

## The Perfections – Equanimity

### Reflections and Practices

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

Suggested reading: Gil's article "Equanimity" found on the article page of IMC's website.

#### Reflections:

1. Can you remember a time in your life when you felt present, poised and balanced while in the midst of some exciting or difficult activity? Or can you remember a time in your life when you felt very present for what was happening and yet able to also see the bigger picture of what was occurring? How did it feel to not be caught up and lost in the activity, yet to still experience it? How did it feel in your body?
2. Some practitioners may be put off by their ideas of equanimity, fearing that it asks us to have a cool aloofness and indifference to our experience and the world around us. What are your ideas about equanimity? How do you distinguish it from indifference or dry neutrality?
3. What are some of the factors that help you to be equanimous? How does meditation help? What understandings help? How can you bring make these supportive factors be a more regular part of your life?

#### Practices

1. During your daily meditation practice, see if you can notice any feelings of poise, balance and evenness. If you don't experience a sense of balance, then explore what prevents you from being present and feeling equanimous with what has arisen.
2. At the end of your day reflect if there were times when you felt indifferent or disconnected from your experience. How does that feeling compare to the feeling of equanimity that you had been exploring earlier in the week? What prevents you from feeling connected, yet equanimous to your experience?
3. During your meditation practice notice when you feel calm and settled, then notice how balanced and poised you feel when you're calm. Also notice the relationship between feeling agitated and your ability to hold experiences with equanimity.

### Equanimity Quotes

As a solid mass of rock  
 Is not stirred by the wind,  
 So a sage is not moved  
 By praise and blame.  
 As a deep lake  
 Is clear and undisturbed,  
 So a sage becomes clear  
 Upon hearing the Dharma.  
 Virtuous people always let go.  
 They don't prattle about pleasures and desires.  
 Touched by happiness and then by suffering,  
 The sage shows no sign of being elated or depressed.  
*-Dhammapada 81-83*

Here, a monk abides pervading one quarter with a mind imbued with equanimity, likewise the second, the third and the fourth; so above, below, around, and everywhere, and to all as to himself, he abides pervading the all-encompassing world with a mind imbued with equanimity, abundant, exalted, immeasurable, without hostility and without ill will.  
*-MN 55.10*

Rahula, develop meditation that is like the earth, for then agreeable and disagreeable sensory impressions will not take charge of your mind. Just as when people throw what is clean and unclean on the earth - feces, urine, saliva, pus, or blood - the earth is not horrified, humiliated or disgusted by it; in the same way, agreeable and disagreeable sensory impressions will not take charge of you mind when you develop meditation like the earth. Develop meditation like water, fire, wind and space, for then...

*-MN 62*

Such a person  
 Who, like the earth, is untroubled,  
 Who is well-practiced  
 Who is like a pillar of Indra,  
 Who is like a lake without mud,  
 Continues wandering no more.  
*-Dhammapada 95*

Peaceful in body, peaceful in speech,  
 The bhikkhu who is peaceful and well-concentrated  
 And who has rejected the world's bait  
 Is called "one at peace".  
*-Dhammapada 378*