

RESETTING THE MIND

5. Practice in Life

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‘Practice in Life’ is the fifth in the series, Resetting the Mind.

Earlier we have discussed:

- What is practice?
- Why practice at all?
- The foundation of practice
- Getting started in practice.

The focus was, practice on the mat, ways to learn how to be natural, and how to live naturally in a controlled environment.

Today, let us together look into these, starting with:

- A brief review, of the important points covered
- The principles of practice in life
- Six areas of change, and
- A summary of the important points that we have covered.

Just like there are nurseries where seeds grow into little saplings that are ready to be transplanted into the open fields, the new foundation of being *and* doing must enter the open field of life.

If our practice does not bring about inner transformation, not much would have been accomplished. When practice enters life, life enters practice—and everything starts working together towards the same end of inner blossoming.

We must be able to watch the mind continually while still being fully aware of all else, and concentrated on one thing. This is why the initial practices that we covered are essential. Usually, our attention is on things outside or on things inside, but never on both and all else at the same time.

The sense organs look, hear, smell, taste and feel things as *outside* or *distinct from them* and since we initially don’t know different, the mind gets fully engaged in an external mode of perception at the cost of total perception.

We forget that what we call things *outside* and things *inside* are seen and known by the same inner intelligence within itself. The *outside* and *inside* are concepts in our mind, as both rise and fall within the same inner intelligence. So, what's the difference? Knowing this, we *must* be able to see and know without distinction of outside and inside.

When this happens, we will see much of what we thought was do very real as concepts, and they too will fall away. The mind will get gradually restored to its universal, natural, undivided state when we let go of the walls, knowing that they are our own creations and without *any* corresponding reality. In this undivided mind, one experiences peace and joy.

Six Principles for Resetting the Mind

Practice in life is a simple plan based on some principles, each having the capacity to restore the mind to its natural state.

Don't be in a hurry. You may need a week for focus on each principle before the plan, which we will cover in the next session, where all of our practice *and* understanding are empowered and come together seamlessly. Know your strengths and weaknesses and decide well how you are going to go about it.

These six principles are:

1. Self-responsibility and vigilance.
2. Train yourself in two new habits: thought selection and thought association.
3. Reduce unnecessary input or information.
4. Don't lecture others.
5. Never advertise change.
6. Shut down the complaint the fault-finding departments.

Let us then start with the first of the six principles, and as we look at each one of them, we look at what they are - with an open mind - and then we'll come to: how to make this happen. 'How to make this happen' are some pointers on the exact mechanics of this principle.

1. Self-responsibility and vigilance

Everything in our lives - our body, health, and the conditions we find ourselves in - are conditioned *entirely* by the thoughts and feelings we have entertained in the past.

The conditions we find ourselves in tomorrow will be conditioned by the thoughts and feelings we harbor from now on. *No one* dispenses our destiny or fate; we are the authors and architects of our own destiny.

We're going to follow the same pattern for all these six principles. Where the principle in itself comes up, then we look a little bit deeper into it and the slight following will have a 'making it happen', which will be a few pointers on the actual implementation of that principle.

So let's look a little bit deeper into self-responsibility and vigilance.

Our thoughts and feelings stem from our understanding. This understanding is not understanding *about* anything, but knowledge itself - where knowing and being are the same.

What you *know* means nothing if you're not prepared to *act* on what is good and avoid what is not good in every circumstance, without any interference, or any preference whatsoever.

If we cannot do what is good and effortlessly avoid what is not good, we do not really *know* what is good and what is not good in each circumstance. When what we know *acts* in life, without struggle, we can say we know. When what we know struggles to act in life, or actions are to the contrary of what is known, it is not knowing, or knowledge - it is mere information.

So consider where you tend to trip up most and try to see what leads to this faltering. People, things and conditions cannot trip you if you are awake and alert to things as they are. Say, for example, someone calls me a fool. I do not have to *act* foolishly, as they confirms that I am indeed a fool. This acting out need not be outer; inner acting out is what is the real damaging force. Some people are very good at a cool front while they blow all fuses inside. They heat up like volcanoes internally and get to experience the heat of your lava. You can use this example across all unhealthy thinking and feeling. Why should what someone says or does have the power to throw off my inner balance? See, they're responsible for their actions, and I am responsible for mine. If I clearly see that the cause of my suffering is *my* reaction, I should be able at once to say: enough is enough! - and find a way to respond to life without blowing up externally or internally. Vigilance is a mind that is continually observed. Wisdom is action when what we know is That which sees everything and acts directly, doing what is best in *each* situation without *any* interference or personal preferences. The same vigilance that sees *within* the mind also sees all that happens externally, so to say, and That which sees must be the One that acts.

Now, my friends, this is not far-fetched philosophy, but something we do in ordinary life! - without knowing that we already know how to do this. See, when you are thirsty, the inner intelligence sends you that signal - and feeling it, you walk to get a glass of water. You don't have to *get* a signal, ... think about it, ... and then give the command to action. This is not visceral action, as some may call it. It is the action of the inner intelligence itself.

So, unless you make yourself *capable* of recognizing this direct and pure action, there will always be a gap between what we know and who does things, and this dichotomy is what is responsible for our problems - *not* anyone or anything else.

As I mentioned, after we went a little deeper into each principle, there would be a slide, 'Making It Happen', 'Making This Happen' - maybe would go into the actual implementation of it, ... so here we go with making this happen.

Making this happen

You may need to slow down your urge to respond - and throw in a quick moment to consider if the impulse to act is the best response you can give. It is the inner intelligence that does this inner 'take-two'. And you will see that it is these inner impulses that are there in our minds that want to act out. But the more you see this, and act differently, the more you realize you are *distinct* from these impulses. All impulses and wisdom can then respond directly. This take-two is a slight pause between what is perceived externally or internally, and before any external or internal action has been taken. It may be difficult to do this across the board initially, and it may appear to slow everything down drastically.

So, find a way to throw in a pause of perception of contact with any stimulus or perception - either external or internal. If you know that you tend to trip up during contact with someone, for example, or some condition, or something, start there - be it physical contact, or even if you just think about them. Put the mind on the mantra when you feel the impulse to act. We have discussed this in the last session. Alter your breathing and freshly consider what the situation *actually is*. This slight pause drives a wedge between perception and reaction. And wisdom comes into play suggesting the best course of action. It is important to do this for all perception of contact - external or internal. In this moment's pause, you can ask yourself, "What exactly is going on?" This feeling of not knowing and wanting to know is enough to let the rush of habitual ways or existing conditioning spill over itself for the inner intelligence to be roused into action and assess the situation afresh. If you have developed the practice of synchronizing the mantra with the rhythm of your breathing, you will find it *much* easier to put the mind on this habit which will give you the stability against the force of existing tendencies. You will not feel any significant time loss with this inner shift if you already have this practice. On the other hand, if you do *not* have this practice, it will be a conscious shift and it may take a moment or two in that take-two. So I highly recommended the practice, as *outwardly* your responses will be seamless, though you are rewiring under the hood. The mind will gradually get rewired from the collective pool of these impulses which form our personality acting in life to wisdom acting in life and direct realization of this setting them aside as objects who will never again be allowed the feeling of subjectivity, or representing who you are. The most important step in resetting the mind is that you must first see that the way we live now - rising when things go our way and falling when they don't - is not a good way to live. There *must* be a stable platform to respond to all aspects of life, and this inner intelligence that you *already* have must be awakened and empowered.

Friends, you have nothing to lose but the iron-grip of impulses, urges, and strong habits that *only* bring you sorrow to yourself and others. Self-responsibility is not just accepting responsibility, but *doing* something about the conditions we find ourselves in so there is real and lasting change.

2. Train yourself in these two new habits

Thought selection: which is *what* you think about.

Thought association: which is how you feel about things.

So, having awakened the inner intelligence and empowered vigilance, you will avoid reacting to your inner impulses and loosen the grip of habit or conditioning as we have discussed. But this is not enough, as this focuses on the hidden impulses that are already there within. We *have* to find a way to live so that we don't *make* any new impulses. For example, when someone wants to get out of debt and into good financial standing and condition, he or she must first get rid of the credit cards which drive up spending beyond one's means. And that is what we have talked about with the first principle. Now, we *must* take the steps to weaken existing impulses *and* find a way to live in such a way that we do not gather new ones. This is where these two principles come in: thought selection, which is what you think about, and thought association which is what you feel about things. These two are the most powerful tools, and if you master just these - what you choose to think about and how you feel about things - you will have done much good for yourself.

We're on to the second principle, but since it's got two parts to it: thought selection and thought association, let's break them up and deal with each one of them at one time - and also bring them together in the last slide on making it happen.

Let's focus now on thought selection. A person who may not be financially well-off need not be ashamed of his financial condition. It has been said: 'Rich is a man whose wants are few'. One could have less, but have even fewer wants and be satisfied with what comes naturally. On the other hand, one could have a lot, but be ever wanting and never satisfied. You experience your thoughts as you think them - in real-time. And then, these linger and form impressions that will insist on replaying and eventually acting out. These impulses become the hidden triggers of action. You must find a way to think about what is going on and to elevate in such a manner that elevates understanding and increases natural goodness. This is why you have to be very careful about the company you keep. To avoid the company of gossipers, slanderers and such, is wisdom. They have chosen one way, and you have chosen another. If you struggle with this, you're still asleep. Once you pick the path of the good, just keep moving from where you are towards the light, ... from good to better to best. When you continually face the light, you do not see the shadow or darkness. If you have resolutely decided to reset the mind to its natural state, which is one of clarity and goodness, just look ahead. Things that are not conducive will fall out of your life. You need not struggle with letting go, as all of you should be facing your aspiration only.

Making this happen: thought selection

Be alert, so you don't react. Initially, start by cultivating right thinking by increasing your attentiveness. This is the best and surest way. For example, if someone is calling me a fool and I am attentive to actually what is going on, outside as well as the gut reaction within, I quickly inquire within if I have been foolish to merit this assessment - and, if so, I apologize and have learned something about myself. If I have not been foolish, I realize that this is his assessment for which I am not responsible. And, at the same time, I also realize that these are, or there are, habitual ways of reacting and retaliating that have arisen in my mind. To realize this *very clearly* is to let go. "I am now free to either excuse myself from the situation without being unpleasant, retaliatory, or confrontational. The person acting is left to work out his condition. And the urges or impulses that arose in me have weakened by disuse." Proactively, have good lines to think on, elevating topics that you may have read or heard, and how these can come into play into your life. If other thoughts want to occupy the mind, dismiss them! - by resolutely and simply saying "No!" - and resume right thinking. If inner turbulence increases, take up some physical work that does not require the mind, but do not be distracted - like listening to music, or something of that sort - because you *need* to still be aware of the activity of the mind; and distractions - all distractions - are mere escape. When you take up some hard work, try to do it as well as you can by taking a deep interest in the work. This way, the interest you take will make the mind flow in the new direction, and habitual ways will lose all their residual energy and weaken. You can see how important it is to have good company, and this does not mean just people, but good reading, good thinking, good feeling, as these will inspire and open new pathways for healthy and right thinking.

We now move to the second part of the second principle, which is: how to choose to feel about things. Can you continue to be balanced when things don't go the way you prefer habitually? Again, the balance that we are talking about is *inner* balance and not keeping a mere poker face while erupting within. This does not mean that eruptions will not rise in the mind, but to be brave in simply observing them - their rise and *inevitable* fall while not feeling bad about them. Ongoing vigilance is essential, but you will also need to be able to feel in a different way by really understanding what is going on. Let us return to somebody calling me a fool. I self-inquire, and if I have been foolish, I apologize sincerely while resolving to correct myself. If not, I see two things again: the possibility of some misunderstanding, and my own impulses to retaliate. To observe both is to be free of both and I can excuse myself hoping that this person can also find a way to let go of whatever the misunderstanding may be. Feeling about things, or our predisposition to things and predispositions are rooted in how we feel about things or all things in general. We have nothing to do with what we are perceiving. They are just the flow of our general outlook or attitude that gets mixed up with what we see to such a degree that it may seem to be part of what we are seeing.

Making this happen: thought association

We are now on thought association, or the second part of the second principle.

Attend to the present. To dispose of the interference of our predispositions, we *have* to cultivate a spirit of attention when we see what is seen and that which is related to the inner intelligence as response is pondered. When we don't really see, we half-see, and to it gets added to our predispositions. And this mixture is presented to the inner intelligence as what has been seen. See, my friends, what gets relayed is not actually what is seen, for what is seen is something else for the most part. So we respond to gross inaccuracies, and as this continues, though we live among real things and real lives, our responses are not based to the real. This is one of the reasons why we have so many conflicts with others - because we are just not attentive. To attend to something is to face it fully, and when we do attend, we deal with things *as they are* and can do what needs to be done.

So, do one thing at one time and do what needs to be done with *all* of your attention, *all* of your interest, and without distraction. Your responses and actions in each circumstances will be just right, leaving little if any room for regret. Since the mind is fully involved, too, it's non-wandering will reduce gathering notions, predispositions, and conditioning - or acting on them. When the rays of the mind are thus gathered, your will-power increases, and you will be able to say "No!" to an unwanted feeling that surfaces and replace it with something conducive, something better, to keep inner balance and peace.

Making it happen: thought selection and thought association

Now let us bring 'Making it happen - thought selection' and thought association together. They are two habits where the two of these work together. You experience your thoughts and feelings first, before anyone else. If you are angry, you must boil within first before others see or experience your outbursts. Once you boil within, regardless of whether there was an outburst or not, you have experienced heat which will build, and one day be out of your control. Thought selection and feeling control are not suppressed but *positive* choices and channels for the mind and heart so that blind and unexamined urges do not seize control and act. 'Act or be acted upon' is a law that operates within as well.

So, for a week, simply do not allow the mind to dwell on anything unhealthy - or allow it to even feel in unhealthy ways - by resolutely saying, "No!" and giving it another way to think and feel. This is not wrestling, it is not suppression, as you have seen the danger in staying the course of least resistance. And to clearly see the danger is to act once it is empowered to avoid its pitfalls. A sure way to increase will-power is to place positive pathways of thought, feeling and action in front of the mind and resolutely reject *anything* but healthy ways. To not identify with any impulses and urges, you must see them rise or be aware of them the *moment* they rise and before they can gain any momentum - *and reject them!* - and put a better way and put a better way on

the mind's table as the only acceptable way. This will drain the mind of habit and conditioning. But it will not happen if you are selective at all. "With others I will do these things, ... but with *my* people - well...!" This will not work. You have to be non-selective.

We now move on to the third principle in resetting the mind.

3. Reduce unnecessary input

Do you need to expose yourself to so much information? Information overload is a serious problem today, and many feel that it is more than necessary if you want to get ahead or move up. But, my friends, this is not entirely true if one examines it well. Let's go a little deeper.

Unnecessary information gets stored in the mind along with how you feel about each. This makes the mind heavy and slow. And to avoid this, the mind automates with responses from within itself instead of having fresh takes. Biases and prejudices form *easily*, and one loses the ability to see the ever-new in a fresh way. What you call information becomes formation or ripples in the mind's lake - which, if visited often, will soon start interfering with how you see things and how you live.

See, my friends, moths do feel that the beautiful light of fire is cooling, but very soon find out quite differently. Besides, when you expose yourself to so much information - be it through the extensive availability through media or communication - the mind reacts to these by classifying all that one is exposed to as favorable or unfavorable. These, my friends, are the seeds of like and dislike. You just cannot expose yourself to so much and have no disposition to anything. If you have no interest, you will not expose yourself to so much information. See, there *has* to be a taste for information to pursue it. So, two things come into play here: the need felt, or appetite, and its fulfillment or pursuit. When these two take hold, the network of appetite and the way of fulfillment start functioning within and representing you and you lose self-control completely. An appetite or taste for something is a lack felt, and at that moment you cannot be happy as there is a lack - something is missing. Nothing is missing, but your *taste* for something suggests that something indeed is, and this hollow makes you devise or resort to ways of fulfillment - which is not really concerned with what is sought but fulfillment which seeks to be full within.

Making this happen

Avoid or reduce news overload by being only concerned with what is necessary in your life right now. And this includes not just news, but communication as well. Especially, stay away from any sensational news, opinionated reports or coverage with views that criticize, because you will soon find yourself thinking in the direction that you are being taken by skillful operators in the media. The care needed in exposing the mind to all but what is necessary is like the care that one has to take regarding spending if one is in debt and would like to be in positive numbers. Avoiding the company of gossipers, slanderers, complainers, criticizers, is also essential, as you will soon

find yourself sympathizing with them or taking the other turn in being critical of them. Both turns are wrong turns, as they increase impulses or conditioning within. If being in their company is inevitable for whatever short a duration you must be in, put your thoughts instead on the mantra or saying the Universal Prayer. The person will soon realize that you are not being rude but also that you are not indulging or getting involved, and the moment to break contact will come about naturally. Try to avoid negatively-disposed people completely - not out of feeling better than them, or seeing them as not good, but by knowing that there is just no compatibility. See my friends, when you visit a zoo, they usually have a petting zoo for children close to the entrance where children can pet or even play with little animals that have a friendly nature and do not seem to mind. But - you keep your distance from animals with an aggressive nature - not by hating them and loving the gentle ones - but by knowing the difference in their nature and acting wisely. When you know that the inner chatter and conditioning are very *difficult* to overcome, and that they disallow peace and harmony, you have awakened to some good insight, and you *must* act on this for it to be wisdom. When it is raining and the road conditions are bad, you drive carefully, not only to be in control of the vehicle, but also to make allowances for *others* who may present challenges. So what is the difficulty here?

We now move on to the fourth principle in resetting the mind.

4. Don't lecture others

When you find yourself in a negative conversation, do not lecture - even if you believe you are right. Unless your advice is solicited *sincerely*, refrain from lecturing others as it will *more than likely* not be received well since it is unsought.

Let us get a little bit deeper. People say things; and this does not mean that they want a lecture - or even your honest views on them. So always examine your motivations. Consider: what in me wants to correct this person or lecture? - and you will see that *something in you* seems to disagree with what is actually going on at that moment, and would like to offer some words, which is nothing more than a mild way of saying: change things! The more you lecture people, the more they will reject you. And if this goes unchecked, you will find that it leads to growing further apart.

Making this happen

Let's get beneath the hood and the actual implementation of 'Don't lecture others'. When you are sincerely asked for input, consider *what* and *how* to say what needs to be said. Say not *more* than what is sought, as dumping is the work of the ego. To be helpful is good, but pushing will solicit reactions that may surprise you. Remember the saying: 'Mind your own business'. This does not mean be a loner or reject people - but *realize*: that each is working out their own things in the way they feel to. When you let people and things be, people and things will let you be as

well. You can help as needed *better* when you know what is sought and therefore it will be received well. This is also called proportionality.

5. Never advertise change

When you begin the journey to restore the mind to a healthier, natural condition, be *quiet* about your quest - even to those you are related to, because you may encounter criticism, opposition, and even discouragement. Most think differently, and to be good and live better does not make you *any* better than them. If they are your little children - and I put the emphasis on 'little' - you can inculcate *much* in them. Adults have their own way of seeing things and their own agenda.

Let us go a little deeper into never-advertised change. Even if you are silent about self-change, change will be noticed in close quarters, and it is best not to wear it on the sleeve, talk too much about it, or get into details. This is especially true today, as so much is shared about everybody on media that you may be quite surprised at what comes back at you from where and with how many twists. So keep quiet - and lay low. Still waters run deep. Change from within before you ever start rearranging things externally. Inner change must bring about outer change that is necessary, and never the other way around or it will be cosmetic at best. Soon, change within will be felt by others and it is good to say as *little* as possible about your quest as it *will* have reactions. You may be quite surprised to know that even when you announce good news, the good may be welcomed, but the new in the news may not be. People like things as they are - even if they are not in the best way - so don't rock the boat and disturb others, and you will be able to plunge deeper still before it becomes very evident and reactions set in - as they still will. See, my friends, unless you will retire to the mountains in your quest, this takes a lot of courage. You will need to be brave to do all things, or to anything that may come. Reactions set in from others and reactions set in from within, as well. Not everyone will approve, and not your own habitual ways either. They, too, will absolutely reject change and go along for as long till interesting reactions set in.

Okay, my friends, ... let's go beneath the hood in...

Making this happen

We're talking about: never advertise change. Once you have decided to change, work from the inside out, from the heart, which is the seat of understanding outward. A change in understanding *must* lead to change in how you *see* things, think and feel about them. This is a combination of how you see, think and feel which is called your vision of things.

In the beginning, we may not have these understandings altogether, and there may be certain slips where we can build upon convictions that brings about harmony. Not only in our vision of things, but seeing how this vision responds to life. This being all-together is called sincerity. The Oxford English Dictionary defines sincerity as 'sincerity, from sincere, derived from the Latin

sincerus - meaning clean, pure, sound'. Advertising change before you can change is like talking about wealth before you have it. It invites all kinds of reactions, as you can well imagine. And, to talk about change *after* it has happened is futile - and it should be self-evident and strong enough to handle any reactions.

So, my friends, *never advertise change to anyone* - even, or especially to those closest, as there will be reactions, and possibly some interference as well which may make you re-evaluate or adjust before even getting started.

6. Two departments to close-down

The complaint department

The fault-finding department

Find a way to close-down the complaint and fault-finding department *completely*. Both of these increase one's conditioning and resulting sorrow - and do *absolutely* no good at all.

My friends, just as in the second principle with thought selection and feeling association, we split them and talked about each one separately. We'll do the same thing here and start off with the complaint department - and then we'll talk about dislodging or shutting down the fault-finding department.

The complaint department

What is there to complain about? - and what does complaining achieve? All complaints are based on a memory of something compared to what actually is here, just now. When we complain, we must experience unhappiness in the present, as we would rather it be like an earlier memory. Just ask yourself: what is wrong with *just now*, or who is unhappy about it? Once we *see* someone, something, or a condition as happiness-promoting, this becomes the yardstick by which all else that comes along is measured. Not even the actual prior experience is measured, but the value that we assign to it as it is filed into the memory pages. We cannot be happy in the present if we would rather it be like the past.

So let us get under the hood in ...

Making this happen: shutting down the complaint department

Use the same technique of a take-two or driving a wedge between what is seen, perceived, whether outside or within, and letting the inner intelligence tell you about the present. The same principle works here, too. Earlier, this was applied mostly to what happened outside. Here, it is applied to the complaining urge that rises within ourselves only. Reactively, as *soon* as you detect a complaining urge, first ask yourself: "What is wrong with the present? - and who is unhappy about it?" Ask this while looking squarely at the situation and not listening to the inner promptings of the mind. When you face what is out there and not the rise of your inner

promptings, you will see each situation for what it is and stop listening to your inner promptings, and this will cause them to weaken by disuse. Proactively, experience each situation without making an assessment of: "That was the best (whatever) I've ever had!" It is these assessments that give rise to complaints about similar situations in the future - and invite sorrow. Can we not enjoy - I mean really enjoy! - whatever it be, without "That was the best I've ever had!" So why can't we experience everything fully without these assessments? If it is a beautiful, sunny day - a *beautiful sunny* day; if it is a beautiful rainy day - a *beautiful* rainy day! -and a rainy day is liquid sunshine only. When you allow memory, which is always in the past, to color the present, we *lose* the present, which is real - and we experience sorrow, because we think about, or what we think about, is not here now!

Making this happen: shutting down the fault-finding department

Fault-finding is a sort of complaint, but it is not comparative with earlier memories. This habit just *looks* for something it considers as a fault - and can package itself so well that it makes you believe that you are helping. Soon it becomes hard to even see or accept that you may be doing something faulty *yourself!* - as reason is employed to justify what is expressed. And just *how* do you go against your own reason? That's why fault-finding is one of the *hardest* qualities to uproot, and it takes drastic measures towards its abandonment.

Reactively, to remove fault-finding you have to be tough on the urge *right* when you first notice it - by seeing the urge as a fault itself! If you have this habit, you will have to go through the understanding portion carefully, to realize conclusively that fault-finding is a fault that imposes pain on oneself *and* others to such a degree that it can be disowned at its initial rising. *Don't* let the fault-finding urge rise and see what it has to say! - as this is a deadly virus, my friends. And this virus employs reason - most skillful of all! Once entertained, it will *insist* on dancing upon the mind's stage for quite a while.

There is some good in everyone and everything. Make it a point to see some good in everything. Now, this does not mean that you go to the other extreme and start praising all and everything. Just look at the glass as half-full rather than half-empty, and you will keep the mind whole and the moment peaceful.

Summary

Friends, we've talked about a good many things today, so let us summarize all these points and once again focus on the *principles of change*, or the principles of resetting the mind in life, or practice in life.

Often, when we look at things proactively, we tend to go to the other extreme. But all extremes lead to extremism, so it is best to just see things *as they are, as they happen*, without adding or subtracting from the moment so infused values do not register with images on the mind.

Today we have reviewed quite a bit. Some of it has been covered earlier, but we have tried to bring all this into resetting the mind or restoring the mind to its healthy condition. Let's briefly review the principles for practice in life, which are the focus of today's session.

Friends, examine these for yourself and see in each instance how checking these habits can heal and restore the mind to its natural state. Habits are limitations we impose upon ourselves - and *no one* or *no act* can do anything to heal this except each one for himself or herself. In letting go of the walls we ourselves have constructed in the mind, we once again discover fullness of being where sorrow cannot reach.

So let us go over each of these six:

1. *Self-responsibility and vigilance.* Taking responsibility for our condition in the present and the future will empower you to do something about it. We do not need to do something about what is *out* there, or what *may be* out there, but the reactions on the mind to what is out there or what may be out there. Vigilance is a state where the mind is brought into the field of observation - *along with* all other perceptions - so things can be seen clearly for what they are, and wisdom is not clouded by conditioning. That wisdom can do what needs to be done.

2. *Train yourself in these two new habits: thought selection, or what you think on, or think about, and thought association, which is what you feel about things.* Once you have the awareness to see things *as they are*, you *must* be able to think on things that are good that elevates, and feel in better ways about all things. What we call the old ways is habit - and vigilance should disallow it from interfering. These two are your most powerful tools, and if you master just these: what you choose to think about and how you feel about things, you would have done much good for yourself.

3. *Reduce unnecessary input.* The mind is already too cluttered, especially today in the data-overload age. Consider that everything that enters usually gets some value infused - and all of this goes somewhere for storage, which is in the mind, ... which is in *you!* Do not open the mind's borders to this wanton immigration, as you will have to support *each one* with part of you only. And this is how the mind gets heavy. Learn to walk *lightly*. You don't have to access information just because it is *out there* - or soon you will have the whole world in your mind - in yourself! - and if this continues, you will lose yourself to them - to in-formation - formation within.

4. *Don't lecture others.* Listen more, ... speak less. Before you speak, remember what you've heard and consider what you about to say. What you say should be succinct and not a lecture, or you may be quite surprised at how it is taken - even though you may have had the best intention - good intention, but bad judgment.

5. *Never advertise change.* Understanding is where change must begin and then flow outwards to the way you look at things, think, and feel. This should continue to flow into *action* - or our responses to life. In most cases, it takes a while to get all this, or get our act together -as being

sincere, and advertising change before change has happened, can result in reaction and resistance that is *much more* than you will be able to handle, or may be able to handle, without giving in to some self-doubt or mid-stream changes. It is futile to talk about change *after* you have changed because change is already in the past, and its effects would be self-evident.

6. *Two departments to close down: the complaint and fault-finding departments.* Consider these carefully and see if either does any good at all! When you complain or fault-find, you are *inwardly* critical and this gives rise to sorrow within that pours out as a complaint or a fault-find. Since both these require a framework of duality, you separate yourself from others psychologically and in the mind-space, there are fragmentation and scars that occur. These also cause hurt to others and give rise to hostility. Better to let things be as they are - and smile - rather than shake the hornet's nest within and without.

In closing, examine these for yourself and see, in each instance, how checking these habits can heal the mind to its natural state. What we have spoken about are habits, ... limitations we impose on ourselves - and *no one* can do anything to heal this except each one for himself or herself.

What I have tried to suggest today is that in letting go of the walls, we ourselves are constructed in the mind, ... we once again discover fullness of being where sorrow cannot reach.

In the next session, let us bring *all* of what we have talked about so far into a program that can be adopted for about two weeks, and if we can do this - and it *can* be done - we should have a solid foundation of self-correction and self-improvement that continues till the mind is reset to a healthy, peaceful, and joyful spirit which reflects in your lives each and every day.

Friends, thank you for joining me today.

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