

A Self-Sufficient Mind

In a quiet room, we can find stillness. And in that stillness, we can contemplate our own mind.

What we often find is that the mind is very restless. It wants to take care of a thousand things, because it's feeling some uncertainty and fear. It wants to fix problems, take care of all the undone things, figure out if everything is going to be OK. It wants to get all of our needs met, from survival needs to meaning, connection and love.

The mind is restless, wanting to fix everything, get everything it needs.

What if we could allow our minds to rest, settling into the full sufficiency of itself just as it is?

We would need nothing in each moment, other than what's required for physical survival. That doesn't mean we do nothing (though we could!) — beyond our needs, there might be a wholehearted desire to do some good for ourselves or others, but it doesn't have to come from fear.

There's a settledness, a peace, that can come with this kind of practice.

There's a feeling that we are enough. That everything we need is already contained in us.

It's a lifetime practice.

Here's how I recommend starting:

1. Sit in a quiet spot. Elevate your hips above your knees with a cushion, to give yourself more stability and comfort. Sit in an upright but relaxed posture. Eyes can be closed or slightly open with a soft downward gaze.
2. Find stillness. Stay in this spot for at least 5-10 minutes, longer over time if you like. It doesn't have to be long, but when you feel restless, stay for a little longer to practice with this restlessness.
3. Rest in direct experience. Let your attention turn to the sensations of your body, the sensations of the present moment. These sensations are direct experience of the world. Rest your mind in this open awareness of direct experience, without needing to do anything but witness them.
4. Observe the mind. Your mind will want to turn away from this direct experience. That's because it feels unsettled. It wants to get its needs met, or fix problems or deal with uncertainties or fear. That's OK! Watch the mind do its thing. What is it trying to fix? Notice the underlying fear or desire as the mind tries to do its thing.

5. Appreciate the luminous quality of the mind. The mind is like an energy, trying to do its best to survive. It is unaware that it already is brilliant, abundant, enough. It is luminous and beautiful. We can start to appreciate these delightful qualities of the mind. This takes curiosity, appreciation, and lots of practice. Keep practicing.

Go and sit, practice, and let me know what you find!