

## A Broken-Egg Moment

or

## Being with What Is

An excerpt from Padme Nina Livingstone's [Let's Not Call It Meditation: Practical Guidance for people who think they can't sit still and quiet the mind](#)

To truly understand the possibility of being with what is, meeting our experiences freshly, we must first notice how often we do not experience our life with fresh awareness. We often do not notice what's right in front of us. We have filters of

prejudices, ideas, and inattention between what our view is and what is. We usually see what we want.

It's as if we are standing at the sink doing dishes, and our son comes in with blood streaming down his face, from a cut because of a fight at school. We aren't going to see the truth (the blood) because we don't turn around and look at him. We keep doing the dishes. We say, "How was your day, Honey?" "Oh, it was OK, Mom. Nothing special happened...I'm going out to play soccer...be home in time for dinner!" "OK, honey, see you later!"



Or, ever try to talk with someone about something "big," when they are reading the paper? They say, "Uh, huh, "to everything you've said? Don't we live like this? So self-involved with our own lists, we don't see someone trying to read the paper? We make up stories about how they don't love us, because they don't stop reading when we're talking to them. Or, from the other side, we can be so self-involved with what we're doing, we don't see someone we love standing in front of us trying to communicate about something they care about.

Allowing thoughts to absorb us, focusing on what's ahead, or what just happened, we are barely alive to what's right in front of us, in this moment, rushing from one thing on our list to the next. Have you ever not heard someone respond to a question you have just asked him or her?

So what can be done about these wandering head-filling thoughts? Trying to stop or push them away, would be useless, pain-producing work. We are tremendously busy people, with loads to get done each day. We do have to work, make plans, finish the proposal, get the kids to the orthodontist, check on the parents, sign up the kids for soccer and music lessons, see friends! Yet, thoughts about our work, relationships, vacation plans, or finances are not the problem. There is a physical, practical reality to our every day life and we need to attend to it. It's getting caught up, or velcroed to thoughts as they come up that becomes a problem. What makes getting caught up in thought so stressful?



Problems arise when inner story and outer actions are out of alignment with what's real and right in front of us in the moment. We imagine all kinds of problems, which don't

"How do you feel when you make mistakes?"

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exist, and then live as if they are real. Not questioning thoughts about the unknown future, making assumptions based on an unexplored past, we continue to run around like someone who thinks they have lost their glasses when they are on their nose all along.



Imagining that we will be late for a sports event or meeting, we rush our kids into the car as if someone is going to die if we are a few minutes late. Feeling like a failure, we throw out the eggs because the yolk broke, and waste perfectly good food. Yet, a “broken egg” moment whenever it occurs, also offers a wonderful opportunity to relax and be open with what is! We can either respond with “whoops” and eat them anyway or say “!?!?#%!” and throw them out. How do you feel when you make mistakes?

We all want to be happy, loved, and loving. Our rushed, confused, impatient, unkind unhappy behaviors come from unrecognized habits of thinking. This is simple to say and yet not easy to untangle the mess we find our self in. However, it’s completely satisfying work when we do it!

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