

passing away in the vast, open space of mind. Choiceless awareness. Moment-to-moment awareness of whatever arises, of whatever exists.

All things which have the nature to arise have the nature to pass away. Everything we think of as "me" disappearing moment to moment.

Moment to moment, just seeing it all as it is, perfectly coming and going of itself.

"Thus shall ye think of all this fleeting world: a star at dawn, a bubble in a stream, a flash of lightning in a summer cloud, a flickering lamp, a phantom and a dream."

## 6

### Self Image and the Imagined Self

It's very seldom that we go through a day or even an hour in which there aren't states of mind that we wish we didn't experience—feelings of self-consciousness, tension, anger, aversion, fear, envy, tiredness. It's also common that, in the course of a day, quite attractive, pleasant states of mind arise that we wish we had more often, that we want to last forever. Somehow, some corner of the mind wants to convince itself that we are only the pleasant states. That's just selective identification, attachment, clinging to some self image, some way we wish to see ourselves.

Moment to moment, the mind, the conditioning, is building some image of who it thinks it is. We think we're the beautiful, pleasant states; we don't want to be depression, anger, agitation, grief, frustration. We're attached to one aspect as opposed to another and, therefore, fail to see the process out of which it's all coming.

But it's very difficult to see what's real when we're actively filtering all the input, when there is "someone" in there trying to be something. The "I" is reconstructed moment to moment out of our liking and disliking of what is happening in the mind. This acquired judgment of each



thing which comes to mind picks and chooses among multiple thoughts and images to construct its house, which is constantly dissolving in the natural flow of mind. This "I" is the façade chosen by mind to represent it. When choosing who we wish we were, we cull from the great mix an image here and there, and discredit the rest through some rationalization. What we choose, or what is allowed to remain, we call "I"—believing all the while that this "I" is choosing rather than what actually has been chosen. Thus the imaginary "I" is continually engaged in the compulsive activity of reforming itself. But this separate "I," this aspect of mind which chooses among its own images for something to be, is just more mind, just another passing thought, a bubble.

We're constantly building a new image of ourselves and wondering what's next. We have allowed ourselves very little space for not-knowing. Very seldom do we have the wisdom not-to-know, to lay the mind open to deeper understanding. When confusion occurs in the mind, we identify with it and say we are confused: we hold onto it. Confusion arises because we fight against our not-knowing, which experiences each moment afresh without preconceptions or expectations. We are so full of ways of seeing and ideas of how things should be we leave no room for wisdom to arise. We desire to know in only a certain way, a way which will corroborate our image of a rational, separate, autonomous self. When we open our minds, our hearts, not *trying* to understand, but simply allowing understanding to occur, we find more than was expected. When we let go of our ignorance and confusion, we allow our knowing mind to arise.

Wisdom occurs in the mind that rests in not knowing,

the still mind that simply is. There's nothing that is absent from our being which a Buddha or a Christ or a Mohammed possesses; it is the same wellspring, the same original nature, a shared essence. In letting go of who we imagine ourselves to be, letting go of our thinking, our attempt to control the world, we come upon our natural being which has been waiting patiently all these years for us to come home.

By clinging to what we think we know or don't know, we block our deeper knowing. By gently letting go of everything—not through force, not by slaying it, but simply seeing all the content as passing show, as process and flow—we become the whole of our experience and open to our natural understanding.

It might be useful to further define "letting go." Letting go means not dwelling on something which has come to mind. It also means experiencing that quality of non-grasping awareness which pulls nothing from the flow—experiencing a great spaciousness which simply lets everything come and lets everything go.

This spaciousness is better understood when we notice that usually the mind closes down on each thought. The mind takes on the shape of each object that comes into it. The mind thinks of an apple, it becomes an apple. It thinks of fear, it becomes fear. Therefore we have come to believe that mind is the contents of the mind. But the mind is no more the contents of the mind than the sky is the clouds which pass through it. The mind is a space in which these contents are occurring, are arising and passing away. The experience of this spaciousness is the essence of non-grasping, of letting go, of having room for everything and holding to nothing.



When we relate to this open space instead of its contents, we're not tightening down on anything passing through. If fear or wanting arises, it is seen within the spaciousness that surrounds it. We don't get lost by becoming it, but simply see it as just another moment in the mind flow, another something which arose uninvited and will pass away in the same manner.

By letting go of all we believe we are, by letting go of thinking we're the body or the mind, that we're brilliant or stupid, a saint or a fool, we at last become whole again and awaken to the universe within us. If we let go of everything, we can have anything. But if we hold anything at all, we lose everything else and that thing we cling to eventually must change and become a cause for pain.

To develop a mind that clings to nothing is the path to wisdom. Thoughts arise, sensations are felt, the senses are open and received, there are preferences and opinions arising in the spaciousness of mind; but seen clearly there is no identification or interference.

So we see that in the spaciousness of letting go there arises a natural balance. By our letting go of confusion, knowing arises. By our letting go of anger, love arises. We don't have to import love, we need only let go of that which blocks it. By our letting go of fear, calm arises. Love and peacefulness, care and generosity are all natural qualities of being that are evident when not blocked by mental traits acquired to preserve and express the imagined self.

In the stillness of meditation practice, these obstructive states are more easily seen and released, but during the day it's not so easy. We become forgetful and drop back into our conditioned beliefs and identifications. We wonder how we can uproot the confusion which starts an argu-

ment, or get rid of anger at the boss, or boredom or restlessness on the job. In our daily lives we discover that by using the same technique of just acknowledging the state of mind as we did during meditation, by just naming it and giving it space—"Ah, there's anger again," or, "Well, that feels like a bit of fear coming up"—we bring it out into the light of awareness and it loses its great power over us. Even if we acknowledged our state of mind once an hour, this practice of noting what happens as it occurs would decrease the intensity of identification with these states and allow a greater spaciousness to the whole day. During the day, if we acknowledge the fear or the dullness, we cut through it. Each time we acknowledge a state of mind without judgment, just noting, "There's insecurity," or, "There's fear," or "Well, look at that restlessness," it weakens the state of mind while strengthening the ability to let it go.

As the negative states weaken, the positive states arise of and by themselves. Such terms as "negative" and "positive," or "unwholesome" and "wholesome," are not meant judgmentally. Rather, they indicate those states that block the light of understanding and those which focus it. We easily recognize negative states: they are uncomfortable, we can feel them in our body. What does it feel like to be angry or jealous or envious? It feels tight and anxious, there is a burning. What does it feel like to be generous, open, kind, loving? It feels warm and spacious, it feels very comfortable.

Seeing what's happening, even if it's unpleasant to acknowledge, can feel very good because it's the truth of the moment and the truth is beautiful. Even acknowledging "I feel uptight" openly in a spacious, non-judgmental manner, frees the tightness and the fear which maintain it, and can



unblock the heart by its self-acceptance. Trying to hide from the negative states, to distract ourselves or run away, just invites them to come back because of the negative attachment. It just tightens the knots. The spaciousness that allows everything to be as it is, allows the tensions to unravel themselves, lets go of the pain of resistance.

We seldom recognize our state of mind because we're so identified with it most of the time. We don't have the space between the attention and the feeling to see it is not us, to remember to simply acknowledge it. We don't usually even recognize how deeply we're identified with a mood or state of mind because we're seeing the whole world from inside it. We're judging and commenting on everything from that point of view, the self image of the moment, the happy "me" with its predilections, or the bored "me" with its desires. We become the states of mind instead of allowing them to just pass through awareness without sticking to them. By encouraging this spacious non-identifying awareness we let go of being anyone at all trying to get anything at all—we don't hold back the flow, or push it; we just allow it all to pass as it does.

## 7

### Judging Mind

The judging mind has an opinion about everything. It selects from the mindflow who it believes it ought to be and chides the rest. It's full of noise and old learning. It is a quality of mind addicted to maintaining an image of itself. It is always trying to be somebody.

Judging mind oversees the process of all our thoughts and actions with a constant nagging prattle. It is one of the voices of the internal dialogue which supports what we suppose is the "ego." When there's judgment, there is "someone" judging, there is an "I am" embroiled in the dance identified with phenomena as "me," someone quite separate from the flow, the process. All of the "yes/no's" in our life have contributed to its power, all the good/bads, all the right/wrongs, all the conflicting ideas of how things "should" be. It is a fierce and constant critic of all that comes within the mind. But, because it is just another process of the mind, it can be brought into the light of understanding and let go of.

Sometimes when we're meditating and get drawn into thought, we have a tendency to think, "Darn it, I'm lost thinking again"; to follow a wandering thought with the



habitual judging comment; and then as we recognize our judgment to react with, "Damn it, there I am judging again." We judge the judging mind.

When judging arises, if we acknowledge it with a spacious, non-judgmental attention, we loosen its grasp by seeing it with compassion for the process that we are, with a respectful recognition of the enormity of the power of conditioning to draw us out. We're going to get lost thousands and thousands of times. But letting go of who we think we are, instead of judging it, allows our life to soften. Identification with thought solicits judgment. If we are simply aware that the mind is judging when it's judging, and acknowledge it with open, clear attention, the judging mind begins to dissolve.

But the mind that comments on itself with the tightness of judgment doesn't allow for the spaciousness which has room for the whole being. Spaciousness bids nothing come and bids nothing stay, it just allows for the nature of mind.

To maintain the spaciousness which can non-judgmentally acknowledge the judging mind requires a balancing act. If we're too close to any thought or state of mind—if we're right on top of it—there's a pressure, a tightness, which does not allow the natural flow the space it needs to be seen in its totality. It's like pressing your face against the plate glass to see something in a shop window. We distort our vision, just as standing too far back from the window causes the objects to be indistinct. If we're too close, we can't focus; if we're too distant, we aren't alert to subtle detail. The balancing comes from investigating how we are seeing. The subtle adjustments come from trusting the intuitive wisdom of the process.

When the judging mind is clearly noted, its fragile nature

can be observed. We see opinions forming and melting away like snowflakes. We see that each comment is like a bubble. When awareness touches it, its insubstantiality, its essential emptiness, becomes readily apparent. The likes and dislikes of the judging mind are just old karma and conditioning running off. But if we compulsively react to these preferences, if we identify with them, they become the cause of new karma. Judging can be very subtle; a single moment of praise or blame, of liking or disliking polarizes our whole world. This automatic clinging and condemning of the judging mind is an ongoing karmic flow that need not be the motivator of new karma-creating action. A moment of judgmental mind, a mind lost in identification with old preferences, is a moment of forgetfulness, of ignorance. A moment of recognition of judgmental mind is a moment of freedom and wisdom.

Someone asked, "How can we maintain if we don't judge? Aren't we then completely indiscriminate?" That question comes from a basic lack of trust of ourselves, a disbelief that if we really let go we'll be okay. Some people believe that if we let go of our constant judgmental overseer we'll become wild, rabid beasts; if we're not constantly under control, constantly suppressing this thought or that thought, constantly manipulating the mind, we'll run rampant and cause harm. We don't realize that when the mind is soft and non-grasping we don't get caught in the melodramas which cause such pain to ourselves and to others. We can trust the awareness which allows judging to be seen as just part of the flow, an outcome of previous conditioning that need not direct or limit the spacious mind. The judging mind tries to convince us that we've constantly got to be on top of ourselves, insisting that if we don't, we'll



become totally unacceptable to those whose love we want most. But actually our ability to love and be loved is directly equatable to the degree that we are able to let go of our separateness, to let ourselves be loved by letting go of our judgmental self-consciousness.

In some translations of yogic texts, we hear about "mind-control," which tends to make us think that we must hone the judgmental quality to control the mind. But real control is letting go. We're free when we let go because then nothing that arises can pull at us—not anger or greed or fear—because there's nowhere for it to stick.

When we're non-judgmentally observing the mind, we see clearly the difference between thinking and watching thought. Watching thought is letting go of the content as we become aware of the process, seeing the space around each object of the mind. Thinking is diving right into the karma which causes the thought, the object, and reinforcing its activity while strengthening its ability to cause identification and reaction in the future.

Christ said, "Judge not lest ye be judged." The more we exercise the judging mind on others, the more forcefully the judging mind will be encouraged to appraise each of our actions. The best means of defusing the judging mind is simply to non-judgmentally recognize it as it occurs.

A few years ago, I noticed that in public places my mind would often begin judging strangers in the room. It was an automatic, rather annoying process cultivated over years of competing and comparing. It seemed to be a way of maintaining my presence in the room. It was ridiculous, but it was happening much of the time. It was particularly noticeable in restaurants when I would overhear the people in the next booth. I was quite critical of their communica-

tion, of who I imagined they thought they were. I noticed how superior I believed I was. The mind was hypnotically running off its judgmental quality.

So I watched and didn't suppress it, I just noticed what it was doing. I watched it insult me and the people next to me in a single swipe. As I worked with this judging quality, I saw how awareness, and a growing sense of cosmic humor cut through this rather sticky mind state and, progressively weakened its authority. I experienced its voice getting weaker and weaker as it lost its potency. Though occasionally I still notice the mind judging conversation from the next booth, it has less pull. I watch it run out its habitual momentum.

There are moments when we'll be free of that inner struggle, and there'll be other moments when the undercurrent of conditioning is so strong that we're drawn back into judging again. When the voice of the judging mind is particularly loud, we are afforded the opportunity to rediscover the power of self-forgiveness. The openness generated by self-forgiveness is so great that it dissipates the tightness of the judging mind. With kindness to ourselves we develop compassion for the difficulties that arise during this gradual awakening. We experience a deep respect for the process we are uncovering and are slowly understanding. We see that to judge ourselves for being as we are is like judging the sky for its weather or the coming and going of the tides. Self-acceptance and spacious awareness allow us to experience our precious life as it is without judgmental divisiveness. To be kind and awake to ourselves and let go of even the sense of unworthiness opens us to our wholeness.



## 8

### The Sense of Unworthiness

The person we want most to love us is ourself. But when we attempt to bring love to ourself, perhaps through a meditation in which we cultivate this quality or in the course of our most ordinary day, we discover that we sometimes think we don't deserve it. We see self-doubt arising to block this love, an interference which we realize is usually present to some degree almost all of the time. It is a sense of unworthiness that we carry with us like a cloud. It blinds us to our beauty. I see in some of the most beautiful beings I know that the hottest fire they have to work with is their sense of unworthiness.

That sense of unworthiness, it seems, comes out of our being talked out of, trained out of, conditioned out of trusting our natural being. It is the result of being turned away from ourselves, taught to distrust ourselves. An oversimplified example is that as children, toddling across the floor, we may have had the experience of needing to urinate, so we did. And Mommy or Daddy may have come up and said, "Oh no! That's wrong, don't do that!" But we didn't *do* anything; we just peed. It's just something that naturally came about through us. But, somehow, it was

"wrong!" It caused us to increasingly question our naturalness.

As we grow older, we learn to take care of ourselves, to be responsible. We are encouraged to be someone special, to be praiseworthy, to be outstanding. And in the course of learning how to reinforce our separateness, it's quite natural that most of us as children at some time lie or steal. We may lie to protect our "specialness," to suit some image of what we are supposed to be, to disguise our natural waywardness, to be someone we're not, just as sometimes we may steal to feed ourselves what we wish we already had.

The child is told not to lie and not to steal, but never told *how* not to lie and not to steal. Our naturalness is accused. Our distrust in ourselves is reaffirmed by the feeling that we're the only ones who ever lied or ever stole, that there's something basically wrong with us.

There is within us, much of the time, that critical judging voice commenting on what we're doing and how we're doing it, pointing out that we're not coming up to par, not being worthy of love. We have somehow come to think that it's not appropriate to love ourselves—that we're not worthy of self-love—because we have lost our natural love of ourselves, our natural self-respect.

Interestingly enough, it's the sense of unworthiness which maintains ego. We don't have to battle or crush the ego. Much of what we see as ego-motivation comes from a sense of unworthiness. When the sense of unworthiness falls away, there is a good deal less ego support. The ego is not an entity out to conquer the world; much of the momentary grasping we call ego is a compensatory mechanism trying to disprove unworthiness. It's not so much trying to appear great as trying not to seem a fool. Being someone special, we



suspect, will compensate for this inadequacy, will show that we are really okay.

When we let go of that unworthiness, when we forgive ourselves for even that, then no one is trying to prove anything. Then the whole ego-structure starts to crumble, and opens itself to much love and self-acceptance. When self-judgment comes up, we try gently to let go of it. The next thought might well be, "Oh, I can't do that, that's self-indulgence. I mustn't let myself get away with that!" which is more of that belief that we have to control ourselves, that we can't trust ourselves. Our feeling of distrust in our natural being has gained such potency, and has been supported by so much of society, that many will agree wholeheartedly that we mustn't trust ourselves.

There is so much distrust in our natural being that many people are convinced that man is by nature evil. That's the sense of unworthiness that we spoke of in relation to the judging mind. People who feel this look at the hindrances in the mind—the greed and the desires, the stuff we all work with, the anger, the selfishness—and say, "Look at that awful stuff. Can I trust a mind that's got all that in it?" But when we suggest that these hindrances are encouraged by such aversion and fear, that one may let go of this conditioned mind and let the natural wisdom arise, they say, "I can't let go of control—I've got to keep the screws on or I'll really blow it." Actually, our sense of unworthiness causes us to reinforce those negative qualities. And, since all of those qualities encourage further separation, it makes us feel even more unloved and unlovable, and makes contact with ourselves and others yet more difficult.

We can note unworthiness just like any other quality of

mind coming and going as it will in response to certain conditions. It's just another moment in mind. It's just another part of the passing show. We can trust ourselves and the power of awareness to penetrate to a clear comprehension of the truth. All our trying to change, thinking we have to *do* something about how and who we are comes mostly from a sense of unworthiness, a sense of personal distrust. Even now a lot of us are saying, "Yes, but . . ." That's just more of the same.

A dear friend, talking to a group about her life, referred to what she called a "cosmic-consciousness experience." She had, a few months before, experienced a wonderful understanding of how things are. As she told the story, somebody in the audience who was a little testy asked, "Are you bragging about having an experience somebody else hasn't had? Are you creating attachment to peak experiences?"

She replied, "No, you know, it wasn't the knowledge that came out of it, or the wisdom, or even the peace. What was really important for me about this experience was that I was worthy to have it."

It's not uncommon for the sense of unworthiness to become more distinct, and seem like it's gotten worse, as awareness deepens and uncovers yet more of its subtle tendencies. Then, it becomes the basis for work on ourselves, for much purification.

We let go of our sense of unworthiness not by submitting it to the ax or trying to control or suppress it, but by giving it enough room to see its own workings.

A sense of unworthiness does not make us unworthy. It's been acquired over many lifetimes—if not billions of mind-moments in this life—when we were told or thought we



were wrong or inadequate. Everybody seems to have it to some degree. I don't know if every culture encourages it to the same degree as ours, but it is very prevalent in this society.

We are worthy of letting go of our unworthiness. If we did nothing but practice letting go of unworthiness, much of the stuff we're working so hard to clear away would have no support system. We would have more room to grow.

Consciously we surrender unworthiness as it arises, not entertaining it with the ego's list of credits. The work which will awaken us is that of becoming keenly aware of unworthiness without judging it. Gently, with patience and a lot of love, we acknowledge the being we really are. As a friend puts it, "Always try to see yourself through God's eyes."

## 9

### Self-accepting Mindfulness

The more we accept of ourselves, the more fully we experience the world. The more we accept our anger, our loneliness, our desire systems, the more we can hear others and the more we can hear ourselves. The amount of space that we're still denying is the distance between us and completion. Because completion isn't being anywhere else.

When we can be with whatever is happening in the moment, our sense of completeness will be present. Our feeling of wholeness, of fulfillment, will be present as we open to whatever's happening in the moment. We don't have to *do* anything about it. Doing is usually the desire for something to be otherwise. When we can surrender into the moment without any attachment anywhere, so that anything that arises is seen with a soft, non-judging mind, we experience our completeness. We can be with our loneliness, or our fear, or even our self-consciousness in a very complete way. We see that those are just passing states of mind, and, though they may be painful to acknowledge, the recognition of their presence is the truth and the truth is beautiful. It means really accepting all of what we are.



Only when we accept all of what we are, are we going to see what's behind it.

Anger is a particularly good example of something we don't want to acknowledge in ourselves, something we judge as "bad." But when frustration arises, anger often follows. When we're watching the mind closely, we can see frustration turn to anger. We can observe that unfulfilled wanting all of a sudden flip into anger. We see how a frustration has become an anger, and that often the anger seeks to blame something. The anger is: we want it, we didn't get it, and then the closing of the heart turns into a clenched fist.

Anger's a particularly good state to watch because we've been told not to be angry, and often we've been told not to be angry by someone who's angry. That leaves us with a very strange message. Because there is some anger in most people, somewhere there may be a knot of impotent rage because everything's changing and just beyond our control. As a child, our puppy died or our parents died, or we moved, or our best friend moved. It may sometimes seem as though everything we love will be lost to circumstances. Either it's going to change or die, or we will. Just as with the child who is continually told what to do and constantly encouraged to distrust his most natural direction, there's a deep sense of loss somewhere within and it sometimes creates a deep anger.

When we uncover this knot of fear and anger we are a bit astonished, but until we accept it with genuine loving-kindness for ourselves, until we accept it fully, with a compassion for how human we are, we can't let it go. As long as we're suppressing it, our attachment is nurturing its roots. It's painful to acknowledge our anger. But it's

okay to be angry, and it's okay not to be angry, too. It's okay to let it come and let it go. We have to hear how it is for each of us. When I say it's okay to be angry, some people get a little chill: "What do you mean it's okay to be angry? I've been told it's not okay to be angry. It isn't okay to hurt anybody." Anger is a mind state; it takes volition to create the action. If it's seen clearly, it doesn't hurt anybody. It's when we get lost into it that it hurts somebody. And one way we get lost into it is by saying, "I'm not angry!"

Striking out at somebody in anger is not a very creative or wholesome karmic event in our life. There are a lot of other ways we can deal with this, but suppressing anger and closing our hearts to ourselves because we are angry is not one of them. We can trust ourselves when we acknowledge our anger, when we acknowledge our fear. When we open trust in ourselves, there's enough compassion and self-acceptance to work with these very powerful emotional pulls—they become our work on ourselves instead of a problem. These mind states are only a big thing when we feed them or fight them. When we cultivate the mindfulness that can accept them, we acknowledge our wholeness, and see it all as it is. Just more stuff, more bubbles passing through the vast space of mind.

There's nothing to hide from. We may say, "Gee, have I got that stuff in me?" But it's only "me" as long as we keep burying it. When brought into the light, it doesn't have power over us, it doesn't leap into action. When we have compassion and patience enough for ourselves to let such a state come up and be seen, it slowly disintegrates. Non-judging awareness has the power to see something as it is and let it go. When we can see it not so much as con-



tent, but as process, we recognize that all this emotional stuff we take so much to be us is really not so personal.

We don't have to be afraid to see anything. In a clear seeing of anger or fear or insecurity or doubt, each thing is defused, it doesn't beg for expression, its reactive power is dissipated. Mindfulness will cut through it. And the mindfulness weakens the force of its arising in the future, even though it may have such potency that it stays for a while. As we experience alternate moments of mindfulness and anger, we begin undermining the power of the anger.

Sometimes we become confused about how to respond to some persistent frustration. If, for instance, we're trying to make supper for our children and an uninvited guest has got his head in our refrigerator, mindlessly eating the food that was meant for the meal, we can trust ourselves to know what to do. We needn't put him out of our heart when we put him out of our house.

The nature of the mind is such that when awareness is present it displaces the kind of grasping that breeds frustration. We cannot have awareness and grasping active in the same moment. They don't fit in the same space. When we're not mindful, when we're identifying with the thought, which is forgetfulness, the opposite of mindfulness, we spin out. When we're mindful, each thought arises and passes away, to be followed by another—there's no stickiness. So, when we're mindful of anger, it won't stay. We don't suppress it, we don't act it out. We're just mindful of it, experience it, and watch it come and go.

Mindfulness is the most powerful agent we have for purification, because it cultivates non-grasping in the mind. It's interesting that in Buddhist thought they don't speak of cultivating lovingness so much as of developing non-hatred;

they don't speak of letting go so much as encouraging non-grasping. When those unwholesome qualities of hate and greed aren't in the mind, the natural state of loving-kindness and generosity is revealed. When there isn't hatred, the love that is always there in the wisdom mind becomes apparent.

Coming mindfully into the moment is accepting ourselves fully. We know that there are feelings we don't know the root of, feelings we're not in touch with: "I feel a certain way, but I don't know why; I have this uneasiness, but I don't know where it's coming from—and, here I am, just open to it, just sitting with it." We can allow ourselves to stay soft with that, not to close in on it, not to cause resistance in the mind and body. It's all right not to know—it leaves room for knowing.

We can experiment with our practice to see what's going on inside ourselves, for ourselves. We can observe what anger feels like, what joy feels like, what separation from the flow feels like, what fear or worry feels like. We can see what letting go does. We can experience all of ourself. We make room for all of ourself and return wholeheartedly into the flow with a self-accepting mind not caught in judging other mind states.

We allow ourselves to just watch the mind judging and see how judging, in the words of the Third Zen Patriarch, "sets heaven and hell infinitely apart." We see that the open space in which the contents of mind are occurring is of itself completely non-judgmental, non-opinionated, non-separate. It doesn't stop at this or that, it accepts it all. Judging breaks the original mindspace into a billion fractured pieces. By watching the judging mind with compassion, we mindfully cultivate self-acceptance.