

Taking in the Good Course

BLOCKS TO TAKING IN THE GOOD

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Blocks Are Normal

In life, when we want to do something positive – something that brings happiness and benefit to oneself, and often to others – we frequently come up against various *blocks*. It's the same with taking in the good. Blocks are common. They're not bad or wrong – but they do get in the way. What works is to be aware of them, explore them so you know what they are, and then decide for yourself if it's better for you to give over to them – or to keep trying to take in the good. With practice and time, blocks usually fade away. Meanwhile, try the suggestions below for dealing with them.

Blocks to Any Inner Practice

- Distractibility – Watch your attention and bring it back when it wanders.
- Out of touch with experience – Explore and get used to simple pleasant sensations.
- Leery of bringing attention inward – You are safe enough to be less vigilant; you can pull attention out of experience if it gets uncomfortable.
- Over-analyzing, pulling out of the experience – Bring attention back into your body.

Blocks Specific to Taking in the Good (TG)

- It's hard to receive, even a good experience – Inhale or swallow and sense that it's OK to let something in; notice that receiving actually feels alright and doesn't hurt you.
- Concern you'll lose your edge – Building up inner resources will aid your success.
- Fear you'll lower your guard – Resources make you stronger; you can still be careful.
- Idea that feeling good is disloyal or unfair to those who suffer – Your suffering will not lessen theirs; your growing well-being could help lift theirs; you matter, too.
- Belief you don't deserve to feel good, or that seeking to feel good is vain or sinful – It's moral to seek the welfare of *all* beings; “all beings” includes *you*; when your own cup runneth over, you have more to offer others: put on your own oxygen mask first.
- Not wanting to risk disappointment – Know that disappointment is unpleasant but not overwhelming; consider what's greater, the cost of occasional disappointment or the benefits of feeling good and building up resources inside, then make your choice.
- As a woman, socialized to make others happy, not yourself – Your needs and wants have the same standing as theirs; you have to nurture yourself to care for others.
- As a man, socialized to be stoic and not care about feelings – You need to refuel or you'll be running on empty; building up inner “muscles” makes you stronger, not less.
- You've been punished for being energized or happy – You're with different people today than those in childhood; notice the people who like it when you feel pretty good.
- Good things in you have been dismissed – What's good about you is *real*; feel the realness of your good qualities; sticking up for yourself today helps heal the past.
- Positive experiences associate to negative ones – Notice this; return attention to the positive experience; focus on particularly sensate and enjoyable aspects of it.
- “What's the point in feeling good, bad things will still happen” – Increasing your inner resources will help you and others when bad things do happen.
- Payoffs in not feeling good – What's better for you: those payoffs . . . or feeling good?
- Not wanting to let others off the hook – Your pain punishes you more than them.
- TG is craving that leads to suffering – TG is compassion in action; by internalizing good experiences, you don't need to reach for them outside you.