

Volition

So as you probably know if you have read about scientific research, then actually they say that we are generally acting out of habit. So you just itch here, and then you realise, oh, I have gone itching. Or you just do something, and then you realise, 'oh, I just picked up my piece of paper.' So they say that the awareness or the intention for acting is known after the action has been performed. This is what some scientists have proved.

But the thing is that we are definitely working with habits. So we develop habits all the time. And then it becomes a reflex. So when we are acting out of reflexes, it's not unconscious but it's just habitual, then the intention cannot be perceived, definitely.

But if we look at how the initial volition has been conditioned to put into a pattern of habits or put into patterns of automatic behavior, then we can recondition our volition in ways that would be more skillful.

So we function automatically in our life. And also we function with habits. But these habits have been conditioned. So if we are able to recondition by understanding how these habits have been conditioned then volition can be understood a little bit more.

For that purpose we need to stop. For that purpose we need to have a kind of break a kind of pause. So instead of reacting from time to time we can just be very much mindful of what we are doing. And then we stop, we are very much there. And we see the pushes that we are having to do something. And we just kind of relax and we are just aware of those impulses that we are prompted to do. To go here or to go there or to do this or to do that.

Then when the movement, when the position is very well known, then the mind becomes much more clear because we are able to calm down the mind with the body. So we are observing the posture for example and then we just don't do anything. Although we want to do something, we are just sitting and then we are quiet. So we see the mind calming down to some extent. Sometimes we can get more agitated because of that. But to some extent if we observe properly, we see that the mind is calming down, knowing the body.

So there is a kind of space. We come to observe any actions before the volition has been agreed on, before we gave the approval to do the things. So this is the way that sensing the volition before an action can be done.

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Like the question is about who is deciding, who is knowing, so why try to find a who in the picture. We can say this is you. We can say "I want to stop" 'it's me, I don't want to move', so that's fine. But the thing is that we have to deconstruct the experience where we can understand what is that. We have to understand the whole spectrum of consciousness, the whole package. So we have volition, but volition is associated with other factors. So it's the volition that wants to stop volition. But the volition itself is a conscious process, it's part of consciousness. So we can say that consciousness wants to stop volition. Or we can also say that feeling wants to stop volition because you don't feel good about it. Or you can say also the perception, your perception is changing and the volition is able to be understood.

So you can label it any way that you want but what is important is to have the space and to have the time to take a pause. This is what we are doing with mindfulness. We take the time and then we take the pause just to observe, and the observation without the observer. That's wonderful.

So we can observe the observation, but we can observe also the observer. And then the observer is nothing more than the observation. So that's why, whatever way we define it it has to be seen by way of a process. And the more we see things as a process, as a component of many factors, the less we can identify with it.

Otherwise we need to function as a human being, so we need to function with these concepts and also with these identifications in order to survive, so this is important. But mindfulness

together with wisdom will give us the possibility to look at the thing properly and then to understand the thing properly.

So stopping, observing, and then taking a pause, this is mindfulness with what we are doing and where we are. And then the understanding is the sampajanna. It is the wisdom that gives you the clue of what is happening by way of the dynamic of the process of mind and body. So then we come to the position where we can deconstruct our experience in order to understand it better. To construct again something else, to construct another story or another something with much more understanding of the whole thing so we get less and less fooled by things that are not so positive, if we can say.

So this is kind of understanding or wisdom.

How to differentiate between a feeling tone and a mood on an experiential level, could you give an example?

So the feeling tone and a mood, the feeling tone is more the subjective or the emotional aspects of the experience. And also the feeling tone is more like the vedana. And then the mood, the mood actually, there is no mood without the sensations, there is no mood without the feeling, but the mood itself refers to the quality of the mind in general.

So we can say I am in a bad mood, or I am in a good mood, or I am in a speedy mood, all kinds of moods can be seen in our life. So a mood is a component of many various factors. So a mood itself can refer to the type of mind that is experiencing that. So one will be the feeling tone. That could be the vedana. And then the mood could be classified with citta.