

Practice Note: Weather

Transcribed and edited from a short talk by Gil Fronsda1 on February 14, 2018

When I lived for a short while in Tennessee, I was told that there was a saying there. That is, “If you don’t like the weather, just wait five minutes” – because apparently the weather there changes quite a bit.

One of the ways that I have valued sitting with myself in meditation or in life is to view what’s happening within me as just weather. Sometimes I’m tired, and it’s tired weather. Sometimes I’m tense, and it’s tense weather. Sometimes I’m happy or upset, and it’s happy or upset weather. There are all these different things coming through. Sometimes my mind is spinning, and it’s mind-spinning weather. There are different strata in the atmosphere. And different strata have different kinds of weather.

For me to just experience these mind states as weather lends itself to not identifying so strongly with them. Not taking them so seriously, or being so absolute – as if it’s a problem, something to hold on to, or something to build up a case against like, “Oh, this means that.” It’s just the weather.

Most of us don't fight against the weather. We don't try to fix the weather for ourselves. We might complain, but we put on our raincoat anyway. We just learn to work with it and live with it.

The ability to just be present, and allow all of these different forces – psychological states, emotions, thoughts – to come through like the weather means that we don't get entangled with them. We don't get involved, or pick it up, and we don't actively reject it. But we just allow it to be there.

There's a certain kind of peace that can come from not identifying it – not reacting or getting caught with it – and just seeing that, “Oh, it's just the weather. Wait five minutes and it'll change.” It's guaranteed to change within five minutes. But, it's not guaranteed that your mind will be sensitive enough to see the change. So, part of what we do in mindfulness practice is to sit quietly to increase the sensitivity. The higher the sensitivity is to what's happening in the moment, the more we see that the weather's changing all the time.

So enjoy the weather. Thank you.