

The Perfections – Resolve

Reflections and Practices

These reflections and practices can be enriched by discussing them with friends, fellow practitioners, and others.

Suggested reading: Thanissaro's article, "Vows", found under "parami" button on the article page of IMC's website.

Reflections:

1. What have been the strongest resolves that you have acted on? What was required of you to act on the resolves? Were you able to follow through on these resolves? Did you benefit from having resolve?
2. What resolves or determined motivations do you currently have? How might it be useful for you to be more resolved? Do you have any resolves in relationship to Buddhist practice or mindfulness? What resolves would support your practice?
3. What, if anything, hinders you from being resolved, committed, or strongly motivated? How might you be resolved in a counter-productive manner? Do you have any beliefs, attitudes, or feelings which make you reluctant to be resolved? Or which undermine your determined effort?

Practices:

1. For the next month when you first sit down to meditate take the time to assume a strong, grounded, and resolved posture. Then take time to make a clear mental determination to be as concentrated and present as possible without straining. During your meditation, if your mind wanders off in thought, don't just come back to the present and to your breath, but also come back to your determination to stay focused. Try to notice how being determined affects your meditation.
2. For one day resolve to be relaxed. Figure out as many ways as are practical to remember this resolve throughout the day. Look for opportunities to relax and try your best to do it even when being tense or stressed seems important. At the end of the day consider how well you maintained the resolve and how you benefited from it.
3. Consider what you know about Buddhist practice to see if there is any practice, virtue, or understanding that would be good for you to further develop. Set a resolve to do so and notice what happens as you follow through on the resolve