

Samadhi (53) Happy, Equanimous Body

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So, hello everyone, and welcome to this next talk on the *Samādhi* series. And it's the third talk on the third *jhāna*. And as we go deeper into absorptions, deeper into a unified, concentrated, absorbed state, the experience of our body begins to change. And one of the ways that I've come to understand this at first, maybe through my own practice, I started to feel that these immersive states, I would leave my karmic body behind. And that one of the bodies we can experience is our karmic body.

And that's the body that we feel and sense that is a product or a byproduct of our reactivity, the ways we've reacted to the world, the way that we have resisted, tightened, tensed by the world. Now, you might want to blame the world for the ways in which you are tense or afraid or contracted. And that's okay. But still, it's something which the mind, the inner life, is doing. The contraction, the tension, the holding on, the resisting.

And it's very deep, and it should have tremendous respect and care and carefulness around this karmic body we have, this body that's conditioned by the regularity or the frequency in which we think the same thought over and over again. If you repeatedly think that you are somehow inadequate, it becomes kind of a self-fulfilling prophecy because if it's repeated enough, it's just depressing. It just kind of drains us. And so that draining, the drain body, I would call the karmic body. If what you love to do is to watch horror movies and the excitement and thrill and liveness of being afraid.

If you do that enough, in fact, you tell yourself horror movies in your own mind, then you have a fearful body. The fear body is predominant. Some people live in their fear body, and that's what I call a karmic body. It's a body that's somehow been shaped by the reactivity of the mind. And as we go through, as we settle and get more and more focused, concentrated, unified, relaxed,

The ways in which the body is tightened up, tensed up, knotted up, held tight, become rigid, the fear body, the anger body, the desire body, the grief body, the things that have gotten so conditioned that we're kind of like living, almost like we become that body. But that begins to loosen up as we go deeper into meditation. We kind of, that falls to the side. That no longer is operating for us. And it's not a loss of who we are.

It's like taking off a coat that has become overly heavy, or overly hot as the weather warms up. We no longer need it. And sometimes it's leaving the karmic body behind. The body feels very different. And the third *jhāna*, one of the ways of understanding it, that it's a happy body, happiness body, that it's saturated, the body is filled with a kind of happiness, where the karmic body is no longer operating.

Sometimes I've called it the diamond body, the adamantine body, because it feels so clear and solid, but transparent all the way through, like a jewel. And sometimes going through the *jhānas*, the posture of the body changes. And sometimes it gets very aligned. And sometimes you can actually feel the body aligning itself with the concentration. It's almost like there's an energetic force in the body that kind of lifts the spine, opens the chest, and you feel very present.

And I call that the diamond body. And sometimes some people might call it kind of an energy body that happens because all that's left is this tingling, flowing, vibrating field of energy seemingly. And so as we leave this karmic body behind, we're leaving behind the ways in which we've been conditioned by the world, by our own behavior, our own thoughts, by the influence of others. And it can be very healing. It's one of the reasons why these *jhānas* are prescribed sometimes, because they have such a deep, there's such deep medicine for the heart, the mind.

It touches kind of the very deep subconscious places that are very hard to otherwise contact. And so the usual instructions, or at least that I'm familiar with, or at least value a lot, when if you're fortunate enough to begin to go through these *jhānas*, do it slowly. Don't be in a hurry to get somewhere. Because the idea is to allow yourself to be reconditioned, to allow yourself to feel the goodness of it, the healing of it. Allow you to kind of get a very different message into your heart, into your body, than the message of danger, or the message of being left out, or the message of not good enough.

So all these messages that we live with that are not so healthy for us, And to be able to have this other way of receiving a different healthy message is one of the values of these deep states. So in this happiness body of the third *jhāna*, karmic body, this conditionality, the conditioning we have, the reactivity we have, really settles dramatically. Then there's a lot less orientation potential for being reactive. And what becomes clear, what stands out and highlights that is equanimity. And the equanimity that is not for or against something, that's not wanting or not wanting something,

The equanimity allows each thing that arises to be there. Like the sky allows a cloud to be in the middle of the vast sky. Or like a vast sky allows a bird to fly through it. The sky is not disturbed. It's not for or against the bird.

It's just vast kind of space and non-reactivity, openness to whatever comes. The metaphor of Buddhism is often that of a path, Buddhist practice. And a path is a clearing in the forest that's open so we can walk through it. And so the path is, to a great degree, defined by the absence, the openness, the emptiness that's there, above maybe the physical trail that's there. But the path includes this open space.

And a path in the woods, the open space, is not disturbed by you walking through it. So the mind, so awareness, so this happiness body, allows everything just to be there in the quiet, equanimous mind.

And for me, very closely associated with this is the feeling of spaciousness, as if there's lots of space around each individual thing. For the Buddha, it seems to be rather in space, kind of similar, but it's the vast space that's underwater in a lake. And there the space has a kind of viscosity.

It has a certain kind of, you know, little bit of weight, little bit of physicality to it that you feel the contact of the water against the skin and maybe the refreshing, comfortable temperature and stillness of the water. And so it's not just simply empty space, but in the third *jhāna*, it kind of feels like it's this wonderful, soothed kind of texture or viscosity or soft butter of spaciousness in which we are breathing or being. And so one of those characteristics of that spaciousness, this vast water, is a feeling of contentment, happiness, kind of a deep, but it's physical. The body just feels like it's, maybe almost like the body is beginning to disappear, getting very soft, or has no boundaries. But the body is kind of saturated or filled with feelings of pleasure.

And some people, some translators prefer to translate *sukha* in the third *jhāna* not as happiness, but as pleasure. Because it's so embodied. And for me, at least, pleasure just doesn't seem to capture how good it is, how wonderful it is. So I prefer happiness. But for some people, happiness is too complicated a state.

And so maybe pleasures, or maybe contentment is the middle way for these words. Deep, deep contentment or satisfaction. So equanimity not equanimity from understanding something but an equanimity of being larger than everything the awareness is large and spacious and open that it has room for what's happening here and now giving breathing room to all things. So you might today, as you go through your day find times through the day to give breathing room, space to what's happening. And notice how it's a thinking mind maybe, the reactive mind, that narrows the space of awareness, narrows the, sometimes a claustrophobic mind, that's much more affected, troubled by what's happening.

And maybe by giving breathing room and opening up, expanding outwards, you get some of the benefit, peacefulness or happiness, or at least equanimity of a spacious, open, wide awareness. May your day be one of equanimity. And I'll continue, we'll continue this series tomorrow. Tomorrow I'll be at IMC. And I think I'll miss a little bit of being here on this wild and grasslands outside and so thank you very much. Thank you.