

OPEN MIND



The conversations we have and the words we use shape our perception of what is real. What we habitually tell ourselves and others about the nature of reality profoundly influences the quality of our lives and relationships. The recital of our script or personal narratives happens often at an unconscious level. It is time to open up our minds to consider replacing outmoded ways of thinking with inspiring, fresh ideas that have the power to hold the Wind of change that is sweeping our lives.

Sometimes referred to as “beginner’s mind” we respect the gift of thinking, using the wonderful resources of our mind, but then letting go of it a bit and for awhile. At this place on the path we practice suspending judgement, holding our thoughts and ideas lightly, not trusting our perspective too much to be the whole picture. Here we loosen our grasping so there’s room for a larger mind to get in. Beginner’s mind is an opening to what might just be—and surely is—something larger than our thinking capacity. Here we open to what might be called a growing spiritual cognition which is essentially a re-cognition, of the capacities that we each have to open to a deeper reality. Be patient and compassionate to that part of you that wants to hold on to more narrow perspectives. Beginner’s mind is a non-grasping, patient, and compassionate holding of thinking so that we can be open to other ideas and perspectives. Open Mind is an increasingly humble mind, always knowing that it does not yet fully know.

The Greek word for repentance is "*metanoia*" It doesn't mean feeling sorry for yourself for doing bad things. It doesn't even mean to “change the direction in which you're looking for happiness,” although it's often translated that way.⁶ The word literally breaks down into *meta* and *noia*, which, depending on how you translate *meta* (it can be either the preposition “beyond” or the adjective “large”), means “go beyond the mind” or “go into the large mind.”⁷ The repentance that Jesus really is talking about means to go beyond your little egoic operating system that says, “I think, therefore I am,” and try out the other one—the big one—that says, “I am, therefore I think.”

Cynthia Bourgeault

“It may be that when we no longer know which way to go we have come to our real journey. The mind that is not baffled is not employed. The impeded stream is the one that sings.” Wendell Berry

Open Mind in Context

Interior:

Interpersonal:

Systemic:

Environmental:



EXPLORING OPEN MIND

Questions: How can I turn information into transformation?

Posture: All Spiritual Knowing Must Be Balanced by Not-Knowing. What do I feel in my body when my mind simply does not know?

Conversation: With whom do I engage that has different “idea-ologies” than me?

Language: Metanoia - What words hold the meaning of entering the “big mind”?

Belief: When do I “confuse the finger with the moon”?

Challenge: What is it like when I face the barrier of “judgement” in my mind? (I.A.W.I.T.)

Practice: How can I exercise an open mind? Practice - Lectio Divina; Icons; Mantra; The Jesus Prayer; Inner Faith Dialogue)