

Guided Meditation: Effortless

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Warm greetings and welcome to this meditation session. Warm greetings. So one of the orientations of meditation practice is to learn how little we need to do. How little we have to think, plan, remember, intend, want. How little we have to fantasize and make things up in the mind. How little we have to orient ourselves around me, myself, and mind.

And be oriented around the activity of conceit. The activity, the action of identifying, the identification. Defining ourselves and evaluating ourselves, judging ourselves, to discover how little we need actually to do to be alive, breathing happily, breathing contentedly. And we discover that there is a natural way that non-doing leads to peace and happiness, and that when we have the opposite of peace and happiness, it is because the mind is doing something. It's engaged in some kind of activity, judging, evaluating, comparing, remembering, expecting, or building itself, orienting itself around the action, the activity of selfing me, myself and mind. And it's hard to believe that doing less and less is so wonderful.

And one of the doings, one of the activities of the mind, is to question it, to debate it, to protest, that we can't do that, not okay to do that. We shouldn't do that without realizing that's one more extra activity of the mind, even that the idea I can't do it is an activity of the mind that we don't have to do. We learn through meditation... how to be alive, fully here, present, without any unnecessary mental activity, mental thoughts. And part of the moving in this direction is two things, complementary guidelines, guideposts, support. One is that we feel, we sense in a deep way that there's something better than the mental activities. Maybe we experience a calm or a peace.

We clearly see we lose that when we get involved in the obsessions, the thoughts, the reactions of the mind. And so to learn to leave that alone, to feel and sense, oh, this is extra, this is stressful. If I go to think the same way for two weeks, I'll be exhausted. The other is to start

having a sense, a perception, orientation towards the way that we can be aware that requires no effort on our part. We don't have to choose. We don't have to engage.

There is a way of being aware that requires nothing of us except to allow it to be that way. Except to put down the doings of the mind quiet. So in this meditation, I would like to guide you a bit to become more sensitive to the awareness in which things occur, things are known, things are felt, with no intentional effort, no effort, no doing on your part. And see if you can start getting a feel and sense of for this amazing, amazing option opportunity to be fully alive and conscious and know a profound peace independent of the doings of the mind, the signifying of the mind, the desires of the mind, the selfing of the mind. So to assume a meditation posture and to gently close your eyes, and at first, just feel, sense, recognize.

The activities, your mind, your heart, your body, is activated by agitation, concerns, preoccupations, the physical tension in the body, which has its origin in the doings of the mind. To recognize the mood or emotions that seem to persist, that seem a little bit solid or held or oppressive. They too originate in the minds with the mind's activity, the doings, and to be aware the quality of your mind, your mental state. And if that is tense or agitated or a challenge, that too... as a result of the activities of the mind. Gently, slowly, consciously take a few fuller breaths in your torso. And on the exhale, relax your body.

Relax different parts of your body. Soften your whole body. And two, as you exhale, soften your emotional body. Relax all together. The mood or emotions that's coursing through your body, allowing however you're feeling, to melt into the surrounding space with every exhale. And on the exhales, soften and relax the thinking mind.

It might help to relax the forehead, the area around your temples, a whole face, if its face is subtly engaged together with thinking. And then to just allow yourself to be for a few moments, nothing to do, nothing to be, relaxing even doing this practice. And in the space of doing nothing, allow the breathing, sensations of breathing, to arise, to show themselves, experimenting with allowing the breath to appear. Instead of doing mindfulness, allowing mindfulness of breathing. And as you're sitting here, now to notice what comes into awareness effortlessly. There's no effort on your part.

There's not a choice you make or engagement or you don't start the awareness of something that arises without effort. It might be some simple ordinary sensation in the body, one that is maybe often there, but is so soft, so quiet, it's seldom known, but it arises in awareness quietly, effortlessly, maybe on the periphery. Maybe there's a thought that arises effortlessly. You're not straining with it or trying to do anything with it. Recognize that effortless quality. It might be a sound that occurs unexpectedly.

There's the hearing of the sound. In the first moment of that hearing, no effort on your part is required. It just arises. It's just there. After which, maybe almost immediately, there's a reaction. But for this exercise, stay close to keep recognizing what arises effortlessly.

Let there be a choiceless awareness that simply exists effortlessly so you can be in harmony with what arises effortlessly. You might be making effort to be present, to be with your breathing. That's okay, but on the edges around where you make effort, beyond your efforting, notice the awareness, what arises in awareness, that does so without any planning, involvement, engagement on your part. And notice where there can be a harmony and alignment between an effortless awareness, and what comes into awareness effortlessly. Fixating the mind, being preoccupied, is a doing, is a tension, is pressure. Whatever you're doing, whatever pressure and activity, let that rest, let that relax, back into where there's no effort.

Everything is returning to rest, to peace, if you allow it. Being attuned to that part of awareness that operates without intention, without purpose, without any activity, reactivity on your part. And as if that effortless, choiceless awareness is a vast open space like a vast quiet lake. Drop yourself down into the depths of the space, the depths of yourself, to touch a place of love, kindness, care. Touch the home for kindness, friendliness, feeling and sensing your capacity to have warm social emotions. Thank you.

Towards yourself, towards others, in a way that is aligned with the effortless awareness. Maybe it's quite subtle. Maybe it takes the form of wishing you could do this. Even that is significant. And from your place of care, the heart's affection for others, awaken, express a wish for the welfare of others. May all beings be happy.

May all beings be safe. May all beings be peaceful. May all beings be free. And may the effortless freedom of your heart support an effortless generosity of care for all people. Thank you.