

What you want , may not be what you want...

By Pierre Zimmerman

Compassion is primarily the wish that others not suffer, whereas renunciation is the wish that I not suffer. Renunciation is not so much giving up things, such as desires or a certain way of life, but giving up desiring itself. To do so is not easy.

One way is to live with few wants, so that the mind becomes clear and calm, and in that clarity, find freedom from wanting. We are not monastics; we desire security, emotional fulfillment, a recognizable identity and happiness. So we need a good job, bank account , a house, etc... Yet a storm, a car accident, a law suit, an illness can eliminate everything in a moment.

As for emotional fulfillment, who hasn't felt disappointments, betrayals, a partner that will not give us what we want or yearn for? Many more examples give testimony to the difficulties of satisfying emotional needs. With identity, we tend to be a unique entity with a good sense of self only to find a constant need to defend it. There is restlessness, malaise, a need to earn more or get greater recognition.

The mechanism of desire is based on a belief: I am incomplete as I am now. Desire is a misdirected yearning based on a misconception that I am separate from what I experience. The recognition that we are going to die, that our emotional needs will rarely be met, and being somebody actually separates us from the world - will become apparent when we utilize three keys that open the doors to freedom.

The first one is to stop seeking security. Everything comes and goes like apparitions in a dream. Take any object you "own," - when you realize you don't really own it, you are free to enjoy it while it lasts.

The second key is to let go of expectations for emotional fulfillment. When I stop wanting other people in relationships to be who I want them to be and accept them for who they are, things go more easily and relationships are richer.

The third key is to know the groundlessness of experience itself: no one to be , nowhere to go. Instead of trying to be someone, realize you are a field of open awareness and experience. Without the burden of identity you are free to respond naturally and appropriately to any situation you encounter.

Renunciation, often understood to mean "giving up or sacrificing," is actually the willingness to experience things as they are, not as we want them to be. This is discovering true freedom, deep awareness and joy that has always been present in you.

PZ/6/21/20