

# 2009-04-03 The Five Hindrances Restlessness

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Fri, 8/14 2:51PM • 35:47

### SUMMARY KEYWORDS

restless, restlessness, mind, hindrances, soften, sadness, impatience, energy, connected, feel, relax, thinking, talk, breathing, life, lucrative career, shorter, traces, settle, notice

### SPEAKERS

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Taking a little bit of care with your posture, sitting up straight and taking a posture that has some expression of alertness in it.

Perhaps some care that your spine is a little bit more upright or alert than usual.

Stretch some sense of energy or strength in your spine

and around that

upright spine relax all the other muscles makes sense to relax. Perhaps taking a few long slow, deep breaths and as you exhale, softening, relaxing.

Perhaps you can soften the belly

are the shoulders

muscles of your face

as you exhale that there'll be a softening movement, a softening wave through your your arms and your legs.

In letting your breath, be normal, hanging out a little bit with the experience of breathing, noticing what it's like for you now to be breathing

except for when there's might be a biochemical cause all restlessness has its origins in the mind and it's closely connected to our thinking whether it's conscious or subconscious

and as you sit now become aware of your thinking, the state quality of your thinking mind Is it active? Or is it calm?

Some people think more in images Some people think more in words.

Put as you think you have any sense of a location in your body where the thinking occurs.

If there is a, you think in images, is there a screen or a stage someplace that you're gazing upon?

Or if you think in words, is there a place where that inner voice speaks or talks?

If you can notice where your thinking muscle is your thinking activity occurs

what is that part of you feel like? Does it feel restless or calm? Does it feel like there's pressure connected to it or he's is there tension or softness

is the energy behind thinking? Does it jump around a lot? Does it feel habitual or insistent? Or is it slow and easy? easygoing,

floating by

And then as you breathe, perhaps either on the in breath, perhaps the outbreath. See if you can soften, relax the thinking muscle. Whatever pressure tension, active energy that might be connected to thinking

it's often

relax letting the thinking mind spread out, flattened out and spread out. Like a wide spread out. Alpine Lake

If you can settle the restless energy of the mind

Staying coming back to your breathing, seeing if you can stay soft and still the rhythmic experience of breathing

or if the thinking mind is active enough for restless enough and see if the winds of breathing can breathe through the restless mind and help it settle. help relax. Help it feel safe

Help it feel content

You notice you're caught up in your thinking.

See if you can relax the thinking muscle.

Perhaps opened up the room the space of awareness that allows this wound up spring of thinking. unwind

quiet down.

So I think it's probably an overused cliché to say that we live in a restless times. And for times when the attention span gets shorter and shorter, but I think that there's something to it. Many people will talk about this about how the fast pace of our life the media, the computers, is begging people more and more restless or more more attention span shorter people jumping around a lot between different things. I saw recently they changed the format in the Chronicle. And there's all these much shorter

articles now. That you know, it's like, like curl blogs or a blog. That's more than a paragraph is too long. And, and what strikes me about it is that having a restless mind is starting to come is being considered normal. And, you know, somehow if there's something wrong with the situation, if we're not getting new stimulus, new ideas, new activity, kind of doing new stuff. And that meditation goes very much against the grain against that tendency in our society, to always keep ourselves busy, always keep the mind active and engaged and doing things and taking in new things. So the important thing I want to underscore here is the idea that a restless mind shouldn't be seen as being normal. You know, or the natural state to be in too many degrees. The restlessness is conditioned and created. added by habit and by the input that comes in. And it's possible to undo that habit, it's possible to change the conditions. And so that the state of the mind maybe can be very different. Some people like to say so returns to more natural state, there's such a thing of natural state of being at ease, being peaceful and having the ability to be settled. Calm with what is so nerve that so I think this topic for today is relevant for everyone. And I think in order to address it realistically, it is not just a matter of working with restlessness and anxiety and stuff in meditation itself, but it also requires some consideration about how we live our lives, and what kind of stimulus input we get from the world. around us. And we get the kind of input we deliver the kind of life that sets up a lot of momentum in the mind. So the mind is, has this momentum of doing and going and looking and searching and having and thinking and solving and all that? Or do we set up a condition so that the mind doesn't pick up all that momentum? What would life look like? If we're not picking up momentum, so that we can go through life without much momentum, so just show up and we do something. And then when it's done, it's done. doesn't stick in the mind. It doesn't. It hasn't affected the mind. It's in this spirit that in Buddhism, sometimes they talk about doing things, so you leave no traces. And they don't necessarily mean physical traces, but no traces in your mind. So when you do something, it's it's complete or finished when you've done it. Mine doesn't have to carry with you for longer. So I thought before we take them to lunch break, we could take about 10 minutes here to hear from you. Either something about what you might be considering or have learned about restlessness in the course of the morning. Or some questions you might have about what's happened so far today.

parade of the things that I've been restless about in my mind this morning and made them really specific with the worries where I really noticed specifically what it was I was worrying about. What came up was sadness. Because there are things that I can't change and the realities of life in my life. And I realized that my restless busyness and my restless mind was pushing away that sadness.

That's profound. Thank you. So sometimes resonances as a way of avoiding what needs to be addressed or what needs to be felt.

And I thought I was addressing it by trying to fix it all in my mind was trying to come up with fixes but there are things that aren't, you know, my father's dying, he's just, that's what's happening, things like that.

So it's painful

to feel the sadness as a painful situation, but it might have more integrity to it, to be present for that fullness of the sadness than it is to be spinning out in the mind. Thank you.

restlessness was when I came Man this morning I realized when we started that restlessness was yes. And that caught up there. Okay. I just found out when I came this morning, that's exactly

why I was was just restless the last. Well, it's been

for a few weeks, but just coming up and it has been very busy and everything. But what I really fastened on was is related to what

I what you said.

What came to me was sadness. And what I came into was, well, we're in our 80s and but we're very healthy and doing fine, but not about a half dozen old friends aren't and it's interesting say sadness. Because that's what I came to was, I just really need to get into that.

Because there's really nothing you can do. You

someone else when you learned about restless this this morning what I recognized is that the hindrances are all very tightly woven together. And that there's the restless energy sort of, is the amperage that's sort of flows, connects them in a funny way, like, I'm going to do something that I haven't done in a long time and sing in public. And I noticed I had a lot of fear around. I have some fear arising around it, but I also notice the restlessness is just amped up so much bouncing around with the worry and you know, all the components so Fear, you know, our version of restlessness. It's almost like the energy. So there's a way to kind of like what you've been suggesting. And to sort of calm the mind or rest the mind or relax the mind, wherever that is, for us. It has a tendency to soften the other hindrances in a way sort of, it sort of takes a little bit of the juice turns the power off, in a way for a moment or two. Great, thank you. Yeah, the hindrances are all closely connected. And often restlessness comes together with at least one other hindrance.

Right, right behind you there. I was kind of feeling a little lost about the restlessness I, I didn't identify anything in particular, was just some random thoughts as but what occurred to me actually just

When I stopped is that they're just

the way to try and maintain bearings and

orient myself to the world around me or

it's that last bit of not letting go.

So your thinking is a way of orienting yourself. And for some people that can be connected to the issue of safety. We, some people are motivated to orient themselves or understand the world through their thoughts in order to establish some sense of safety or security or well being or something.

I always think that energy

too much energy is what makes restlessness but I'm I noticed this morning that bringing energy to calming, bringing strength and energy to the calming process was very helpful. Thank you. How do you do that? How do you bring strength and energy to the calming process? I don't know. It's just in the process of doing things that are coming through them energetically rather than trying to just do them quietly

or mildly.

I don't know how to articulate it more than that. Is that of any help? Thank you.

Having said that, the thing that I have

difficulty with is not doing it that giving up the doing process. So there is a way and I've experienced

as well kind of an experiential

feeling of bringing strengths to the common

process, but it's different than doing

and I don't know how to articulate that but for me, that stopping of doing is very, very good. JOHN Jane but when they, when it happens, it's usually fairly profound. Great, thank you.

I found the

restaurant restaurant. This is connected to the impatience a much into impatience. So, I observe in my daily life, some time, it just come in, it's all of certain impatience. And it's, it's, it's things I had to do all together, you know, connected and the next another one another. In other times, it's not there. It's not

really

rest rest is there it's come for some moment, it's just found just a very impatient is for certain things and hit too fast. Oh, one after another. So that was the

Good, I found Thank you one of one interesting exercise to do within patience is to explore ask yourself, what is it the impatience believes? What beliefs are behind the impatience?

other parents use suggest that they just come sit down, be quiet and

not get off everything.

Just be not doing anything for a while.

Yeah, very, that's helps. Great. Great. Thank you. So one more year. I realized a couple of years back when I could finally give it a name. When I grow up, I want to be a bodhisatta.

And I'd actually gave up a fairly

lucrative career a year and a half ago sold my business because I didn't feel I was doing enough in the world. And, you know, I'd like To see the world but I don't know what to do is to song ghosts. I think at the end of this morning, what I can probably do best is sort of be an example of, of stubbornness for others, and to also be a model of someone who is trying to accept things the way they are, and perhaps encourage others to be able to show them perhaps by example, that they can do the same thing. Great, thank you. Appreciate that a lot. Okay. So let's take an hour for lunch. And now you're welcome to talk.