

## Practice Notes: Finding Home

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A few words about the practice. I had a conversation already this morning with someone who told me about an episode in Homer's Odyssey where I guess Ulysses is trying to return home from the Trojan Wars. He's on a boat, and at some point the circumstances are that he ends up on an island where there's a nymph, and lots of sensual delight, wonderful foods, and where the nymph could satisfy all kinds of sensual needs and desires of a person. And so he was there, living that life of great food and maybe sex and other things, and for seven years, having forgotten that he was on his way home. And then one day, he was, because it was an island, he was standing on the edge of the islands on the sand, looking out across the sea. And maybe I imagined it was a very peaceful vision, a vast vision, very spacious, open, boundless kind of out into space, out across the sea.

And there was something about that view that reminded him of going home. And so then he'd left the island and continued his Odyssey home. And the person who told me this story is that Homer didn't have the kind of language that we have to... But the person who told me this felt more like what... that Ulysses saw in looking across the ocean that way, was not his physical home, but his internal home, how you can be home deeply in yourself. There's something about, for some people, seeing something very spacious, maybe the night sky, the vastness of it, sometimes a place in nature, that resonates or touches something very deep, that, oh, this is home. Sometimes people think it's the place. But sometimes people feel, oh, it's some deep inner place.

So I recognize, oh, this is my place. And then we have a society. Apparently this nymph's name, according to my friend, was the one who covers things, somehow in Greek. And we have something in Buddhism called the hindrances, which literally the word for it, that's which covers over our wisdom, our sense of home, our freedom. And there's all kinds of

ways in which our mind spins with thoughts and fantasies and scenarios about the past and the future, resentments. That our mind spins a lot that keeps us.

But what cuts through all those thoughts? to show us another way. And sometimes it's a beautiful natural setting that quiets the mind or helps us see beyond the contours and the boundaries of our thinking mind. And meditation can be that as well. There is a kind of inner eye, inner seeing in meditation, even with your eyes closed, that can be comparable to looking out across... the ocean on a clear, open, daze, blue sky, vast sky, like right nearby here down the, you know, we have on the Pacific, and, or maybe being high in the sierras, or that there's something comparable can happen in meditation where we see past or see through or see under the thinking mind, and we feel, we intuit, we kind of see vast space, vast silence, vast stillness, vast tenderness, a vast love, something that that kind of points us or connects us to some deep place inside, some way of being that maybe we all have available, though it's usually covered over.

So maybe as you sit here today, Maybe you can see if there is there something, have you had some experience in your life that was kind of like Ulysses, that you saw something different now, and this touched you in a deep way. And is there some way here, as you do a walk in your meditation, as you sit, that you can kind of reorient yourself so that you're not mesmerized by the island of thinking that we are caught in. but rather something more tender and deeper that you say, ah, this is home. So may you find your inner home here today. Thank you.