

# Juniper

## Feeling Groovy

We may like the sound of Buddhist training—meditation, inner transformation, going beyond the ordinary. It has a certain allure. But do we really want it? Do we really even need it?

The mind certainly functions without it. But the mind tends to function in grooves. It is like an old record where the needle follows a single track, rarely jumping out. We each have our grooves. Where they are useful and productive, life feels good; where they are limiting and counterproductive, not so good. Sometimes they can make us feel down and anxious, sometimes joyful and elated.

What we sometimes don't notice is how deep our grooves are, though it may become more apparent when we try to break them! It's easy following the same routines—but try to be more patient, exercise for twenty minutes, or eat healthy? No groove.

Buddhist training helps us wear away at counterproductive grooves. But it takes effort. Our habits put up a fuss when we try to change them. Our grooves are comfortable. We're used to them. They're our grooves. Meditating for five minutes a day doesn't seem like a big undertaking, but it can take a stronger act of will than we think. We want to say it isn't working, we can't meditate, it's too weird, we don't have time.

It's true. We don't need to meditate. But if we want to break out of our grooves we have to do something. Otherwise we stay stuck—that's what makes them grooves!

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