

Uncontracted with the Unsatisfactory

We may feel that a way of looking that points to the unsatisfactoriness of all things is rather bleak, depressing, joyless, or severe, but in the experience itself, letting go brings lightness and even a deep sustaining happiness.

We may have noticed that seeing all phenomena as inconstant gave some release from clinging and contraction; Letting go of the need to get, or get rid of, phenomena for happiness and ease, brought more ease and a certain happiness. Whenever there are desire demands or aversive attitudes there is contraction born of craving. A Dukkha way of looking recognises that things cannot bring lasting satisfaction, this insightful way of looking stops feeding the contraction, and there is relief.

A first application of the noting of "Dukkha" or "Unsatisfactory" can have a silent "because they are impermanent". Like with "Anicca" this way of looking aids letting go and releasing craving.

Can we feel the freedom of a holy disinterest in phenomena themselves? One that is not a lack of interest and intimacy with life, while also not being a reification and fabrication of import to things. This guides us towards a happiness in keeping with both experience and the teachings: When we get what we want there is a relief; felt as happiness. Generally we associate that peace with 'getting' rather than the ease of craving fading. Craving is Dukkha; we can explore finding happiness and relief by directly easing craving.

A second expression of "Dukkha" or "Unsatisfactory" can have a silent "because of the contraction". Seeing gross contraction in the body or subtle contraction in the energy body is a sign, expression, and experience of Dukkha born of craving. Contraction in the body sense or in the space of awareness is more reliable than trying to notice aversive and greedy thinking, which may only be an indicator of more gross forms of craving.

When craving fades, a little or a lot, body, heart-mind, and awareness all become more spacious. Body and heart-mind reflect each other in an interdependent way; as we relax craving in the heart-mind, body relaxes; as we relax the contraction in any 'body' sense we can notice a correlative opening in the heart-mind and space of awareness as craving fades.

Many times we will find a relief from this way of looking, yet sometimes it doesn't seem to be having much effect. This can be due to a more subtle not yet acknowledged aversion to the phenomena. It can be helpful to engender a little more metta into the practice: Welcoming the phenomena to arise, be present, and go, all with holy disinterest.

You can experiment with different approaches to regarding 'Dukkha':

a) by intending to let go in relationship to that phenomenon; **b)** by relaxing any bodily contraction that accompanies the clinging; **c)** by allowing, welcoming, or opening to the phenomenon as fully as possible; **d)** by tuning in to the moment-to-moment disappearance and dissolution of the phenomenon clung to; **e)** by regarding the phenomenon and noting "dukkha" or "unsatisfactory"; **f)** by any other means you may discover for yourself.

Slowly exploring each approach one at a time over many meditation sessions.