

Questions for Chapters 21 & 22 and the Epilogue. **Dancing with Life**, by Phillip Moffitt

Questions by Sue Greer

Chapter 21- Now That You Know, What Is It That You Know?

In this chapter Moffitt moves our focus from dukkha and suffering to address how our ego-awareness can play a part of holding us in our chain of suffering and how we can recognize our true self by using the path of awareness and choice. We are invited to use the truth of the Eightfold Path to bring ourselves to know the simple truth that we LIVE within each moment, this moment, the NOW and it is our choice to be awakened to suffer or liberate ourselves to be freed from our ego attachments.

1. Moffitt begins by sharing the insight that we become captive to our misery and negative experiences. He has observed that people tend to share negative experiences and are uncomfortable, ambivalent, defensive and even had an aversion to sharing their joys and positive experiences. Would you say you agree with this insight? Do you shy away from sharing in you joyful and positive life experiences? He also states that SUKHA (happiness) can have the same liberating insight as DUKHA (suffering) in our self-liberating awareness. Have you ever experienced this? How potentially working with our dukkha can help prepare us for embracing your Sukha?
2. Next we move to the concept of our ego-identity. We are invited to let go of what has defined us. (I would add to the loss of our ego-identity as to more than our occupation. Adding divorce, empty-nesting as a parent, a defining illness, to name a few others) Moffitt shares his story of letting go a lifetime of building his “hero” identity, and how difficult it was to let go of this identity that gave him his feeling of worth, importance and definition in life. When we let go of our own “hero” identity what happens to our feeling of value and definition of self. Where are we? We struggle, our Ego struggles, our sense of purpose is challenged. How do you see the Eightfold Path as a path to help you re-define yourself ?
3. Ego-Limitations pg 256 . Just wanted to add this quote as I feel it sums up how our ego can limit us in embracing the NOW. “What matters is that you allow yourself to know what must be surrendered and voluntarily surrender it.”
4. Goal of No-Goal. We get caught in; what will come, what is the future, how do I prepare for the unknowable. We get caught in the unknowable possibilities of what could, might become, rather than be open to the unfolding of NOW. Moment -to-moment goals. How comfortable are you with this concept. TO BE IN THE NOW. Not future oriented, Here we can find ourselves “bound up in time” and not learn, live and experience the gift of the moment. Our self and our ego cling to Goals to have a sense of life when in fact goals can take us away from the joy of now.

CHAPTER 22- The Courage to be Happy

1. 1.pg 261-2. Do you acknowledge SUKHA, appreciate it and have gratitude for it? Do you resist Joy? Receiving JOY require being vulnerable and fully present “...your happiness will not be diminished by being fully present with it, it will be enhanced.” Do you acknowledge SUKHA, appreciate it and have gratitude for it? What are your reactions ,thoughts about being afraid of happiness?
2. Three Kinds of Happiness
 - 1) Happiness based on conditions. This is not sustainable because everything changes.
 - 2) Happiness based on your state of mind and feelings. Here, you are basing happiness on your own state of mind, biases, and beliefs.
 - 3) Happiness independent of any external or internal conditions or factors. You are basing your experience on your inherent awareness, and you are present to the NOW.

Ways to become more aware of your Sukha:

- 1) Accept your feeling of Sukha.
 - 2) Notice or observe how your body is feeling and reacting.
 - 3) Recognize the truth of your experience and investigate the qualities of awareness, choice, and response.
3. pgs 270-71. Your well-being is not dependent on conditions but wise choices. You can find freedom from conditions affecting you by investigation and acceptance for what is. This can help stabilize you in “allowing “ the conditions to be independent of you. You remain focused on your choice to stay aware and free of the conditions, unharmed or persuaded by something that will fall away. Thoughts? Reactions? Examples?
4. pg 272. Non-Dependent Happiness-Dukha DuKha- Happiness of realization. This the ultimate happiness not based on any conditions of states of your mind. Here you are relaxed in the sacred NOW, without any attachment or thought. Have you experienced this sense awareness? If so would you share your experience? How does it feel different form the other experiences of Sukha? Some examples Moffitt gave are: no sense of self or “I” or personalized experience it just is. Another was a deep feeling that your meditation is an offering to bring joy and happiness to all. A sense of true compassion for all, in deep equanimity.

EPILOGUE

My take away from the ending of the book in Moffit's words about LIFE "...if I did not have enthusiasm (passion) for it, if I did not bother to be FULLY PRESENT for it's sadness or loss, then there is no life to be lived..."

1. Are you willing to be fully present in your life, full of joys and despair and suffering equally?
2. Are you willing to be fully present to what is happening RIGHT NOW? Our only choice.

Grateful to have had the opportunity to share this book with all of you, Gratitude to all of us who work to bring this in to being, through zoom and community. I am grateful for each one of us and our willingness to venture into the greater awareness to freedom and JOY.