

**April 2022**

Greetings,

I hope everyone is doing well. I just started working on the roof garden. I pruned, weeded, fertilized and mulched the raspberries. Also I helped my neighbor plant some dahlia bulbs. It was really nice to get back in the garden.

During these turbulent times a teaching that has been very helpful to me has come up. It is the teaching of "all acceptance". I just wrote an article on this teaching in the Serene Reflection Dharma Association newsletter. The article is attached. I have heard from others that this teaching is also very helpful to them at this time.

Take care,  
With all my heart,

Rev Basil

**All-Acceptance**

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The Buddhist teaching of all-acceptance can be difficult to understand. It is easy to confuse all-acceptance with an apathetic, resigned response to injustice and suffering. In addition, many people believe that unless they nurture powerful emotional responses to injustice and suffering (such as fear and anger) they will be lacking in compassion.

All-acceptance is neither disengaged passivity, nor hyper-emotionalism. Rather, with all-acceptance the first response to beings and situations that challenge us is to sit still with an open heart, without thoughtlessly and impulsively being swept away by strong emotions and opinions. With this foundation of stillness, and mindful recall of the Precepts, we can better see if anything needs to be done and, if so, if we are the ones to do it. In any case, we can always open our hearts and offer our love and the merit of our training to any situation or being experiencing suffering and distress.

Emotionalism is a kind of addictive stimulant, like alcohol or drugs, which makes it so tempting to indulge in. But it is a superficial cover-up for spiritual suffering and disease, and just stirs us up without offering any meaningful help to others or ourselves. The real gift of training in all-acceptance happens at a deeper level, beneath the surface of things. When we view the world without the distorting lens of emotionalism—which is a projection of self—we apprehend the beautiful flowing of the Eternal in everything there is. Then we can see Reality as it is and live with an open and compassionate heart.

I would like to offer an example of how all-acceptance helped me in my own experience. When I was first diagnosed some years ago with colon cancer, I had waves of fear, anxiety, regret, and anger arise and block my ability to accept that this was happening to me. My meditation and training helped me, but I was still experiencing a lot of resistance to the reality of my situation.

The night before my surgery I was spiritually in bad shape, very scared and very agitated and not still. Then it came up strongly for me to meditate and be absolutely still. Although it was very difficult to overcome my anxiety, I knew deep down that this was what I had to do.

I worked very hard at being still and letting go of my fears, and after some time I felt myself becoming more and more still deep in my center. And then, I actually felt the love and flow of the Eternal in me. I cannot describe how much this helped me. The teaching of all-acceptance opened me to the reality that I was permeated with the love of the Eternal, and that whatever happens, this love would always be there. I was able to go into surgery the next morning with a peaceful heart, accepting that—whatever happens—the Eternal is always there and is our true refuge.

So I can say from personal experience, and from what others have told me of their experiences, that meditating and training with all-acceptance opens up a beautiful dimension to our existence and helps us live a full and rewarding life.