Uncovering the View: How Do I Really View My Body?

Although we were once all infants with very simple needs for nourishment and survival, our relationships with our bodies have grown complicated over time due to influences such as our upbringing, gender, society and more. It can be very helpful to stop and ask ourselves these questions: “What do I see as the purpose of my body? What is the view through which I approach and relate to my body?” Fred uses the analogy of a car. Most of us see our car as a vehicle for taking us to certain destinations, and we maintain the car so that it will serve that purpose. If I consider my body as a vehicle, where is it that I want it to take me?

Below are some open ended questions to help you uncover your view and how this view plays out in your life – how it affects your actions of body, speech and mind and the choices you make. Ultimately, how does this view affect your happiness and well-being.

1. Please reflect on each of the following statements: what truly resonates with you today when you consider your relationship with your body? What do you most identify with? Perhaps some resonate strongly, some slightly, and others not at all. What behaviors and emotions around eating and care of your body result from this view? Journal as helpful to clarify your observations.
2. I view my body as an object of sensual pleasure (including any of the senses of taste, smell, touch, hearing and sight).
3. My view of my body is closely aligned with my ego, or self image.
4. I avoid thinking about or tending to my body.
5. I view my body as a vehicle for fulfilling my aspirations in life, such as (note what is meaningful for you) …
6. Am I a better caretaker of my car than I am of my body?
7. Do I see the bigger picture of my edible diet choices in terms of its impact on other people and the earth?
8. How mindful am I of what I am eating in terms of the plant or animal life given up so that I can be nourished?