

## Mindfulness from Love and Peace

**Gil Fronsdal**

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And then to offer some words about practice today, there's a famous American poet named Walt Whitman who has a famous poem, famous line that goes something like we are made up of multitudes. We are multitudes. That's who we are, is made up of a lot of different people, a lot of different qualities, characteristics, a lot of different identities, a lot of different roles, a lot of different ways in which we identify ourselves or find ourselves or focus on, prioritize our attention. And some of the choices we make about where we put our attention, where we live from, is very limiting. And sometimes we define ourselves or identify, even unconsciously, with our fear. And so we think we're a frightened person.

We identify with our resentments and hurts, and we feel like we're a victim. That's who we are. We identify with what's uncomfortable, or we identify with our beliefs. We identify with... There's a kind of a negativity bias that some people have. It's where we identify ourselves or focus on what is going wrong and what's not right. And so we often limit ourselves quite a bit in this multitude of who we are.

And we have some choice about what we connect to within ourselves. And to exercise that choice in a wise way is what we do in mindfulness. And one of the things to choose is to remember that probably as part of the multitude of who you are, maybe there is some modicum of peace inside. Maybe there is some place that's calm and settled. Maybe there is love or goodwill or kindness inside. And so sometimes it's useful not to push anything away or deny anything, but to find that part of the crowd, of who you are, all the different pieces, and settle there, stay close to that, and maybe see the rest of it from that place.

So if you can find the source of love inside of you, of kindness, of care, of compassion, and goodwill, and you don't have to identify with it necessarily, but... If you could, and it might be better than the other places you identify with as yourself, you might want to prioritize

that rather than the unconscious prioritization of the problems of life and your problems and what's wrong and how things are not, you know, or the fear or the resentment or the whatever it might be. To find what is good, what is healthy, what feels part of the whole, and then rest there in meditation. Maybe use the breath as you exhale to settle there and feel it or breathe with that place. And once you have some stronger connection to it, and that's where you're finding yourself in the present moment, from there you can meet and hold what is difficult, if that's important.

From there, you can look at your fear, you can look at your anger, your hurt. And from a very different vantage point, where the very way in which you see, the very way in which you're aware, contributes to the healing, contributes to the wholesomeness, contributes to somehow finding a healthy way of being here in this world that's good for you and maybe good for the world. And so the two parts of the multitude that I'd like to emphasize, that today, maybe it's, just make it easy, either love or peace. Is there anything that resembles or any, even if it's a small part of you, even if some parts are screaming for attention, can you provisionally say, it's okay, let me just find this other source, this other way, love? Love. Or peace, and establish yourself there.

Walk that way, walk in love, walk in peace, sit, breathe in peace, breathe in love. And then if there's something screaming or something important that needs to be held, need to be seen, see it through that lens, hold it that way, and see what happens. Thank you.