; and Exercises 13-16 dealing with Impermanence, letting go of cravings in the sense of unwholesome desire; releasing Erroneous Notions and liberating ourselves from Ignorance; yet we do not let go of Reality, and the truth within our hearts.

Notwithstanding /

Part VI: Glossary *continued*Life is a verb, not a noun *continued*

Notwithstanding the above, it is I feel pertinent, as discussed in the sections on Patience (pp 11-12), that Siegel was by no means the first to discuss life in terms of a verb. For example:

- i. R. Buckminster Fuller: in his 1970 autobiographical book called: *I Seem to Be a Verb*
- ii. Charlotte Perkins Gilman: 1904 in her book *Human Work* wrote: "Life is a verb, not a noun."
- iii. Alan Watts referring to an ancient Chinese tradition with their sense of "Treeing"; rather than a tree. In other words, living manifestations are in constant flow with the energy and vitality of being...being as a living process. [Alan Watts 1995 pp 1-15].

All living tissue axiomatically are patient so their being can manifest in the fulness of time.

Mental Representations

For further elucidation about these, please see F 3 on web based on the work of Luis de Rivera – including further discussions re the meaning of ideoplastic.

Mental Representations can be considered – in Buddhist metapsychology terms – to be the equivalent / overlap with Mental Formations.

Imported and adapted from F 21; Reflections on the Full Awareness of Breathing Sutra – which has a fuller exposition on these matters.

A mental presentation or activity produces physical changes in the brain, which, in turn, induce changes in the rest of the systems / functions.

de Rivera 2017e

This process is described by the word ideoplastic.

Mental Representation can be wholesome or unwholesome – leading in turn to wholesome changes in our neuro-physiology on the one hand; or dysfunctional ones on the other.

To summarise:

- ❖ Positive / wholesome mental representation will have a positive effect on our neuro-physiology – for example, allowing us to feel safe (Autonomic A State of the Ventral Vagal PSNS²⁹).
- ❖ Negative / distressing ruminations will have a negative effect on our neuro-physiology.

*** **

These matters are of great relevance to the Sutra of the Full Awareness of Breathing. We could say that neuro-physiologically regular practice of this sutra is facilitating a move from unwholesome mental representation towards wholesome mental representations, thus greatly facilitating our Well-Being. Mental Representations also form a key part to understanding Mindfulness Training and Mindfulness Attitudes.

Reference to above: www.atdynamics.co.uk

F 3: Mental Representations and Their Effects on Well-Being –

Including their relevance to Personal and Motivational Formulae

Based on the work of Luis de Rivera

Ideoplastic principle:

A mental presentation or activity produces physical changes in the brain, which, in turn, induce changes in the rest of the systems / functions. This is related, but larger, than the well-known ideomotor principle.

de Rivera 2017e; 2024e

²⁹ PSNS: Para-Sympathetic Nervous System. (See B-22 and B-28 on website for a fuller exposition of the Polyvagal Theory of the Autonomic Nervous System – after Porges 2011). Sometimes notated in this and other IR articles as the A State. For a brief introduction to the notation of A,B and C States, please see [Polyvagal Theory and States](http://www.atdynamics.co.uk).

Part VI: Glossary *continued*

Meta-awareness I (meta-attention)	“Being able to track the quality of one’s own awareness – for example, noticing when your mind wanders or you’ve made a mistake.” [Lapate et al 2016].
Meta-awareness II Adapted from glossary of B28 Automatic Pilot: see Williams and Penman 2011 – e.g. pp 36-38. Automatic Pilot can overlap with the driven mode. Meditation facilitates the Being Mode and Being truly Present.	A complementary perspective on meta-awareness is given by Dahl et al. ○ “....An awareness of the processes of conscious experience , such as recognition that one is expressing an emotion, a thought, or a sensory perception as it occurs in real time. ○ It “is involved when one suddenly recognises an emotion before it provokes a reaction, for example, and also when one suddenly realises that one has been ‘on autopilot’ while engaged in a daily routine.” [Dahl, Wilson-Mendenhall, and Davidson 2020 p 32198] The ability to realise, to recognise, that we are entering the B Autonomic State (or C State) before we become entrapped in it and react inappropriately, is an important form of meta-awareness. In this way we can prevent ourselves inadvertently responding on “automatic pilot”. ○ Naming and befriending distressing feelings / emotions, as in Breathing Exercise 7 and 8 of the Full Awareness of Breathing, is a form of meta-awareness. Our judgement can be seriously impaired if we are not aware of what Autonomic State we are at any moment in time. It is only through Reflective and Awareness Building Practices that we can develop meta-awareness in depth. Please also see: ○ Glossary Figure 1: version of Figure 2.5A: Autonomic States and their impact on Judgment (p 54)
Naming and Taming Mindful approaches to distressing feelings as they arise.	The practice of “naming and taming” [Siegel 2010 p 246; and p 116] (Affect Labelling) helps to offset distressing feeling such anger / sadness when they arise. For example, we can say silently to ourselves: ❖ “Anger”; or, and perhaps better still: ❖ “Hallo Anger; I see you are arising within me”; or: ❖ “Hallo irritation, I see you are back again.” This helps me to distance myself from the anger arising. On the other hand, if I say ➤ “I am angry”, then I and my anger become one – and I can be taken over by the anger in my Body-Mind. In this sense, the anger has us, rather than us having the anger (to reframe Carl Jung: “Complexes have us, rather than we have complexes”. The efficacy of Naming and Taming seems to come about by a re-balancing of the two hemispheres. The experience of the emotion per se is essentially a Right Hemisphere dynamic; naming the emotion is a Left Hemisphere modality. As we become aware of the distress (RH), we name it (LH); and studies show that this then de-potentiates the original distress / anger / irritation. “.... studies /

Part VI: Glossary *continued*

Naming and Taming <i>continued</i>	studies by my colleagues at the UCAL have actually shown that naming an affect soothes limbic firing. Sometimes we need to “name and tame it”. We can use the left language centres to calm the excessively firing right emotional areas. But again , the key is to link the left and right, not replace one imbalance with another. Siegel 2010 p 116 Left and right here referring to Left and Right Hemispheres. Daniel Siegel - founding co-director of the Mindful Awareness Research Center at UCLA, USA. In all our enthusiasm and zest for live, it is important that we remain in balance – neither, as it were, siding with yin or yang.
Neuroception Preamble to this Glossary entry	Neuroception is a concept developed by Porges and his Polyvagal theory – see, for example, Porges 2017 pp 19-20. Our very judgement will be clouded / lead to erroneous notions if our mental equilibrium is disturbed. The implications of this are that in certain mental states we will axiomatically be being driven by these very states, resulting in Judgements regarding others – and ourselves. (Meaning that these judgements will be mis-judgements) It is for this reason that a brief exposition of the Polyvagal Theory of Porges is given in the main text in the section on Non Judgement - see pp 17-20.
Neuroception I Imported from F 21 A, B and C Autonomic States are IR's simplified notation of Porges' Polyvagal Theory [Porges 2012], which has been very helpfully expounded by Deb Dana. Neuroception II /	We cannot become truly mindful without some basic understanding of some of the research in neuro-science during the last several decades. I hope that what follows helps to make this clear. Neuroception is the ability of the animal / mammal / human to detect safety, danger, or life threat. This occurs at an unconscious level. Our responses, feelings, and behaviour are largely dependent upon which state we are in – i.e. A, B, or C. Our ❖ “Story follows our State” [Dana 2018 p 35]. This is the result of our perceptions, feelings and thoughts being, to a large extent, dependent upon the State we are in at that moment. Note that neuroception is not always correct; e.g. when a stick is mistaken for a snake; or when a snake is mistaken for a stick. ⚙ During evolution there was a tendency for a stick being mistaken for a snake more often than a snake to be mistaken for a stick. ⚙ Reason: those who saw a snake and thought it was a stick did not survive. In other words, their neuroception activated the A State, making them feel safe. ❖ It should have alerted them to Danger, to Beware: the B State, with the activation of flight / fight (SNS mobilisation in context of danger / fear).

Part VI: Glossary continued

Neuroception II

Childhood trauma and / or abuse of children can lead to disturbing adult Habit Energies that result in inappropriate neuroception – e.g. when any adult (male or female) may be pattern matched (neurocepted) by the *subject* with a previous memory (unconscious) of a threatening parent, and this inappropriately triggers a FEAR or RAGE response.

To clarify further:

Our perceptions of the world will tend to be false / one sided if our neuroception as adults inappropriately detects the Autonomic B State (mobilisation in the context of fear / Sympathetic Nervous System activation) or C State (immobilisation in the context of fear / life threat; Dorsal Vagal PSNS State – Para Sympathetic Nervous System).

- These states can enable us to survive as a child;
- however, their manifestation as unwholesome Habit Energies as adults can lead to ongoing distress and so entrap us.

On the other hand, wholesome Habit Energies from being nurtured in our own childhood can enable us to be caring and nurturing adults / parents.

Polyvagal Theory in the /

Part VI: Glossary continued

<u>Polyvagal Theory in the context of non-judgement</u> [Porges]	Please see exposition of the Polyvagal Theory in main text: ○ <u>2.5A Preamble to non-judgement</u> (pp 17-18) which covers the Polyvagal Theory in the context of “our judging mind” quite fully. For convenience, Figure 2.5A from p 17 is reproduce below.		
Autonomic Nervous System State	A; B; C notation of Autonomic State	Approach or withdraw behaviours	Type of judgement / behaviours associated with this state in our present world
Dorsal Vagal (PSNS)	C	Flop; or not move; for example, a zebra being chased by a lion neurocepts Life Threat; and unconsciously drops to ground appearing dead; or as “wish to hide in cave”.	➤ “I’m not good enough” ➤ Wish to hide in a cave. ➤ Loss of self esteem. ➤ “Give-up-it is” [Frankl 1946: Man’s Search for Meaning 1947]
Sympathetic Nervous System	B	Run away (FEAR); or attack (RAGE) – e.g. if our children are threatened by an aggressor.	Negative judgment: from, e.g.: ○ “I do not like you” to being angry with the other; to ○ “I hate you”. Anger can be justified; and can be seen as an inbuilt defence mechanism to ward off being attacked.  It can also reflect our own unconscious shadow – as in “The Evil Empire” referring to another nation / country.
Ventral Vagal (PSNS)	A	Approach behaviours CARE / nurturing circuits; PLAY [Panksepp 1998]	Tenderness; Understanding; feeling of warmth towards the others; Compassion for self and other; wholesome Social Engagement.

Glossary Figure 1: version of Figure 2.5A (on p 17)
Autonomic States and their impact on Judgement

Please note that the subsequent pertinent discussion on:

- Comments on Figure 2.5A in context of our present state Mental representations and beyond (p 18) is not included here.

Part VI: Glossary continued

Reflective and Awareness Building practices

Imported from F 21: Reflections on the Full Awareness of Breathing Sutra Part II

(Practices)
(Cf. "Mental Training")

With thanks to
Ruth Sewell for
this wholesome
phrase
Imported from F
21 with some
modifications

We often talk about mental training, yet in the context of psychotherapies, Heart-Mindfulness, Meditation and Autogenic Training the term mental training is not really appropriate, as Ruth Sewell, an Autogenic Therapist colleague, has pointed out. Her term Reflective and Awareness Building is much more apposite.
This glossary entry briefly reflects on these matters, and is itself an abbreviated version of the more extensive glossary entry in the companion article B 28.

Some year ago Howard Cutler, following conversations with the Dalai Lama, subsequently wrote:

The systematic training of the mind – the cultivation of happiness, the genuine inner transformation by deliberately selecting and focusing on positive mental states and challenging negative mental states, is possible because of the very structure and function of the brain..... Neuroscientists have documented the fact that the brain can design new patterns, new combinations of nerve cells and neurotransmitters (chemicals that transmit messages between nerve cells) in response to new input. In fact, our brains are malleable, ever changing, reconfiguring their wiring according to new thoughts and experiences.

Howard Cutler 1998 p 31
The Art of Happiness – a handbook for living
(in conversations with the Dali Lama)
Quoted in Ross 2010 p 138

This is a wonderful and far-reaching perspective. We can go further still by adopting Ruth Sewell's phrase for such learnings and growth as:

❖ Reflective and Awareness Building (Practices).

Reflective and Awareness Building is essentially experiential, and hence the domain of the Right Hemisphere, rather than the analytical modalities of the Left Brain. (See also McGilchrist 2021).

Ruth Sewell comments on the term mental training:

✿ "I resist this term as it is, potentially, a fierce / controlling term and strongly indicating a heavy cognitive bias. I don't have a specific replacement, but I tend to go for reflective and awareness building..."

We can see the Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing as an example of Reflective and Awareness Building Practices, and one that reduces negative ruminations and the [Second Arrow](#).

In addition, Reflective and Awareness Building links in with Luis de Rivera's:

❖ "Amplified State of Consciousness Induction Therapies" [de Rivera 2018 p 17].

In the same way, we can see this article as embracing Reflecting and Awareness Building approaches.

Second Arrow /

Part VI: Glossary *continued*Second Arrow

There are many things in life that can result in us suffering. In Buddhist psychology the perceived cause is sometimes referred to as the 'first arrow'. However, what actually results in us suffering deeply is often not this; rather what our minds tend to make of this. For example:

- We may get a bad cold; and start to say to ourselves: "Why me? Why should this happen to me right now at this important time in my life?"
- We may be irritated by someone at college, at work, or in the family – and embark on negative ruminations about them in which we plot to get our own back – feeding the negative wolf³⁰ within with hatred and ill-will towards the other.

These are both examples of our response (the second arrow) inflicting more suffering within us than the original incident. Meditation, Mindfulness, Autogenic Training, and Reflective and Awareness Building practices / approaches, can help us to prevent or deflect this second arrow from penetrating.

The Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing can help to reduce our tendency to allow the Second Arrow to penetrate – or even to develop at all. (F 21 on website); as can Right Mindfulness.

Smriti (Sanskrit)Mindfulness;Heart-Mindfulness;Mind-Heartfulness

In Buddhism, Smriti denotes mindfulness, representing a pivotal awareness that shapes an individual's behaviour and comprehension in various Buddhist practices, fostering a deeper understanding and conduct on the spiritual path.

Extract from <https://www.wisdomlib.org/concept/smriti> with gratitude

To recap from PART I: Introduction: The Essential Meaning of the word Mindfulness (pp 6-7):

Mindfulness is remembering to come back to the present moment. The character the Chinese use for 'mindfulness'³ has two parts: the upper part means 'now,' and the lower part means 'mind' or 'heart'.

- ☸ The first miracle of Mindfulness is to be present and able to touch deeply the blue sky, the flower, and the smile of our children.

Hanh 1998 p 64-65⁴
(Bullet point added)



Impermanence allows seeds to manifest as flowers
No impermanence, no flowers.
Seeds of Heart-Mindfulness

Glossary Figure 2
Becoming a Dandelion Flower
Seeds of a Flower; No seeds,
No Flower.

Ubuntu /

³⁰ See, for example: Fredrickson 2009 p 179 The Two Wolves Within. Some suggest this comes from the American Indian Cherokees; other authorities are uncertain of the origin of the story... for example, it may have come from the Lenape people.

Part VI: Glossary *continued*

<u>Ubuntu</u>	The concept of Ubuntu indicates a generosity of spirit often lacking in the “consumer society”. Generosity in the sense here is also the generosity in the time we give to others. This is discussed more fully in the main text, which includes a lovely story regarding the nature of Ubuntu. See: ✚ 9) <u>Generosity [2.9]</u> Generosity of Spirit pp 27-28; which includes the story of the anthropologist, his assumptions; and the school children. ✚ Ngomane 2019: Everyday Ubuntu: Living Better Together, the African Way
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Part VI: Thematically related /

PART VI: THEMATICALLY RELATED ARTICLES on website: www.atdynamics.co.uk

A3	Towards a concept of happiness and well-being
A 13	Expressive <i>Autogenic Resilience Training</i> Exercises Series C
B3 Part I	The Origins of Affect and Affective Neuroscience <i>And the misplacing of Affect in the Neo-cortex</i> (After Panksepp)
B3 Part II	Emotional Operating Neuro Circuits – <i>a brief introduction to Panksepp’s model</i>
B6	Perceptions, Flowers, and Reality.
B 12	Affect Labelling, Autogenic Training, and reducing Emotional Distress
B18	The Space to Choose – reflections on the gap between the stimulus and the response
B 24	Autogenic Switches and Well-Being (which also summarises the nine pre-frontal cortex functions described by Siegel [Siegel 2007])
B26	Well-Being and Flourishing as a Skill we can Develop – Based on the work of Richard Davidson
B28	An Experiential Introduction to ABC States of the Polyvagal Theory – <i>An outline of a brief practical guide developed with students of AT</i>
D 2	Dana Paramita (2011)
D5	Reflections on Mindfulness [after Thich Nhat Hanh]
C2	Mindsight – our seventh sense and associated pre-frontal cortex functions
C7	Being in touch with our feelings – Hemispheric Integration (includes the concept of Affect Labelling)
C 14	Reflections on Small is Beautiful, Erroneous Notions, and Innate Goodness Reflecting on Economics as if People Mattered (Planned for Autumn 2026)
C 15	Attention; Autogenic Training; and Mindfulness (Planned for Autumn 2026)
C 16	Reflections on Einstein’s Words; Fallout; and for a future to be possible (Planned for Winter 2027-2029 – including discussion on Nuclear Winter)
F 3	Mental Representations and Their Effects on Well-Being (after de Rivera)
F 6.2	Introduction to Meditations on Constructive Feelings including ⊗ Constructive Feeling Meditation 2: Existence
F 14	Meditation on Inner Aspects of Autogenics 3.0 (2025)
F 21	Reflections on the Full Awareness of Breathing Sutra Part II (2026)

Part VII: References and sources /

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*The butterfly counts not months,
but moments,
And has time enough.*

Rabindranath Tagore
Fireflies (1928)