

BHIKKHU KHEMINDA'S ANTIDOTE TO LIFE'S UNDESIRABLE EXPERIENCES



When one encounters the personal experience of undesirable incident, do not drown oneself in the sea of depression or keep tormenting oneself with questions of why? why? why?. A dhamma practitioner should look wisely at the situation and know it is time to make use of the theoretical knowledge of one's Abhidhamma study .

Following is the antidote offered by UBT Abhidhamma Master when he was recently approached by a devotee:

"Dear devotee,

Let's celebrate this 'happy' moment! It is a wonderful moment, the moment when you can see and realise the dhamma. Why do you have to go insane? Instead, you have to thank the persons who hurt you for their kindness and effort to show you all akusala cetasikas. As I repeatedly said that Abhidhamma is found within ourselves and your friends had just taught you that. They are good Abhidhamma teachers for you.....not me! I only teach you AME but they have taught you AMR (Abhidhamma Made REAL). They wanted you to know what anger, disappointment, feeling hurt or whatever negative emotions arising in you right at this moment are all about! They will never leave you in peace until you have learned the lesson well. These friends will keep coming to you (to be more precise 'to your mind') again and again. Once you've grasped the lesson fully, then only they leave you. What nice teachers they are!

*So, now, relax and observe the volcano (which is about to erupt) within yourself. Do you remember when I said that everything in this world was fleeting? The volcano which is about to erupt is fleeting. Your perception of them is also fleeting. They are just waves which come and go by themselves. Life is not something that you have power to control over. That's why the Buddha said '*sabbe dhamma anatta*'!*

Actually, if I take these things seriously, I would be hurt too! I talked to them regularly. They seemed to be ok at that time. And only few hours after, then, the decision was totally contrary to my understanding. But I am not hurt, simply because I do not take it seriously. They had come to assist me and, now, they do not want to. That is life. Whatever arises must pass away. Nothing lasts forever. My life had taught me that nothing really happened the way I wanted it to be! So, it is better not to be too serious in this life.

It is better for all of us to be always prepared for this kind of situation. When Ven. Abbot gave me a laptop to use, initially I really took care of it (and, I still do). I did not want to see it gets dirty, breaks down or whatever. I was afraid to damage it. I lost my peacefulness. Until one day a thought came up to me: "What am I doing?" "Do I want to see it new always?" This is not the Dhamma! Whatever has come into existence, it has to start decaying and eventually passes away. Since then on, I was able to keep my mind peaceful whenever I used the laptop. Why? Simply because I am prepared for some day in the future when it breaks down.

My dear devotee,

I am also prepared if you all leave me some day. And you have to be also prepared if I leave you some day in the future. This is the way it is. Nothing is permanent. I am also prepared if you all criticize / blame me some day. And likewise, you have to be prepared too! The Buddha said that there are 8 worldly Dhamma (Gain, Loss, Fame, Defame, Praise, Blame, Happiness, Unhappiness) that keep following one like one's shadow. No one can escape from them. Not even the Buddha, let alone us! So, if you have this kind of wisdom it helps you a lot.

I can understand that it is too hard for you as you have always regarded these people as your true friends. But there is no other way to solve rather than to be patient and strong. Just like a royal elephant forbearing the cuts and wounds received on the battle ground, you have to forbear this painful experience too. But, please do not affect your metta and karuna for them. When they did what they did to you, I am sure they were suffering (even if they might not be aware of it). Let's give our good qualities to them without wanting them to be kind to us. If they are aware of their mistakes, that is good. If they don't, then, that is also good i.e., you keep cultivating your metta and karuna. Nothing to lose.

(Can you tell me what to do Bhante?)... Do as they wished...do not bother yourself with any unnecessary thoughts. Just do what they wanted you to do, then, let your disappointments go.

(You are our mentor - are you not able to help them?)...I have shown everyone the way to live a peaceful life but if anyone does not want to follow....what can I do? It is like when I tell people the way to UBT and they do not want to follow the way I showed and, therefore, they couldn't reach UBT, then, what can I do?

I really hope this will help you regain your peacefulness. Be strong, things will change.

May you take care of yourself happily'

Bhikkhu Nheminda