

Ponder and discuss the Dalai Lama's quote.

Spiritual Practice and the Quality of Our Experience

Human beings need to make sense of our experience. We categorize and characterize in order to bring meaning to our lives. Over the centuries, this has led us to notice that:

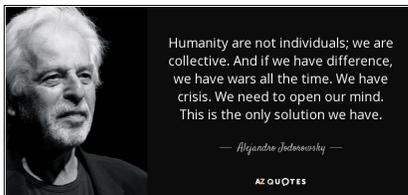
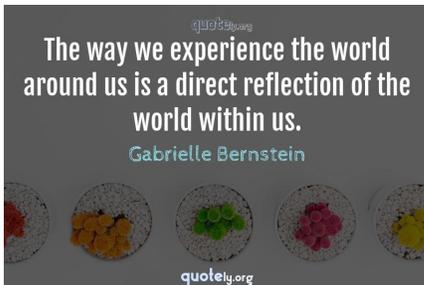
**I AM
HUMAN**

1. Each of us has an internal subjective experience. Each of us feels like an individual. We all have a sense that we are unique individuals having our own life-experiences.

2. Each of us also has an experience of the outer world. We interact with the outer world and that is in part how our experiences are shaped.

3. We are all in relationship with others. There is a very real sense that our lives are shaped by others. Relationships and communities influence everything about us – for good or ill.

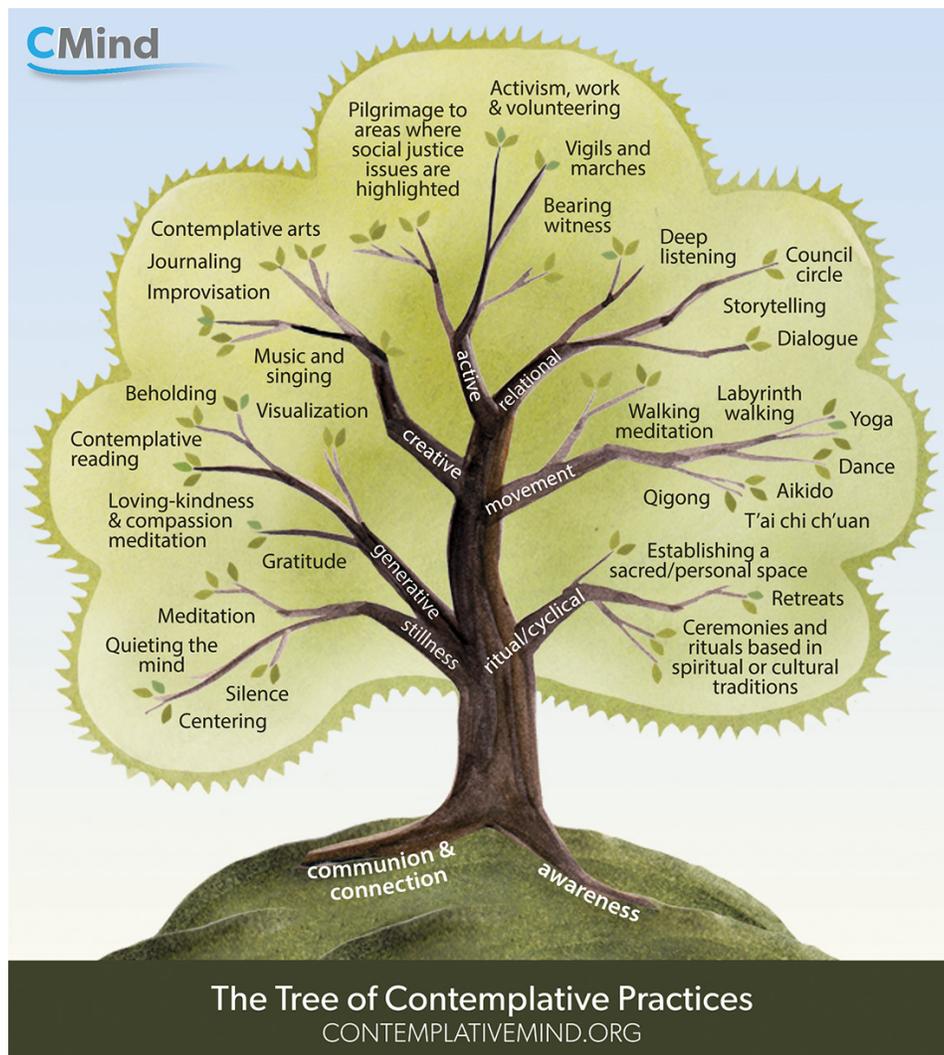
These three life-dynamics are always working together. They influence each other and bring shape to each of our moments. Generally speaking, we can influence the quality of our experience through a deliberate shift in the three dynamics. Spiritual practices help us make these shifts.



Zoom out to read the quotes

Discuss how you view your experience as a human. Is it similar to the dynamics above? Talk about how the different dynamics work together and influence your life - in ways that are both helpful and unhelpful. Do you agree that spiritual practices can shift the quality of these three dynamics?

Spiritual Practices Help Shape My Experience



Take a look at this conception of spiritual practices. Remember, all models have helpful and unhelpful elements. Discuss as a group which of these practices (or others not listed) you find valuable. Then answer this question: How might this spiritual practice shape and enhance my experience of life.

NOTE: Click [HERE](#) to visit the organization that created the tree:
The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society

If It's Too Good To Be True, Well...

"MOST PEOPLE THINK THERE ARE A LOT OF BAD PEOPLE RUNNING AROUND IN THE WORLD. THERE AREN'T A LOT OF BAD PEOPLE. THERE ARE A LOT OF BAD IDEAS. AND BAD IDEAS ARE WORSE THAN BAD PEOPLE BECAUSE BAD IDEAS ARE CONTAGIOUS. BAD IDEAS GET GOOD PEOPLE TO DO HORRIBLE THINGS."

SAM HARRIS



Do you agree that, in the world of spirituality and spiritual practice, there are bad ideas dressed in sincerity and catchy sounding language? Discuss Harris' quote and what we can do to avoid the trap of false claims made by many spiritual practitioners and teachers?

Going Deeper

Here's an interesting article on the comunization of spirituality.

Click [HERE](#) to read, *Beyond McMindfulness*.

And for fun, if you want to zen out to the KFC video, you can access it by clicking [HERE](#).