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Brendon Stewart - University of Western Sydney

At the University of Western Sydney Dr. Brendon Stewart teaches in the masters program in Analytical Psychology. The teaching unit Buddhist Practice and Analytical Psychology explores the relationship between Buddhism, an ancient religious practice and analytical psychology, a 20th century psychological theory.

Buddhism counsels us to realize that there is a means by which people can work with their suffering. But a fundamental complication in Buddhist philosophy, a complication especially confounding for many people who seek a personal salvation is that Dukkha rises endlessly. No sooner does one calm one's suffering Self than one enters into suffering once again. Paradoxical indeed! So the realization necessary in understanding suffering is to note that it is endless. There is no permanent state of grace. This seems to demand an imaginative step into another way of understanding existence.

Many of the students, newcomers to any serious study of Buddhist ideas tend to think of Western psychology as encouraging a strong ego devised individual and doubt the notion of One Mind or interconnectedness. In contrast they may consider Eastern philosophy (read Buddhism) as underrating the world of consciousness.

Nonetheless there is a growing interest in Buddhist ideas especially those that describe and advocate mindfulness and meditation. Even the Australian Psychological Society offer workshops on how a practitioner might bring these skills into their professional practice.