

## Monday evening sitting meditation with reflections

**Gil Fronsdal**

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So I'll say a few words, reflections for the beginning, and then a few words at the end. And if I look back at my practice over the years, going on retreat, the first day, and I could, I'm pretty confident to say that often on the first day, I lost my perspective. Often I didn't see a bigger picture, the context, of what this practice was about, is about. That somehow I got mired and caught in my challenges, my pains, my unruly mind, my achy knees, the drama of the moment. And it seemed like that was the most important thing in the world, and mostly the important message in the early years of practice, was that the really important message that I was getting loud and clear with all that, was that I had failed. I lost all perspective.

One of the changes over these years is that I'm no longer lost in my own drama as much. No longer lost in the details of the moment and being for and against something, and no longer caught up in some ideas that's supposed to be different. I know there's much more important things now than that. I know that what's important is our good hearts. We have within us, around us, a kind of the preciousness of this human life, of our human hearts. We're all good people.

Deep inside, deep inside there's something profound that would like to come out and show us a level of love and peace, freedom. And the attempt for this to come forth comes at the price of it running into all the kind of ordinary dramas that we caught in. It takes a while to see that there's a deeper movement here. There's a deeper heart's desire that's operating here. And it takes a while, took a while for me to appreciate how important this practice is for this world that we live in. The world is suffering.

And some people, someone has to learn another way. Someone has to find a way that's not continuing greed, hatred and delusion. Someone needs to learn a way of love and peace, learning how to be with what is without being at war with it, without being caught in our

self-reoccupations. And this is what this practice is about. This practice is one of the most profound ways that you can prepare yourself to live in this world, to benefit it. You've all done really well today.

It's phenomenal that you're here. Your good heart brought you here. And who knows, maybe the needs of the world brought you here. And as we continue with this sitting, quietly, maybe, just maybe, you can hold yourself with care, appreciation, valuing how wonderful it is that you've decided to come here to do this, even in spite of all the difficulties of the first day. It's a profound thing that we're here together doing this. Thank you.

So, perhaps like me, you're tired at the end of a day like today. I hope you go to bed with care and appreciation for what you've been doing and maybe inspired. Maybe you can go to bed with the thoughts. This was a day well spent, even if it was hard, even if you don't have the evidence of it. It is a day well spent. It's well worth what you've been doing here and what you're finding your way with. And we'll continue in the morning and delighted to share it with you. Sleep well.