

Judgment & Changing Minds

For some, in our early and developing practice we tend to point out, hyper focus and define others by their shortcomings, worst moments, and weak habits. We view certain individuals as unworthy of our time, and incapable of rehabilitative change. Conversely, we see ourselves, our family, and friends as noteworthy and on track toward enlightenment.

One time, a particular officer who is very nice to everyone was responsible for yard duty. It began to sprinkle rain and they closed the yard on us. Some guys expressed anger & frustration. I felt empathy for the officer, because they tend to interact nicely with us. I easily forgave them. Conversely, a different officer constantly threatens to give us, residents, infractions for minor wrong doings. That particular officer had yard duty and it started to pour rain. However, they chose to keep the yard open – much to our disbelief. My core beliefs went haywire! I chose to forgive this officer for their past enforcement. In turn, I had to question my past negative judgment about them. No one is inherently bad & sometimes people have to make tough decisions. Keeping an open mind keeps us from wrongly assessing individuals' innate worth.

Albert R.

North Carolina

Thank You FOR READING!

Below are some questions to reflect on from this piece. Feel free to also use one as a conversation starter with a fellow reader, or even a loved one on the outside!

A "mind of equanimity," in the words Albert uses, can be difficult to achieve. Certainly Buddhist practices can help with this, as can other spiritual and religious training and beliefs. How have you tried to establish a more loving and tolerant way of being present in the world?

Would you say that spiritual practices provide a good basis for sound judgment and clear thinking? If so, how do you recognize that kind of growth happening, in your own life and/or in the lives of others?

We'd love to hear what you thought of the piece, or if you've had any meaningful conversations as a result. Or perhaps you'd like to share an expression of your own (visual art or creative writing). You are always welcome to write to us at Shining Light at P.O. Box 267, Annville, PA 17003.

**Note: We will not be able to provide a response to your letter or receipt of your submission, but know that we value your feedback and contributions and will take them seriously.*

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