

Seeing the World with Quiet Eyes

(April 21) Leslie Ellestad

Equanimity is the capacity to see clearly what is happening and remain balanced, and from this place of balance to be able to respond wisely. Wise action means action that increases the well being of self and other.

The development of equanimity is supported by our mindfulness practice through increasing capacity to stay present with whatever arises in our experience, without pushing away, grasping or ignoring (suppressing).

Ethics - primarily committing to non-harming - is a support for equanimity. When we know we have done our best, even though we are always acting from a state of partial understanding, we are able to enter into any gathering with the "bliss of blamelessness".

Confidence that arises through repeatedly returning to our mindfulness practice and experiencing the deepening of understanding that happens as we continue to practice, supports the development of equanimity. We know that no matter what happens, we have the capacity to start over and the support of mindfulness to continue deepening our understanding.

The four practices of loving friendliness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity, with the use of phrases, visualizations and felt sense, all support the eventual development of equanimity.

Recognition of what pulls us out of balance, helps us see where our own personal developmental work is needed and supports the development of equanimity.

Recognizing impermanence, both while meditating and in daily life, supports our increasing capacity to let go. Letting go is a major support to the development of equanimity.

The recognition of the truth of non-self, a lack of a fixed, independent, reliable, me, myself and I, is also an important support for the development of equanimity.

What equanimity is not: not indifference, not withdrawing, not resignation, not numbing out and not unresponsiveness.