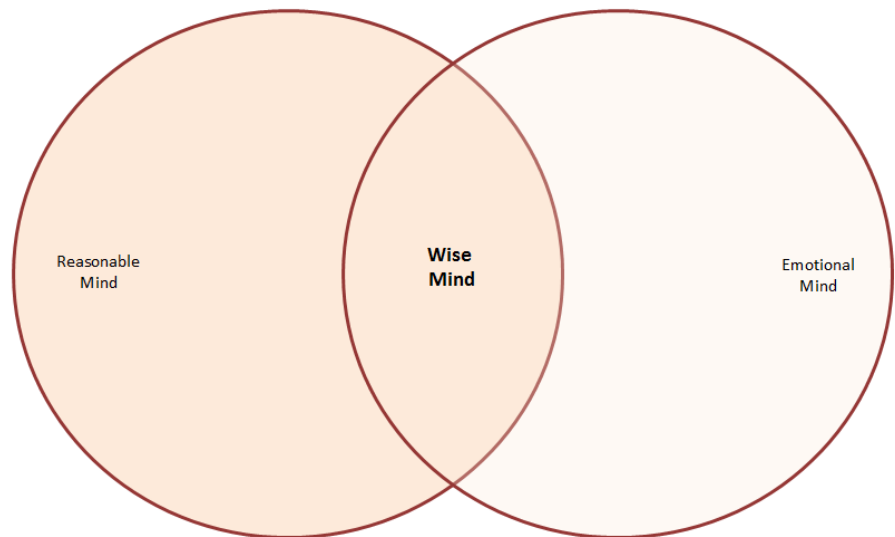


Living from a Wise Mind

Most problems in living can be separated into two broad categories – problems with emotions and problems with thinking. Emotional problems have to do with impulsively acting the way you feel, moodiness, anger, anxiety, and confused feelings. This happens when we operate from an Emotional Mind. Thinking problems have to do with what you know or don't know and discrepancies in reason or logic. This happens when we operate solely from a Reasonable Mind. Any combination of emotional and thinking problems can lead to misery and distress as a result of interpersonal chaos, confusion about self, or the inability to regulate your mind.

Functioning from a Wise Mind, however, can help us integrate emotion and logic together and use them in concert to improve your quality of life. To understand Wise Mind, you need to understand the two states of mind: Reasonable Mind and Emotional Mind.



Reasonable Mind

Facts and logic are the framework of reasonable mind. You are in reasonable mind when you think logically and rationally. Reasonable mind can be a storehouse of information, helping you define a problem and determine a solution. Reasonable mind is much easier when you are healthy, strong, sober, rested and fed, as opposed to when you are sick, weak, stoned, tired, or hungry. When you are experiencing stress or don't feel well, Emotional Mind starts to take over.

Emotional Mind

When an emotional state controls your thinking and behavior, you are living from your Emotional Mind. Emotional Mind can flood your system with energy in anger or zap your energy in depression. Impulsively acting the way you feel can lead to out of control behavior creating chaos, hurt feelings, and more problems. Emotional Mind tends to be irresponsible, careless, mindless, impulsive, and impatient. Strong emotions distort facts, magnify excuses, and shrink your perception of consequences.

Wise Mind

Wise Mind brings together the cold logic of Reasonable Mind and the heightened sensitivity of Emotional Mind to a centered calm state of mind. Wise Mind is doing the best you can under the circumstances. When you act skillfully with problems causing misery and distress, you are in Wise Mind and doing the best you can. When you relate what you know (your smarts) to your problems (what hurts) you are being skillful and in Wise Mind. Wise Mind joins what you know to your problems. Your effort to link your problems causing misery and distress with your reasonable, logical abilities is the basis of skillfulness and Wise Mind. To access Wise Mind, you have to use intuition to go beyond emotional reactions and logical analysis. Polarized thinking and set ideas interfere with Wise Mind. Flexibility, awareness, imagination, and open-mindedness nurture Wise Mind.