

Accessing The Wisdom of Now -

Would you rather be happy or right?

"When asked the question, "Are you happy?" the Ego/Fear/Mind often responds, "What do you mean by that?" "Who is really happy?" "How can I be happy when all these people are suffering?" and "Happiness is for fools who have nothing better to do." Perhaps a better way to ask the question is: "Are you happy with yourself *now*?"

After all, we can only be responsible for happiness with ourselves, and the only time is in the present moment.

When we really love someone (a child, a family member, a partner), we want them to be happy – happy with themselves, happy with their lives. Unless they accept and love who they are they can't be happy with themselves.

"Why, then, do we have such a hard time feeling worthy of, claiming, loving and accepting who we are?"

You may have heard before the saying: "Would you rather be happy or would you rather be right?" Mine is a similar version: "Would you rather be right or in delight?" Recently I have been asking myself: "Would you rather make wrong or make a difference?" and "Would you rather be a piece of work or a piece of art?" Basically, they are the same. Because the bottom line is when the Ego/Fear/Mind feels that something is wrong with us, in defense, it attempts to save face by making someone wrong in order to be right.

(excerpt from my new book THE DAILY PRESENT)

Take the following example: I sent a manuscript I wrote to my friend M. who I value, and wanted to share my labor of love with and get some feedback from. I actually sent it to a couple of friends for the same reason. M. returned my manuscript with an accompanied email, commenting about it being 'Western/American centric' (which it was meant to be...) and made spelling/grammar corrections in the manuscript itself. I was furious. I felt incensed and violated. "How dare he do such a thing?" "He is clueless" "What a nerve"... "Would he correct or paint over a Picasso?"

I was wondering: "Was my ego/fear/mind triggered here?, do I have a legitimate right to be angry? Can I continue being friends with him?, What do I do with all these questions?"

You see, it's easy to have an opinion or attempt to have an answer. After all, who can't relate to such a story? Our lives are filled with them. My point is that rather than looking for an immediate answer - perhaps it's wiser to look for a way. A practice of dealing with such a matter mindfully. Sitting with it... pondering on it... practicing being present with it and gaining insight into it - which means breathing through it, investigating and viscerally experience it rather than react from automatic pilot.

I can tell you that in my case - 'having sat with it' I realized that I was really upset with myself for sending it to him in the first place - while my intuition was telling me not to... Not taking care of myself by assuming that he should know better, (based on what?) and that he had a good intention of helping me - perhaps more than I wanted to be helped.....

The wisdom of now is born out of the decision to be happy rather than right. Because while M. may have done the wrong thing, he didn't make me wrong. It's only my ego/fear/mind that got triggered into having to be right about feeling that i was wronged..

To find out more about Samuel's mindfulness coaching and to purchase The Daily Present and his CD's, go to www.livinginthepresent.com

Samuel has spent 20 years as a body/mind therapist and a meditation teacher, speaker and author. In the 1980s, he facilitated The New York Healing Circle, which helped thousands of people with HIV live with a sense of peace and self-acceptance. Trained in body-centered psychotherapy, and in the Zen tradition and the Vipassana style of meditation, as well as in MBSR (Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction - by Jon Kabat Zinn), Samuel is in private practice in Manhattan. He has been teaching Living in the Present / Dynamic Mindfulness Meditation through individual & couple sessions, classes, workshops, organizational wellness training and retreats.

He currently teaches Mindfulness Meditation, Stress and Pain Management to cancer patients at Gilda's Club and people with HIV at Friends In Deed, at a major bank in NYC, The 92nd St.-Y, and the NY Open Center. He co-facilitates workshops, and retreats with his partner Stan Grier - worldwide. <http://www.livinginthepresent.com>