

Wednesday sit with instructions, week 3

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A few days ago I offered the little saying, don't make it worse. The partner to that saying is the saying, choose what's better. And sometimes that's clearly what we can do. At times when we're settled, it's clear that going into a story again is going to make it worse. But more inspiring, it's clear that there's a better choice. There's a subtleness that's here.

At some point, when there's enough clarity and stillness, we can feel the downside of thoughts and attitudes related to me, myself, and mine. They create a kind of wind drag. Or if we're rolling down the hill into the future in a nice, gentle way, thoughts about me, myself, and mine are like having the brakes on. Maybe they slow you down. Maybe they stop you entirely. It's possible to feel a subtle tension or pressure or tightening up associated with the selfing, the meeing.

It's extra. It's added on top. Some of them take the form of... Like filling in the blank. I am, blank. I am. It's just a story. It's just an idea that we sometimes latch on to, react to, take seriously.

And sometimes there's a feeling inside which maybe not connected to a story, but maybe the legacy of living and me, myself, and my story for a long time. The leftover, deep in the mind maybe, of a place that of tension, pressure, solidity, maybe a kind of immobility, stuckness. And it's remarkable that we can be mindful of these things. A mind with a story, a mind with pressure, a mind with self-concerns, where it gets clear that being mindful of this is the better alternative than collapsing into, getting tangled into, the thoughts and feelings that are putting on the brakes, thoughts and feelings which are bundling things up into a ball or a marble of tension, holding pressure to in a way start now in the meditation.

Begin with a global awareness of your body and posture, which by now probably has some more familiarity, a little bit more ease in the body to be sitting this way. Perhaps there's something comforting, a homecoming into this body, in this posture. Remarkably there can be we

can feel uncomfortable in ourselves sometimes, and it feels good to hold that discomfort in the global body of this meditative posture. And if you take some moments to feel kind of the global body, might there be some movement, some inclination for the body to become more settled? Are there some very subtle places of holding and tension that can be released? And where in your body do you feel the most physical comfort?

It doesn't have to be dramatic, but where in your body do you feel most comfortable, settled, pleasant pleasure? Almost as if you're giving your body a treat. Poor bodies generally has to live under the impact of the mind, often in unfortunate ways. But here, sitting here, to offer a gift to this body of yours, of leaving it to feel its own pleasure, its own goodness, allowing the body its own movements to releasing tension, when there is a lot of self, self-efforting, to be aware. The attention can be tight and forceful. Sometimes it can even feel heavy.

Maybe your body prefers your attention to be gentle, light, so that awareness gently accompanies the experience of the lived body, where the awareness can be there lightly and openly, without clouding itself with stories and ideas, including ideas of self. Maybe settling the awareness into a small little area where the breathing is most comfortable, most pleasant, where awareness and the body meet, the meeting and sensations, settling, studying yourself on the breathing. The breathing in this small area, the fewer the thought, the more space there is to also feel the influence of breathing through the body, beyond the edges of the particular sensations of breathing. Maybe there's a radiating, glowing sense of beauty or sweetness, pleasure, that arises from the delicacy of awareness in touch with breathing. And if you find yourself being pulled into the world of thoughts and stories, see if you can find the hook, the little factory pressure, of selfing, the place where there's a wind drag or a speed bump or a tightness, let it relax. And then choose what is better than being caught in thoughts.

And there's a way in which we settle and abide here in the sensations of breathing, while at the same time the mind opens up and becomes wide, spacious. The quieter the thoughts, the slower the thoughts, the thinner the thoughts, the more space gently choose what's better to be here in a better, healthier way than other options presenting themselves. Maybe becoming wiser about how little selfing is needed to sit here peacefully, quietly, to be alive in the lived experience of now. Okay. Choose the better option. Perhaps where there's a sense that this is the way, here this experience, this way of experiencing.

Here is a gentle way forward down that gentle slope into the future. Now, as you all know, the abode of this practice is the present moment. See if it's your during this day, you can stay close to that abode of the present. So you can identify and see that there's always a choice between the wholesome and the unwholesome, between getting lost and caught up

in thoughts and staying present in an embodied awareness, present in an open mind, present and attentive here, maybe in a quieter way. Be careful that you spend the day going through the day, quiet enough, still enough, attentive enough to keep choosing the better option. Maybe experimenting with avoiding the thought factory, trusting... There's a deeper knowing, a kind of deeper thoughts that arise from deep within that will guide you just enough to make your way to what's next, to take care of the next moment, this moment. Stay close. Thank you.