

## **Undivided Mind - Becoming Whole** by Rodney Smith

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... A lay Buddhist is one who fully embodies his or her entire life of work, family, and relationships without spiritually prioritizing any activity. From this perspective all moments are equally precious, and whether we are practicing formal meditation on retreat or showing up for ordinary moments of our lay life, freedom is never diminished. The unequivocal resolve not to move away from where we are is essential. Once we abandon the belief that there is a more spiritually useful moment than the one we are in, we have embraced our life and infused it with the energy for awakening.

...There are three impediments to lay Buddhist practice. The first is the belief that monasticism and long retreats are the only way to realize one's true nature.....

...When we believe we are not where we need to be for spiritual growth, we relegate our daily life to a secondary tier. We energetically pull out of our spiritual life and wait for the appropriate secluded moment in order to fully engage. Leaning toward or away from any experience creates an anticipation of fulfillment in the future, and the sacred that exists here and now is lost. Discovering the sacred within all moments is the hallmark of awakening....

...We often feel our everyday existence is a distraction from our spiritual intention. When this happens, life is divided between the sacred and mundane, and the mind pits one concept against the other. But belief shapes reality, and if the belief is maintained that the sacred lies somewhere else other than Now, our spiritual life will be governed by that limitation. The truth is that the sense-of-self is not separate from the moment in which it is arising, any more than the sense-of-self is outside the mind that it thinks it possesses. In fact, realizing the undivided mind also heals the dualistic notion of "me" being outside the moment....

...We cannot delay fully embracing the moment. To do so maintains the divisions within the mind, the division between the mind and the body, and the division between the organism and its environment. All divisions are attempts to keep us from the truth of what is right here. When this is understood by the sincere practitioner, there can be no more hesitation, no more postponement, and no more pulling back and waiting for a more opportune time. It is literally now or never....

...The most important understanding for a lay Buddhist is the immediate availability of awakening. Awakening need not arrive after a long, protracted practice history unless we believe that this is necessary. We deliberately delay our readiness because we are divided about what we really want. We practice until we are tired of preparing for what has always existed here and now, then we become quiet and surrender....