

Realization

What Is Versus What Should & Should Not Be

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ABSTRACT

The actual source of happiness is the absence of conflict with one's self, and that can be had regardless of whether "what is," in this moment, is or is not wanted. However, when one applies the idea "should not be" to that which is not wanted, then the self-conflict that creates suffering arises. The acceptance and allowing of the forms that arise in one's awareness as "what is" is the shovel that allows one to dig one's self out of the hole of self-conflict that is the ultimate source of one's suffering, as opposed to just continuing to dig the hole deeper using the shovel of what should and should not be.

Key Words: source, happiness, conflict, self, suffering.

Of all the thoughts that we can think, perhaps the one that most thoroughly hides from us our nature is the thought that something should not be. And why do we have the thought that something should not be? Only because the mind holds what is only an idea of what it thinks should be.

But beyond both "should be" and "should not be" lies what is. And it is only there that one may find their true self. "Should not be" places one in conflict with what is. And in that conflict with what is, one loses sight of their true nature, which is itself what is.

When we think that something should not be, we reject what is, and in rejecting what is we reject ourselves, because we are what is.

Thinking that something should not be is different from thinking that one does not like something. One may or may not like asparagus. The mistake is in thinking that that which you do not like should not be, and that only what you like should be. We think that getting to what we like must somehow involve the elimination of what we do not like.

But both what we like and do not like, what we want and do not want, are both what is.

We have the ability to imagine what we would like to happen, and then act to try and make it happen. But what we would like to happen may not be what actually happens, may not turn out to be what is.

When what we want to happen, i.e., what we think should be, corresponds to what is, then we are happy, because then the idea that "what is" should not be does not arise, and so we are not in conflict with what is. But when what we want to happen does not happen, when the thought of

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what should be does not correspond to what is, then the idea arises that "what is" should not be, and we are then in conflict with what is, in conflict with the now, in conflict with ourselves, and so we suffer.

"Should be" is only a picture we draw on a paper, an image that arises in the mind. For some reason we think that what is should correspond to this image, to what is only an idea, and when it does not the idea "should not be" arises, and there is then self-conflict, or conflict with the present moment, with the now.

Most people spend their lives trying to make "what is" correspond to the idea that has arisen in their mind of what should be, because when there is correspondence between the "should be" and the "what is," conflict with one's self does not arise and so suffering does not arise, and instead the opposite of suffering arises.

But the illusion here is that the good feeling or happiness that comes from this lack of self conflict is coming from the particular situation or arrangement of forms that just happens to, in this moment, correspond to our idea of what should be. And so we seek those forms or situations that correspond to what we think should be because we think that is where happiness is found, and we think we need to get rid of those forms or situations that do not correspond to what we think should be, because it seems that until they are gone, until they cease to be, there is no room for the "what should be" that we mistakenly think we need to be happy.

The actual source of happiness is the absence of conflict with one's self, and that can be had regardless of whether what is, in this moment, is or is not wanted. However, when one applies the idea "should not be" to that which is not wanted, then the self-conflict that creates suffering arises.

But because we do not recognize what is happening, because we are not conscious of what we are doing, it seems that the suffering we feel as a result of this self-conflict has as its source the form we do not want, making that form seem even more unwanted and even more something than that should not be, when the actual source of that suffering is only our manufactured conflict with the "what is" that is masquerading as the unwanted form.

We have the habit of applying the label or thought "should not be" to whatever form arises in our awareness that is not wanted. But we are not aware we are doing this; it is an automatic and so unconscious movement. And because we are not aware that we are applying the label "should not be" to whatever unwanted forms arise in our awareness, we equate what is not wanted to what should not be.

But we do not have to apply the label "should not be" to that which is not wanted. And when you don't label the unwanted as something that should not be, it may remain unwanted, but it does not then become the source of suffering, because it is not then being used as an ingredient in the creation of the self-conflict that is actually the source of all suffering.

Freedom is finding happiness in what is, regardless of its appearance as wanted or unwanted. Bondage is being able to find happiness, to not be in self-conflict, only when "what is" happens to correspond to the idea of what should be that has arisen in one's mind.

You cannot know your true self while in conflict with your self. You can only be in conflict with that which seems to be not self or other. Therefore, while manufacturing self-conflict by labeling "what is" what should not be, the true self remains hidden and appears as something other than self.

This is not to say that the ideas "should be" and "should not be" should not themselves be, for these ideas are also "what is" when they arise.

If you find yourself in conflict with this moment because you are thinking that something should not be, then you may begin to think that the idea "should not be" should itself not be, but there it is. To think that the ideas "should be" or "should not be" should themselves not be is to simply continue the unconscious process at a more subtle level.

This is why the solution always lies in simply being aware of what is, which means without labeling what is, in whatever form it appears, as either what should be or should not be.

Which means that if you do find yourself labeling "what is" as what should be or should not be, then the way out is not to continue the process by labeling those thoughts as themselves what should not be, but to instead see them as what is, in that moment, which is, after all, what they are.

The suffering, when it arises, is what is. The negative emotion, when it arises, is what is. The unwanted form, when it arises, is what is. The acceptance and allowing of the forms that arise in one's awareness as "what is" is the shovel that allows one to dig one's self out of the hole of self-conflict that is the ultimate source of one's suffering, as opposed to just continuing to dig the hole deeper using the shovel of what should and should not be.

Perhaps the only thought that has the ability to free us rather than just bind us more subtly is the application of the idea of "what is" to whatever form appears or arises in our awareness. Calling something "what is" is still a label, still a form, but it is not a label that places us in conflict with our self, and in the absence of that conflict greater Awareness emerges, or really, reemerges from behind the veil of what should and should not be that had, for so long, kept it hidden from Itself.