

Creating Inner Stillness From Judgment

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If we found out that it is our own judgment that creates inner turmoil and stress, is it possible that we could, paradoxically, use judgment to facilitate inner stillness? Below we will explore how we can intentionally elevate the level of consciousness that our judgments come from and learn how to use our judgments to construct an architecture that is supportive of an inner environment of stillness.

The Necessity and Purpose of Judgment

Seeing life through the perspective of your ego means that you have no choice but to judge. When we look at another person it is actually true that we never know who we are looking at. What we do know of the other person is our perception of him, or our judgment. Humbly acknowledging this concept that we, as human beings, are not engineered to perceive the truth of anybody, situation, or thing, but simply experience our judgment, is the foundation of allowing the distortions of our judgment to create inner peace.

As we perceive situations and label them, we can also discover that it is just as much judgment to call something good, as it is to call it bad. It is surprising to some to find that perceiving good qualities in a person is equally as judgmental as seeing bad qualities in them. This would mean that judgment itself isn't a bad or a good thing. It is merely a lens we use to determine the shape of our own perceived reality.

Why is it that the nature of the mind is one requiring judgment? Could it be that one of the reasons we are judging beings is that our judgment gives us the experience of life. For example we cannot experience hot if we have no judgment of cold. We cannot experience nice if we have no judgment of cruelty. The sound of one hand clapping is silence, but it is necessary for us to have two hands clapping in life so we have a contrasting possibility to experience a sense of audibility of life.

Knowing that judgment is as necessary to our existence as oxygen is to breathing, we can then realize that when we notice our own judgments we are having a conscious experience. However, when we lose ourselves in the stories created by our perceptions, we are living life from a lower level of consciousness. Taking a step back and observing the perceptions and judgments you have allows you to use them to realize a greater degree of consciousness and to use them as a point of reference to better find you.

Inner Stress Emerges from Judgment

If what is written above has some truth from your perspective, then how does judgment cause us to sacrifice inner stillness? Perhaps pure inner stillness is a place of compassionate acceptance of self and others. And if compassionate acceptance is synonymous with being unconditional, that would make pure inner stillness a state of non-judgment. In that case it would be our

judgments that push us out of the balanced point of inner stillness. In particular, it is the judgments that come from a place of non-awareness that create a sense of inner turmoil in the form of anger, dissatisfaction, depression, irritability, or delusional optimism. Before we advance to the next very important consideration in how to use conscious judgment to create inner stillness rather than inner friction, I will invite you to consider the following trap that may be tempting to fall into.

You might be saying, “Well, if it really is my judgment that knocks me off my chair of inner stillness, then I’ll just stop judging!” It is important to know that saying these words is one thing, and being in this elevated place of awareness is yet another. There are many people who seduce themselves into believing they are non-judgmental in the name of finding inner peace. The truth is that having judgments and just not being aware of them is actually a lower level of consciousness than having judgments and being aware of them. When we fall into this category of indifference toward our ego’s judgmental nature, it is our optimistically illusory view that causes us further stress because we are in a lower place called indifference.

So could it be that there is a genuine difference between true non-judgment and being in denial of one’s judgment? Maybe we can adopt the attitude that being purely non-judgmental is a journey rather than a destination, and that we can simply fake it until we make it. But the approach will be just that, a fake, no matter how much we want to buy into it. The question is, can we facilitate a greater degree of inner stillness by becoming more aware of our judgments than if we are blind to them?

Facilitating Judgment into Inner Stillness

Once we become aware of our judgments we can create an expansion of the stillness already fostered simply by that awareness if we accept a powerful offering from the Buddhist philosophy. The offering I speak of is the invitation to take at least two points of view on every situation, person, event, etc., that you judge. For every bad quality you perceive in a person, actively perceive a good quality. By finding a “shadow” for every “light”, and vice versa, we are neither blinded by darkness nor blinded by light shining in our eyes.

How is it that we resonate at a greater degree of truth and stillness by taking two opposing views of any situation? Perhaps we can agree that any judgment leads us away from the truth. So for every inch we go left away from the absolute truth, if we also go to the right of the absolute truth the same number of inches, we create the opportunity to find the balanced point between the polarities. This Buddhist philosophy is one of allowing ourselves to experience the extremes so we can find the balance in between. Experiencing only one extreme is called imbalance. This philosophy is one embodied in nature if we have the sensitivity to notice it. For example, would a bird be centered and balanced with wings only on one side of its body?

Conclusion

As this article concludes you can walk away considering what it would mean for you if you embraced the idea that judgments are both a very necessary aspect of our experiential existence,

and, ironically, a source of inner chaos or stillness. In the pursuit of stillness you have seen that judging consciously can cultivate further inner balance by directing us to view any given situation from two perspectives rather than one. I invite you to cultivate a space for balance within yourself in this way.