

# 2016-10-05 Practice Notes Preoccupation

Fri, 9/25 9:01PM • 6:31

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

breathing, present moment, preoccupation, perspective, rhythm, walking, caught, meditation, thinking, breathe, thoughts, context, life, swept, ballast, constant, live, creates, picture, lubricates

## SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

So it's very easy to be preoccupied. It's very easy to get swept away in the currents of our thinking and lose touch with a variety of things, we can lose touch with what's happening the present moment, and we're off somewhere else thinking about it. It's also possible to lose touch with perspective, where we get swept up in some concern. And the perspective we have on it is maybe one that is narrow, or maybe particular slant, which is not very useful. thinking this is the whole world is in this particular piece of drama that I'm thinking about. And so it's quite common for people have the experience of some kind of context that they're in. That both helps them to kind of feel like more likely to be in the present moment. And more likely to put their thinking in a context so that we're not living completely in our thoughts as if they're telling the truth. And we see there's a bigger perspective to have for our lives, and whatever we're thinking about. And so sometimes, some people find going in nature, those that are going down and looking at the ocean, or sitting in a park bench, that somehow the that setting helps us to feel more kind of encourages us to be a little bit more in the present moment, we're much more likely to notice what's going on. And also it can give a perspective on our lives, where we realize that our particular preoccupation is not the whole picture, The Big Show, there's other aspects of our life that we can appreciate them. And so it kind of the pool or the way were grabbed by a preoccupations, it will not be so strong. So in meditation, in sitting meditation, one of the things that can be used to get this perspective so we can break out of our preoccupation is our breathing, and to come and connect to your breathing, the natural rhythm, the breathing, that keeps us alive, that flows and keeps going. And our breathing is not a thought. It's not a concept that we're thinking about. It's a direct experience that we're having. And it's something it's always in the present moment. And there's something about the nature of breathing, that lubricates the mind lubricates our being there's a maybe the rhythm of it of coming and going like, like the tides, because like the waves coming up and down against the beach, or something, that it kind of keeps things kind of fluid and less likely caught. It also can give a perspective on our life, where we realize that we're alive, it's pretty precious to be alive and breathing. And that's distinct from whatever the preoccupation is of the moment that we have whatever we're thinking about. And one of the ways of using breathing to in this way is, is to simply let go of whatever you're thinking about, return to your breathing whenever you can. Another way of doing it is to stay with your breathing the best you can, and whatever is happening for you, whatever your preoccupation, breathe with it, breathe into it, breathe through it, breathe around it. So that the breathing is like the ballast of a boat, that the keel that keeps you from tipping over too far. Or it's the reminder that there's more going on here than whatever you're thinking about. It's an encouragement to the rhythm of breathing, as we breathe through something is an encouragement, don't get caught in that don't get lost in that preoccupation. There's more going on here. There's your breathing, there's a live life that in the present moment, which is much more so one of the one of the ways that breathing can be helped us in meditation is if there's some preoccupation and also like some physical pain or some strong emotion is to breathe with it, breathe through it, breathe around it to kind of like breathe and kind of be the

lubricant, the massage. The breathing is kind of like this constant that keeps us kind of in the present moment is kind of like a thread that's always with us, always a touchstone we can come back to and so your thoughts come and go and where you go in your thoughts is variable.

But that constant is always there. They offer stability and context perspective. In walking meditation, the same thing can be provided by the walking the rhythm of walking, legs as they walk. And they're also you can walk with Your emotional life, walk with your thoughts, walk with your preoccupation. And so kind of sense that the walking the whole body as it walks, holds it all or isn't is creates a bigger context, context or perspective on what's going on. Certainly, if you can let go of your preoccupation, and just be in the present moment with your walking, that's a nice thing to do. What I'm talking about here is particularly useful when you simply can't let go of something. And so, okay, so it's going to stay, but then you don't let that be the whole picture. You don't stay caught in that or you don't give yourself over to it. But you have something else you do that's in the present moment that has a rhythm to it. That creates that different perspective or ballast or lubricant that keeps you from getting caught in a preoccupation. The concern might continue, but you're that's not the whole picture. It's not the only place you're live. So as you stated as you were practice here today. And if you find this idea interesting, I'm saying you might try that. Try breathing with whatever is going on, try walking with and seeing if the breathing and the walking, kind of help support you're not to get caught and whatever your have been caught in, if it happens to be that you get caught. If you don't get caught anything this morning. Breathe anyway. Thank you