

## Balance: Another Frontier

Many lives reflect the impact of a turbulent time. It is not lost on me that a force of undertow pulls me towards trying to find happiness where perception has indicated it cannot be found. Listening to what has been called “wisdom,” I struggle to move into a process, a vessel of intimation, with the lived and felt experience of teachings extracted from threads gathered from the works of those who have preceded us.

A spiritual teacher in the 1946 film version of “The Razor’s Edge” (original story by Somerset Maugham), told his student: “Look within; that is where happiness can be found.” If this idea is a vessel of intimation of lived and felt experience about happiness, some of the experience of unhappiness, even depression, might be explained as follows: With an emphasis on gathering things and pleasant experiences outside of ourselves, and then trying to hold onto them, we become unbalanced and depressed.

By looking within, being with and allowing for stillness, making a space inside where the mind can rest in a natural state of contemplative restoration, and allowing for the sacredness of the space to dispel the pressure for deadlines, can offer a way to heal ourselves of the effects of stress. The endpoint of our intentions is accepting that the analytical and critical functions of the mind reduce emotion to a point on a graph but do not elevate the life-breath of passion, higher consciousness, love or poetry. Rather, they become reduced into a small and constrained space. For anyone who arrives at a moment ready to listen to insight, anyone can also un-tie the knot pulled tightly within that part of the inner turbulence habituated by conditions repeated so often, they become accepted as truth no matter how unbalanced they feel.

During holidays and vacations, we may strain to practice some measure of the peace we often find lost or missing from our daily lives, and lament the end of these times, knowing we must return to our normal existence full of stress and a loss of tranquility. Hitting rock bottom at some point may be the motivating force behind a lifestyle change that practices a return to balance,

answering to that call to “ be within.” We respond to the obstacle by acknowledging that balance needs to be recovered.

The insight which may be the vessel of intimation of balance comes from the observation and self regard of the inner being practiced in self-compassion. Because we remember to practice the peace within ourselves once we have come to recognize the impermanent nature of that which brings us to our states of imbalance, the imbalance becomes the spark of our insight.

Ned David Bratspis, MA, LMFT

7700 Pioneer Way, Suite 201

Gig Harbor, WA 98335