

Guided Meditation: Don't Make it Worse

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Hello everyone and welcome to this meditation broadcast from Insight Meditation Center. I'm delighted to be with you and the names that I recognize on the chat, it's also very wonderful to see. Thank you for being here. Yesterday in the guided meditation, the focus was on ease and recognizing what takes you away from the ease. So the simple instruction for meditation was, or it could be, set yourself at ease and notice how you lose the ease or what takes you away from the ease. And in doing that, we start seeing the activities of the mind where we get agitated, or shut down, or confused, or get caught in thoughts, or desires, or aversions.

And then the question is, if you see that, what do you do? And what we do is we're mindful of it. We see it clearly, that what we're doing is kind of a truth-telling. Oh, look at that. Look what I'm doing. I was at ease and now I'm less at ease.

Just that information begins shifting. Maybe our priorities, shifting what we want to devote ourselves to. And so today I want to orient a little differently in that at any given moment, setting yourself at ease, calm, whatever you're capable of, even if it's ever so slight. Let yourself be at ease and don't make it worse. Don't make the situation worse. Don't choose to follow the option which brings you more unease, brings you stress, brings you distress, kind of makes you more agitated or less at ease.

Don't make it worse. And it might be the situation is pretty bad, pretty difficult for you in some kind of way. And life can be that way for sure. And this simple teaching, don't make it worse. And what worse means, in the subtlest forms of that, is that the mind gets fixated on something, gets stuck on something, gets focused on something, where the mind loses its ability to have a relaxed, open attentiveness to the present moment, where the awareness does not flow along with the present moment, but it gets caught in something, involved in

something, reactive to something. It might be caught up in judgments. It might be caught up in opinions, preferences.

So don't make it worse in whatever way you are. And let's see if that could be an orientation for this morning. And see what you learn in that process. You don't have to do it well. Because if you don't do it well and then feel discouraged or upset about that, you're making it worse. Just allow things to be.

Don't make them worse. And if anything else, let yourself be at ease. So assuming a meditation posture, and gently closing the eyes, and become aware of your body, the whole body, as globally as is easy for you. And are you more aware of the front of your body or the back of the body or equally throughout? Are you more leaning to the right or to the left? Or is it balanced?

And within this global body, taking a few deeper breaths and relaxing the whole body as you exhale. Breathing in, relaxing. Letting your breathing return to normal. With a normal breath, relax your thinking mind, soften the mind. Maybe the thinking mind can broaden and spread wide as you exhale. In whatever way is easiest for you or however slight, set your heart at ease.

And then stay attentive during this meditation to the breathing. Breathing in and breathing out. And stay also attentive to what your mind is doing. And is there any way in which you're meditating or doing anything else with the mind that diminishes the quality of your well-being, how you are? Do you somehow make it worse to the more calm and quiet and centered you are, the more subtle is the recognition of what makes a situation worse? The option which is less desirable because the mind has gotten activated or agitated.

Maybe in ordinary life, it would be a normal state to be in. But in meditation, there are ordinary states of being which are not the best option. Don't try to make those options, but avoid the options that make it worse. Stay close to your sense of ease. Even if you feel uneasy, be attentive that you don't make it worse. Stay with the situation, breathe.

Hey. Hey. Thank you. Sometimes the mind drifts off in thought and our state becomes worse, becomes more distressed or stressed or agitated. Sometimes it's almost second nature to judge and find out what's wrong. And the situation becomes worse.

Allow yourself to be as simple and as at ease as you can, with ease and simplicity. Stay here with your breathing, appreciating how simplicity and ease and attention can be a protection from the automatic ways that we might make it worse for ourselves. Bye. And then as we come to the end of the sitting, to take a moment to recognize if there's something about

the calm or the subtleness, the ease or peace, clarity, or anything about the meditation that provides you with a reference point to recognize when you are making it worse for yourself. Maybe by reacting, judging, coming to fixed conclusions, resisting, pushing away. Do you have a heightened sensitivity for that?

Based on how you are now at the end of the meditation. And then may it be that as you go into your life today, whatever way is next for you, that the benefits of this insight, the benefit of this meditation, can be applied to not making any situation worse for ourselves, for others, by what we say, by what we do, even by what we think. And to refrain from what makes it worse. And may we hope that in doing so, the benefits of this meditation are something that we can share with others. May we care for others. May their well-being be of our interest and our orientation.

May we live for the welfare and happiness of others. May all beings be happy. May all beings be safe. May all beings be peaceful. May all beings be free. Thank you.