

The Seven Factors of Awakening

Equanimity

Practices and Reflections

In each of the following weeks repeatedly spend time with the reflection and practices for that week. It would be helpful if you also discussed your reflections with others.

Week 1: Equanimity as inner balance and seeing the bigger picture

Reflection: 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?

Practice: 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.

Week 2: Equanimity compared to indifference

Reflection: 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?

Practice: When you find yourself in a challenging situation apply yourself to be mindful of your body. Give attention to your posture and assume a posture which is well grounded and balanced. Explore how a dedication to being mindful of body and posture helps you to be equanimous.

Week 3: Equanimity as a Factor of Awakening

Reflection: In the list of the Seven Factors of Awakening equanimity is last, after concentration. Why do you think this is? Do you experience a relationship between concentration and equanimity? How might these factors contribute to your spiritual development?

Practice: 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.