

# Fighting injustice without being consumed with anger

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Visualize a physician who has to meet many sick people. He may say, “How can I enjoy my health if many people around me are sick?” And if the doctor himself is sick, there is no hope for anyone. Therefore, the duty of a doctor is to keep himself healthy, so that he can help his patients. Because if you see many – too many – people suffering in the world around you, and if you don’t know how to suffer less, how to nourish yourself with joy and happiness, you will become like them, and not be able to help.

There must be a way to help you suffer less. So that you can help those who suffer more. And that is where the practice of mindfulness can help. In principle, you know that there is fresh air available. There is fresh water available. There are many refreshing and healing elements of nature, around us and in us. And if you know how to get in touch with them, you can gain the nourishment and healing that you need. This not only benefits you: if you suffer less, if you can nourish yourself with joy and happiness, then you will also be able to help others around you.

So, the practice is to preserve ourselves, to stop ourselves being overwhelmed by the suffering all around. This is possible with mindfulness. Because you know that fresh air is available, sunshine is available, fresh water is available; many wonders of life are available. Mother Earth is there to help you heal and be nourished. And if you are aware of that, you allow Mother Earth and all those wonders to embrace you and help you heal. And then you become an instrument of healing for others around you. So, the physician has to take care of himself. He knows that his well-being, his health, is very important for the people who suffer and come to him for help.

The practice of mindful breathing, of mindful walking – allowing yourself to be fully present in the here and now, in order to be nourished by nature – is very important. If we can stop running, looking for things, we can allow ourselves to be fully present in the here and now. And let the refreshing and healing elements of nature heal us. Then we can become instruments of peace, of happiness, of joy, to help others suffer less.

Around us, there may be a lot of anger, bitterness, and resentment. If we don’t know how to go home to ourselves, to take care of ourselves, nourish ourselves, we will be overwhelmed by the collective energy of hate, anger, bitterness, and so on. So take care of yourself. It’s very important. And to do so, you have to go home to yourself. There is a safe island within. We have to go home to ourselves via mindful breathing and mindful walking; we can calm down our body, our feelings, and begin to feel peace. And we will be able to see things more clearly.

We know what to do, and what not to do, in order not to make the situation worse. And we realize that one in-breath, or one mindful step, can help to create a little more calm and peace, so we do not give up. We see that hope is always there. And we don’t feel powerless, helpless. Because if we know how to practice mindfulness of breathing and of walking, we see that one single in-breath, one single step, can make a difference. And that makes us hopeful.

But the problem is not only what you can do. You are motivated by the desire to do something to help the world suffer less – yet ‘to do’ is just one option. ‘To be’ is another way of doing; if you can be relaxed, if you can be peaceful, if you can be compassionate, that is considerable action in itself.

Even the way you sit and look at people can be very helpful; if you have peace, tranquility, and compassion, then your presence is already very helpful. So to be is very important. To do comes from that kind of being. Be peace first; do peace later.

And then there is Sangha [Sanskrit word meaning assembly or community] : if you have friends who know how to be relaxed, to be peaceful, to be fresh, to be healthy, then together you can create a powerful collective energy of peace, joy, and happiness, which can rescue many people. And that belongs to the realm of being.

You are peace. You are fresh. You are compassionate.

That collective energy of peace, freshness, and compassion has begun to contribute to the well-being of the world. And, of course, it will allow you to know how to promote more peace and freshness and joy in the world. So, the answer is how to protect oneself from being carried away by the collective energy of hate, violence, bitterness, and anger. How to create an island of peace and freshness and compassion within. If a group of people can do that, then they can be a refuge for many other people. That is why building a group of practitioners is very, very important.