

The Perfections – Patience Reflections and Practices

These reflections and the practices can be enriched by discussing them with friends, fellow practitioners, or even strangers. A useful way of engaging with the reflections is to spend a few days with each one, perhaps rereading the reflection to see what new perspectives repeated readings provide. It can be nice to devote some quiet time to focus on these reflections, perhaps while going for a walk or drinking tea.

Suggested readings: my article on *Patience* on the articles page of IMC's website.

Reflections:

1. Patient perseverance: Reflect on what personal obstacles you might have that interfere with persevering with a challenging activity. What abilities and understanding do you have that help you to stick with doing something you have committed yourself to?
2. Patience under insult: How do you generally respond to anger and insults directed at you? Under what circumstances are you most reactive to anger toward yourself? What beliefs come into play when you know someone is angry with you? What abilities, practices, and understandings do you have that helps you to be patient or non-reactive to anger and insult? What benefits come from being patient while being insulted?
3. Forgiveness: What attitudes do you have toward forgiveness? Under what circumstances are you willing to forgive someone? When is forgiveness difficult for you? Are there areas in your life where it would be useful to forgive?
4. Acceptance of the truth: Are there things which you are not willing to look at, to be honest about? Are there some things you believe are true which you resist? When can acceptance of the truth help you to be more at peace? Acceptance of the truth sometimes takes the form of surrendering to the inevitable. Have you ever found peace through such surrender?

Practices:

1. Choose a task which you regularly avoid doing or which you often procrastinate about. With resolve, engage in the task and stick with it until it is done. When you are done, reflect what that was like and what you could learn from doing it.
2. If you become angry, do your best to not do or say anything out of anger. What happens inside of you when you hold your anger in check? What do you have to do in order to keep your anger in check? What are the benefits and disadvantages in doing this?
3. Choose one person you are angry or irritated with, or who you feel hurt by. Spend some time reflecting on what it would take for you to be able to forgive this person.
4. During sitting meditation, at a time of unpleasant or what seems like uninteresting experience, focus on bringing the quality of patience to it. Notice any resistance to the experience and consciously bring the quality of patient kindness into the experience.

Handouts, email list for parami course, and info about interviews are found at
www.insightmeditationcenter.org/books-articles/articles/theparamis/