

Releasing Attachments and Aversions

Why Attachments and Aversions Are Hindrances

Attachment means clinging to what we want — pleasure, people, praise, success, comfort.

Aversion means pushing away what we don't want — pain, loss, discomfort, disapproval.

Both arise from the same root: **identification with experience**, believing that our wellbeing depends on controlling what comes and goes.

They create inner friction, mental noise, and suffering because reality never stays still. When the mind is grasping or resisting, it's not *present* — it's caught in craving or fear.

In practical terms:

- Attachment says, *"I'll be okay only if I get this."*
 - Aversion says, *"I'll be okay only if I avoid that."*
- Both say, *"I'm not okay right now."*
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What Happens in the Brain and Nervous System

When attachment or aversion arise, specific neural systems light up — mostly in the **limbic and reward circuits** of the brain.

a. The Dopamine Loop and Attachment

- The **nucleus accumbens** and **ventral tegmental area (VTA)** drive motivation and pleasure through **dopamine release**.
- When you anticipate something desirable (a person's affection, a success, a comfort), dopamine surges.
- But once you get it, dopamine quickly drops — leaving a sense of craving or "not enough."
This cycle forms what's sometimes called the **dopamine trap** or **hedonic treadmill** — the endless chase for satisfaction that never truly satisfies.

Neurologically: attachment is a *habit loop* reinforced by dopamine → reward → craving → action → brief reward → craving again.

b. The Amygdala and Aversion

- The **amygdala** scans for danger or unpleasant stimuli.
- When it detects something associated with pain or threat, it triggers the **sympathetic nervous system** (fight/flight/freeze).
- Cortisol and adrenaline rise, the body tightens, the heart rate increases, and perception narrows.
This is aversion in motion — the brain trying to protect you from discomfort, even emotional or imagined.

Both attachment and aversion are, therefore, **defensive reflexes** in the nervous system — one trying to *grasp safety*, the other trying to *push danger away*.

Neither allows full openness to the present moment.

c. The Prefrontal Cortex and Emotional Regulation

When mindfulness or wisdom is active, the **prefrontal cortex (PFC)** modulates these limbic reactions. If the PFC is calm and connected (as during meditation), it inhibits excessive craving and fear responses. But if stress or fatigue reduce PFC control, the amygdala and reward centers dominate — leading to emotional reactivity.

d. Autonomic Nervous System Balance

- Attachment often involves **sympathetic arousal** (chasing, striving).
 - Aversion often involves **fight-flight-freeze** (avoidance, contraction).
 - True equanimity involves **parasympathetic balance** — where the system feels safe, open, and grounded.
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How Binaural Beats and Other Methods Help

The goal isn't to suppress attachment or aversion, but to **regulate the nervous system** and **stabilize awareness** so they can dissolve naturally.

a. Binaural Beats and Brainwave Entrainment

Binaural beats help by *entraining the brain* into frequencies associated with calmness, insight, and integration:

Frequency	State	Effect on Attachment/Aversion
Alpha (8–12 Hz)	Relaxed focus	Balances PFC–amygdala activity, promoting calm awareness.
Theta (4–8 Hz)	Meditative, subconscious access	Allows emotional patterns of craving/fear to surface gently for release.
Gamma (30–80 Hz)	Unity, insight	Integrates emotion and perception — the “aha-moment” frequency of equanimity.
Delta (0.5–4 Hz)	Deep rest	Heals the nervous system; dissolves deep tension or trauma roots of attachment.

So, for example:

- Listening to **alpha or theta beats** helps soften grasping or resistance by quieting limbic overactivity.
 - **Gamma frequencies** may help cultivate compassion and nondual awareness — seeing that both pleasant and unpleasant experiences are transient waves of consciousness.
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b. Mindfulness and Interoceptive Awareness

Practices like mindfulness meditation or gentle body scans activate the **insula**, the brain's interoceptive center — where sensations and emotions are integrated. When you observe craving or aversion *in the body* (tight chest, fluttering stomach, contraction), you rewire

the system to *feel* rather than *react*.

Over time, these sensations lose their power to hijack behavior.

c. Breathwork and the Vagus Nerve

Slow, rhythmic breathing stimulates the **vagus nerve**, increasing **parasympathetic tone**.

This lowers heart rate, cortisol, and amygdala activity — the physiological foundation of non-reactivity and acceptance.

d. Heart Coherence and Compassion Practices

When you bring attention to the heart area and generate feelings like gratitude or compassion, the **heart rhythm** becomes coherent and entrains the brain into synchronized alpha states.

This coherence literally harmonizes emotional and rational brain centers, allowing attachment and aversion to dissolve into understanding and kindness.

The Deeper Integration

At their root, attachments and aversions are **misdirected energy** — the life-force flowing outward toward what it wants or away from what it fears.

When awareness stabilizes, that energy returns inward as presence, clarity, and love.

Binaural beats, breathwork, meditation, and heart-based awareness all serve the same purpose: to bring the nervous system into coherence, the brain into harmony, and awareness into stillness

where craving and aversion fade because *nothing needs to be resisted or possessed*. AKA the “State of Needing Nothing”