

The Perfections – Truthfulness

Reflections and Practices

These reflections and practices can be enriched by discussing them with friends, fellow practitioners, and others. A useful way of engaging with the reflections is to spend a few days with each one, perhaps rereading it to see what new perspectives repeated readings provide. It can be nice to devote some quiet time to focus on each.

Suggested reading: Gil's article, *The Perfection of Truth*, found on the article page of IMC's website.

Reflections:

1. What has been your history with truth? What did you learn about being truthful growing up in your family? What meaningful teachings have you received about truthfulness? What personal experiences have influenced your attitude toward being truthful? What is your attitude and beliefs about being truthful?
2. How would you assess the strength of your commitment to being truthful? What are the conditions that make it easier for you to be truthful? Under what circumstances is your commitment to truthfulness compromised or challenged? When do you believe it is ok to not be truthful?
3. Make a list of as many benefits that can come with being truthful.
4. Make a list of the areas where you could improve your truthfulness.

Practices:

1. For two days watch carefully over you speech and work hard to only speak what you are confident is truthful. Do your best to avoid 1) exaggeration, 2) repeating as if true things which you have heard or read but don't actually know for yourself, and 3) the common lies of everyday conversation (e.g. saying 'fine' when you are not when some asks how you are).
2. For three days spend ten minutes a day after a period of meditation considering if there is anything you have not really admitted to yourself. Are there any truths that you have been avoiding?
3. Spend another day being as committed to truthfulness as you can be while not causing anyone any unnecessary hurt. Notice the effect this has on you, your conversations, and on others.
4. Spend a day noticing when the tone of your voice is conveying a different message than your words. Are there ways that you could be more truthful so that your tone and words match?