

Mensch sein

Retreat mit italienischen Freunden Juni 2025

2. Vortrag am 30.06.2025

Chapter 1: Introduction and Opening Song

The session begins with a communal song led by Leticia, encouraging those familiar with the lyrics to join in. The atmosphere is set for a reflective and participatory experience.

Chapter 2: Moving Into Silence and Openness

The speaker reflects on a previous practice about moving the mind into silence, which is described as entering a space of freedom and openness. They discuss the challenge of escaping the "dualistic worldview" intrinsic to humans, which revolves around constant vigilance and dichotomies (danger/safety).

Chapter 3: The Dualistic Mind and Seeking Silence

The dualistic nature of the mind is explored further, especially how it typically misinterprets silence as merely the absence of noise. The speaker discusses how modern society conditions people to crave constant stimulus, leaving them either relieved by or deprived of silence, thus perpetuating a cycle of dualistic thinking.

Chapter 4: Experiencing Silence, Stillness, and Peace

The conversation pivots to the subtlety of non-dual experience, emphasizing that real silence is not about the absence of noise but about clarity and openness of the mind. The practice extends to the body through stillness, referencing the Buddha's own characterization of enlightenment as "peace"—a state without struggle, neither craving nor resisting.

Chapter 5: The Buddha's Realization and the Problem of Dukkha

The speaker elaborates on the Buddha's insights concerning human struggle, specifically the unease or "dukkha" that arises from constant mental and existential struggle. The dualistic mind continually generates dissatisfaction by never accepting circumstances as they are.

Chapter 6: The Origin of Human Ideas

Tracing human development, the speaker reflects on the emergence of abstract thinking and imagination in early humans (e.g., funerals and cave paintings). This "upgrade" set humans apart from animals but also introduced new problems—namely, psychological suffering.

Chapter 7: The Buddha's Analysis—Ideas, Emotions, and Suffering

Expanding on the previous chapter, it's explained how human suffering arises when ideas or desires conflict with reality. The Buddha classified the resulting emotional responses into three broad categories: greed, hatred, and confusion, the fundamental ways humans interact with their ideas and the world.

Chapter 8: The Two Approaches to Addressing Suffering

The speaker summarizes the two main strategies humans employ to handle suffering: changing external reality to match our desires, or recognizing desires and ideas as internal, thus choosing not to be controlled by them. The first is habitual and exhausting; the second, advocated by Buddha, is a path toward peace.

Chapter 9: The Simplicity (and Challenge) of Letting Go

Letting go of ideas is framed as simple in concept but difficult in practice, with humanity habitually clinging to desires and beliefs. The Buddha's instruction is to simply recognize thoughts as thoughts, rather than acting compulsively upon them—a challenge given millennia of conditioning.

Chapter 10: The Cycle of Emotion and Action

The process by which thoughts create emotions and these provoke actions is dissected. Emotions don't arise randomly but are always linked to frustrated desires or ideas clashing with reality. Stepping back from this process is identified as crucial to break the cycle.

Chapter 11: The Buddha's Fundamental Instruction

The essential teaching of the Buddha is introduced: when we encounter sense experiences (seeing, hearing, etc.), we should allow the experience to simply be, without reacting or adding layers of judgment. This non-reactive awareness is at the heart of Buddhist practice.

Chapter 12: The Sutra Story—Practicing Non-Reactivity

The story of the monk Malunkyaputta is recounted, highlighting how even seasoned practitioners struggle to understand and enact this simple, yet profound, instruction. The emphasis is on repetition and training: "In reference to the seen, there will be only the seen."

Chapter 13: Putting It Into Practice—Staying Back

The practical implications are drawn out—seeing and allowing an experience to remain just what it is, rather than being swept up in automatic reactions. Humans are unique in the capacity to pause and choose a response, rather than react instinctively like other animals.

Chapter 14: Conditions for Maintaining Clarity

Several practical supports for staying mindful and present are outlined: maintaining a nurturing environment, managing energy, and seeking harmonious relationships. These create the necessary conditions to avoid reactive patterns and cultivate clarity.

Chapter 15: The Path Forward—Training and Wisdom

The session concludes by underscoring the ongoing nature of this training: cultivating mental strength, stability, and the wisdom to not react impulsively. The original simplicity of the Buddha's message is highlighted, encouraging participants to maintain open, clear minds and practice "not acting"—laying the foundation for wisdom and compassion.