



Men, Buddhism and the Emotional Discontents of Western Modernity

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Late-Modernity involves a loss of personal meaningfulness leading to rising levels of depression and addiction. This paper explores the emotional life stories of a group of western men whose experiences have led them to embrace a globalized Buddhism for answers. Buddhism offers men emotional self-awareness, mindfulness, self-discipline, community, increased calmness of mind and a sense of self-worth. In that context the discourses of Buddhism provide a narrative of hope and a transformed masculinity. There is now a growing body of western scientific evidence that meditation and mindfulness have positive psychotherapeutic value.

Issues of emotion and spirituality are explored through the a range of men's stories including David an emotionally balanced former Buddhist Monk, Frank once a disturbed psychiatric patient, Trevor once a "bikey" now a Buddhist, Charles whose meditation practices were prompted by his depression and Jon and Steve whose normal unhappiness is eased by their spiritual practices.