

Dec 7, 1981 - Following 3 day Vapassana Course
with Julia Canete

After our final sitting on Sat. night I was moved by the tears of a seriously overweight young woman who was in dialog with Julia. Shortly thereafter I felt the strong urge to return to the meditation hall to work with the "loving kindness" meditation for my own benefit and to send love and support to this young woman.

In just a few moments tears were trickling down my face - tears for this unhappy young woman; or tears for myself at that approximate age when I was 50 pounds overweight and feeling very isolated and very much like a freak; or tears for my daughter, Kate, who is seriously overweight and experiencing (I believe) a similar sense of isolation and non-relatedness; or tears for all three of us individually, or collectively and ultimately the tears were for all beings with their unhappiness of isolation, decay, unending and unsatisfied desires, ect.

Doing the "loving kindness" meditation I realized that when I thought "May I be happy", "May I be peaceful" or "May I be free from suffering" I was a) asking for something in the future and b) asking for a permanent state where, in fact, there are mind states, which are inherently transitory and can only be experienced in the present, movement to movement.

Between me and being happy in the movement is a) name attachment (conditioning) to use - happiness. b) my judgments (harsh) about myself. c) my unwillingness to acknowledge my relationship to God (or the Dharma) and d) seeing myself as the creator instead as a channel (self-importance).

Between me and being peaceful in the movement, are judgments instead of acceptance, love, compassion, forgiveness

Between me and the absence of suffering in the movement are my desires and attachments, my clinging and grasping; and my aversion, my anger, my hatred, my pushing away.

It became clear to me that I spent much of the retreat clinging to a new attachment, a new desire, focusing on what I do not have, and want (a concentrated mind), rather than on being with the blessings I already have received - a perceptive mind, courage, generosity, a compassionate heart.

My slowness or difficulty in achieving a concentrated mind is to teach me patience, perseverance, and humility (and maybe I'm not ready for it yet).