

## Tamed and untamed consciousness

THROUGH OUR SIX SENSES (including the mind) we experience form, sound, taste, smell, feeling, and thought. We might think we understand these things, but perhaps our common understanding is insufficient. For example, take feeling.

The Buddha spoke of subtle feeling, which is the Oneness of our feeling and the object of our feeling, *before* they are dichotomized. This is the very first stage of feeling. Subtle feeling is beyond the reach of our judgments, our criticisms, or our evaluations. Our usual feelings can be classified into several categories: physically or mentally pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral. But subtle feeling occurs *before* such judgments are made. It is the state of Oneness with our object.

We might think it is impossible to have such feeling. But we only think this because we have been tamed, or educated, by the dualistic world. The fact is, subject and object—you and what you touch or feel—are One from the start. Realization is only a matter of *seeing* that this is so. Until we *see* in this way, we assume we are existing together with many beings in a world of good and bad, right and wrong. But actually, if we would just look carefully at our experience, we would *see* that all beings *already* exist together in peace and harmony, without disturbing each other in the least.

From the perspective of everyday human consciousness, the world seems to consist of many competing things. This consciousness divides and separates everything. It makes distinctions. This way of seeing is why we never really understand anything as it is. We're not One with the flow of *this moment*. This moment, as it is, is already Oneness.

At its first stage, feeling is just Oneness. It's One with the flow of instants as they are. Then we say there is instant A and instant B. But the "A" and "B" we pick out are just the dregs—

## Peace and Harmony

the remains or results—of what we have experienced. They are already past. Gone. Not real. They are not *this* instant itself, because *this* instant is always in motion.

But though we can't attach to A or B as an instant of time, we can't ignore them either. We should accept them, but we need not be caught by them. All we have to do is participate in the flow of *this instant*—that is, we have to just be here.

Of course, we *are* here already. But we always pick up something in particular. This is our consciousness at work—it's very quick to pick something up. It then forms a pattern by which, over many years, we become tamed—educated into believing that what we pick up is Real. Then we completely forget this process of the instants of time, of action that lives from moment to moment. We have to realize this process of instants, learn to be present in *this moment*, and put this learning into practice. This is a big project for us, but it is of utmost importance.