

## Is Buddhism a form of psychology?

Since the Buddha seemed primarily concerned with the suffering we experience that is caused by the delusional mind the answer seems to be yes. Through meditation and other practices the Buddha give us a way to work *with* our suffering.

"Suffering ceases to exist when it is no longer something we experience as impinging on our life, as an unnecessary, and avoidable intrusion that we finally learn to exclude from our lives once and for all. Instead, what we realise deeply is that suffering is inseparable from life. I like to describe what happens by saying that suffering doesn't disappear *from* our life, but *into* our life."

Barry Magid

Many modern psychotherapeutic techniques draw heavily on Buddhist teaching (or other Eastern Philosophies). But also, it now seems to be becoming recognised that some forms of Buddhist practice, particularly those that promote cultivating samadhi, thought-free concentration states, can also "spiritually bypass" emotional problems. So modern psychotherapeutic techniques can be helpful for supplementing Buddhist practices.

Some worry that there is a danger of diluting the teachings of the Buddha by amalgamating with so much Western psychology. But surely that is also against the spirit of the teachings of the Buddha, who declared that every teaching should be tested in our own experience, not followed as slavish rules instituted by virtue of authority.