

# 2007-10-12 Anapanasati What is Our Relationship with Our Exp...

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## SPEAKERS

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So to some degree, or to big degree. The first stage, the first two stages of this process, just being with a breath as it is, knowing breath as it is, is a calming process in and of itself, because usually we're not just with things isn't as simple knowing way we're usually engaged or contracted resistant or something. And as we kind of let go of all the usual ways of kind of interacting with things and just relaxing just knowing the mind relaxes in the mind relaxes a lot of tensions in the body relaxed. And it's pretty commonly known that just being with the breath can have a calming effect. However, here the Buddha also allows us or encourages us be actively involved in this calming, tranquilizing settling of the body relaxing of the body. And to take it further than just make much quicker than how it happened just on its own. And as we do this, some people have the experience of becoming more and more aware of places where they're tense. And don't worry about it. Just as part of the process, you kind of discover these places. Don't feel like you have to be in a hurry or you're failing because you can't relax it. It's enough just to hold it in awareness. Just be soft around it. I wasted a lot of time meditation, watching some kind of tension that existed. And watching it like a cat and mouse hole, you know, kind of waiting for it to relax and just watch it, I'll be with it. I'll just see it relax, and then come back at some future sitting and relax. What happened to it? You know, I didn't, I didn't get to see the process. You know, I had this idea that I was going to get to it to watch it. You know, you might or might not even it's just your job is to be there. present for it. And some of the softening might just be softening around something. So your relationship to it is not tense, gripping part of the track in this last stage, the fourth stage of calming the body is that people think that's what's all about just calming. And they just get kind of really overly ambitious. And that's all they doing. So constantly engineering and actively trying to relax this and that and this and that and doing it. And you got to be kind of easy about this process. If you're making a too much of a project, you probably just keeping yourself agitated. There's a balance between calming the mind the mind becomes settled and calm, and the doing part of meditation. So if you're doing that relaxing thing, relaxing your body, and the mind is spinning around trying to do too much like engineering project, it doesn't really work. So you might have to be kind of very soft and spacious and allowing. And so that's why going back to the earlier stages, sometimes good No, not just not only spend your time relaxing, relaxing, relaxing, but go back and forth and kind of do as it feels good. It's it feels helpful. If it doesn't feel helpful, then don't do it. Very easy, right? So what do you think of that? What was your experience like when we have comments or questions? This

gives you the Miko be helpful. Can you explain what we're next in your mind?

Gotta explain what relaxing the mind is. It might be different things in different times for different people. The mind, sometimes the people associate the mind with the brain. That can be a lot of physical tension connected to that mind. You know, people, they, if you're really thinking about something hard, you the eyebrows could go omitted up into tension is there. There can also be pressure, sense of pressure or tension inside the skull. It's there in the scalp different places, sometimes in the jaws in the teeth. So sometimes it's relaxing those parts of the mind the brain, the body that seems very closely connected, close by to the mind of your mind happens to be, I suppose some people think their mind is in their heart or in their belly. Same thing be true there wherever is really close to it, the physical relaxing. Sometimes it has to do with the speed of the thinking mind. Sometimes thinking mind is very kind of one thought after the other can be very fast. The thoughts themselves are harsh, or tight or grasping. And you can kind of just like you listen to the quality of someone's voice, and hear if that voice is anxious or tight or harried or you know all kinds of things. You can listen to your own thinking voice. It's possible take the inner voice of the mind and quiet it Relax it. So it's not necessarily so physical. But it's you know, there's something there. Also the mind sometimes if it's too many things going on too many preoccupations, too many concerns too much we resisting things we're afraid of doing things we want, the mind can feel actually very narrow, very small, very compact, relaxed mind feels very expansive, spacious, open. And sometimes the mind is really relaxed, the mind feels actually bigger than the body gets as big as the room bigger than the room just feels like it has no boundaries to it. So as so relaxing, the sense of being bounded or localized, the mind feels localized, then there's some tension there. So relaxing, the sense of being localized in one place. So those are some of the things that helpful. Can you relate to that?

I yes. So the relaxing thing is dangerous because you might fall asleep. And so this is where they're Meditation involves a balance, finding the right balance between energy and calm. And so sitting up straight being an energetic also is important. So calming the body doesn't mean you come away the energy come away the alertness that's there. I think of it mostly as relaxing the tension that's helping the body relaxing do that. But you don't want to relax attention and lose your vitality. So, I think everyone, anybody who meditates for some amount of time, is going to run into getting so calm, they start drifting off in the mind kind of soften dreamlike states or actually fall asleep or variety things you get complacent kind of easygoing, less lackadaisical with a thought. So it's very important to watch if you don't have a sinking mind, and then arouse some energy. So either physical energy can sit up straighter, or some people do faster walking meditation, get the energy flowing, and they come back to sit with that energy. It also as possible to arouse mental energy mental effort, and it's a little bit harder for some people to figure Are you but there's an art to doing that to one way if you're doing mindfulness, and you're doing mental noting, you can know a little bit faster, know a little bit more often. So that way, mindful more energized doing that. And, or using mental noting, too. Note with a little bit louder voice mental, the painter voice a little louder, just to kind of get the energy going. But also as possible to arouse kind of mental energy, mental alertness, to kind of have clarity or lightness in mind says lighten the mind. So it's a bit harder to kind of, you know, but you know what happens, you know, if you're falling asleep at the wheel driving your car, and then this big semi kind of pulls right in front of you kind of almost cut you off. You're going to be your mind's going to be energized.

as well.

And I can't believe I was sleeping I feel so you know, mental error said in a different way. The mental energy that's there has something to do with our relationship to experience, and if we're resistant or if we're versiv. Or if we're having judgment that this is boring, or if your judgment, this has no value for me, then sometimes the mind kind of begins to sink in, if you think that, Oh, this is good for me, and I'm going to be the next Buddha, or this is really frightening for me, this is really going to be the next era,

you know, is in the mind suddenly energized. You know, praise and blame is a great Energizer of the mind. And, but if it doesn't praise or blame us, and people just fall asleep, because, you know, it doesn't relate to me then. So there's all kinds of ways in which mental energy has something to do with a relationship to what's going on. And so it's, it's a variable that can be adjusted. So it's not so easy to figure out how to adjust the mental energy thing, but it can be done. So this is very important to balance. So right now the emphasis here is on relaxing, but I take it to be to be following the instruction When when sits cross legged with body erect, direct means to me, you know, kind of alert kind of energized. And so and there's a balance and the paradox, a paradox, irony or something is that you can actually get much, much more deeply relaxed. If you have good energy. If you take the first route to relaxation, you can find, you know, just the normal way of relaxing, just kind of relaxing everything, and you give up your energy, you can only go so far as like you read, you might go so far as you falling asleep. But sleep is not the most relaxed state you can get into. And many times I've got up in the morning to meditate and found myself feeling more relaxed during meditation than I did, waking up from sleep. meditation can actually get you into deeper states of relaxation, while you still have alert energy. And so I'm sorry to say here so you can go much further, much deeper, deeper and relaxation. If you have energy, if you alert then you can if you Like, oh, completely energy? Yes, Mary. Here we have two mics.

So in in getting more relaxed, which was very helpful in the process of feeling my body, the three dimensionality of it, the waves and all that. It seemed to, you know, I live pretty tight, and it's hard sometimes to feel emotions. So then emotions start to arise. And I was kind of like, oh, should I follow these or ignore them? Or, you know, what should I do here?

What should you do? What's your choice, you know? So, you know, the classic, you know that there's all kinds of different instructions or ways of relating to our experience so that you can choose from and when normally in the mindfulness instruction, we give instructions or pay attention Do what is predominant. So the emotion thing of freedom, we just turn to that and feel that. And then sometimes they really need attention, you know, you have to have to attend to them. This 16 stages, I think, presupposes that people are not going to have huge emotional reactions like this to deal with, it's, you know, it's like step by step, you just, you know, you do this, you get this image into your room, you know, pretty soon you're enlightened, it's very nice. But in the messiness of life, there's all this other stuff that goes on. So one thing you can turn towards it and do mindfulness of emotions. The other thing is that the relaxing of the body, softening body might still be relevant, because some of the emotions we have come with tension. So sometimes I've taught kids about mindfulness of emotions, by having them act out emotions, to tell those kids you know, that eight year old you know, be really angry mine anger for me, they all come Norling at me. And then I still can freeze and they're all frozen in different postures. It's gonna notice your body posture you in you know, it's Going on your body? And what do you have to do to, to let go of your anger, when they also relax your body, you know, it's like, oh, well, that tension. So be afraid, they're all afraid to come relax your body. And the fear goes away. It's a little bit idealistic, but the idea being to show them that there's a connection between our emotions in our body, and that we have some choice perhaps, to with to effect positive effect on some emotions by relaxing the body. So these keep washing the body Washington attention. And the advantage of that is then you don't get engaged in the emotion because some people really love to get in there and or they don't love it, but they just do. And they're negotiating and arguing and fixing and doing this and that, but the emotion just kind of stuck in the maze. And sometimes just kind of getting out of its way and just relaxing the body with a dog. It's there can be helpful.

The emotion was it was a softer emotion, but the other thing that happened was, I didn't follow it. But in continuing the process, I had this Sort of moment of feeling like I guess it was like contentment, you

know, just like well everything is fine. Everything is gonna be okay. You know, it was like Oh, is this PT now but I moved along. It didn't last. Good.

Great great to see Yeah. So I mean I think the hope is that as you do this process that you do feel start feeling some really nice feeling some good feelings peace, calm contentment and as we'll see this afternoon joy but you know happy joyful yet because in your your head of the program and anybody else

and what I like about them breathing and giving yourself instructions is some it helps me a little bit to prioritize and Not just in the meditation but throughout the day. So what I'm doing because the breathing is always there. So you just follow it. And I have the feeling that while my problems all my challenges are still there, but I can move through it more gracefully, I don't have another word but if you slave I can keep a certain posture, even though shift once in a while but

it feels

mo reassuring. Great.

Yeah gives you a kind of a vantage point or leverage in your life, it's very effective. That doesn't require you to kind of understand the sophisticated natures of the mind. You know, the details of why you feel the way you feel. You can just kind of relax the body is that lubricator and I check in with my body, my breath all the time, you know in your daily life. See noticing them. I'm talking here I'm checking in and kind of kind of habit to notice. And I noticed that they start tightening up or tensing in different ways different for different reasons. And sometimes it tends to seems appropriate. And sometimes they'll soften. You know, soften. And sometimes a softening and relaxing of the body can cut through make a lot easier. The working through certain emotions than if I did my psychoanalysis with it. So yes, it's good. It's a great aid through the day I called the grace lubricator keeps your date, your date, your date of duplicated. Soft. Thank you.

Okay, so let's do have lunch. And for lunch, you're welcome to talk to each other if you'd like. But I think what I'd like to ask is that I think might be nice is to keep this room here, the meditation hall, a place was not talking to me if you're in here, you'll hear us talking out there. So you have to that's part of it. But you know, if you want to come in no one, no one's going to talk to you. You come in here and now But don't eat in here. And then. And then people who know how can set up picnic tables in the, in the outer Hall, sit around there and have lunch and talk if you'd like, you're welcome to take these chairs outside, I suppose. But when you bring them back in, make sure that the bottom doesn't pick up any dirt or mud or something. So if you don't get the floor dirty, maybe get a paper towel or something and clean it before you put it in the rug here. And, and if you've watched most of them, you have name tags on the board, or their name tags typically put out there in the drawer. It might be nice if you put people can see your name. Some of you are doing the program for the year. So it's nice to people get familiar with your name and know who you are. So maybe during lunch, you can do that. And then we'll start again at 10 after one and we're going to go right into discussion of joy. So I don't think you want to be late.

Otherwise you'll be clumpy