

Guided Meditation: Rapport with Oneself

Gil Fronsdal

February 04, 2026

Keywords: mindfulness, rapport, Insight Meditation Center, meditation posture, empathy, present-moment attunement

Hello and warm greetings from Insight Meditation Center here in California in Redwood City.

Continuing with the overall theme of love and now this week the elements of love, today's topic is rapport. And generally rapport is understood as being something about the way deep relationship resonance we have with other people. But in order to be able to have that with others, we need in a sense to have that with ourselves. And mindfulness is a way of developing a deep inner rapport. And I love this way of talking about it because rapport implies a kind of willingness to listen, willingness to feel and sense and be present, willingness to suspend self-preoccupation or selfish desires that interfere with being able to be in harmony or in resonance with someone else, to really know them well and to feel them well, to have empathy for them in a deep way.

And so to be able to do that for oneself connects us to the very parts, very sensibilities we need in order to do that with other people. And the more we can feel like we have a deep rapport, a deep respect, trust, openness, willingness to be present for all of who we are, the easier it is to develop a healthy rapport with others, to be sensitive and empathic to who they are, the fullness of who they are. So, to think of mindfulness as rapport, developing a present moment attunement to oneself. Not a present moment judging, not a present moment reacting, not a present moment probing and digging and fixing, but rather, and maybe also not a present moment attempt to make oneself calm and stress-free, but rather to do that indirectly by offering a kind of higher quality listening, attending, attunement to ourselves, to really kind of accompany ourselves as we are and see what happens as we do that.

To have this idea that you're not in charge, but you do have a very important role, just like you're not in charge of a friend in distress, but you have a very important role of accompanying them, being with them, attuning to them. So in that way, we sit and meditate. So, to

assume a meditation posture, as you would with a friend if you were going to really attend to them in their challenging times, in their distress, maybe you adjust your posture, you would sit closer, you would clearly show that you're interested in it, that you're present. So we do that with our meditation posture. Whatever way that your posture is, to see it as a way to be available, to know, to listen, to discover what is here, and then to take some long, slow, deep breaths.

I'm seeing that there's people who have trouble with the sound, and the sound cutting sounds like it's not... I don't know where the problem is, and no sound. So some people have sound and some people don't. Some coming and going, gone. No sound, no sound. Sounds okay with... So a lot of people say the sound's okay. Okay, so I'll continue. Maybe it has to do with local weather issues in some parts of the country. I also wonder if how you're logging on... If the people who are in trouble with the sound, if you're logging on through the IMC website to the web page that IMC has, and maybe it's a problem with IMC's website, or if you're directly onto YouTube, maybe that's different. Okay, I'm going to continue.

And this is delightful that the way to practice mindfulness is to be available for everything, that whatever happens is part of the practice that we practice with. And today it's issues around the sound. And so with that, may be fixed now. We'll continue. And maybe if you're ready to close your eyes and listen, feel, accompany how you feel right now. What has shifted, what has changed, how you are. And whatever way you are, see if you can become attuned or receptive like a good friend who feels and senses what's going on within. Your mood, your state of mind, your state of body, the energetics.

And then to notice how your breathing is. Does your breathing somehow express or manifest how you are, the way you're breathing, the sensations of breathing? Is there any emotion or mood somehow conveyed with how you're breathing? And with breathing as a reference point for how you are, both being aware of how you are, but not getting pulled into your thoughts and stories and ideas, with your whole body. See if you can have a deep rapport with yourself, a deeper attunement to how you are, as if you're accompanying yourself carefully, kindly, lovingly, accepting yourself as you are, but with every breath, in breath and out breath, staying receptive, staying free of thinking the best you can, or letting thoughts recede to the background.

With every breath, accompanying yourself, companion to yourself, building a rapport, letting go of your thoughts, letting go so that you can better sense, know, feel some way about how you are, and not fixing it or judging it, but accompanying, attuning, having a friendly rapport, a caring rapport that allows yourself to be just as you are, but with empathy for it, with care,

every breath, a caring accompaniment.

And then as we come to the end of the sitting, to take another look at how you are, how you feel, your state of mind, state of heart, to settle down and to consider how you are now, how it might allow you to attend to others, to be aware of others, to build a rapport with others, to have empathy for others. To what degree are you really open and receptive? Are you quiet and pulled back? You're allowed to be how you are. But given how you are, turn your attention out into the world and with whatever way that you can be present for this world of suffering and joy, this world of where people harm each other and help each other.

And in your own way, as you are, offer your care through these words. May all beings be happy. May all beings be happy. Be safe. May all beings be peaceful. May all beings be free. And may we have a deep human connection to all beings and their welfare, and to in some way, in our own way, contribute to the welfare and happiness of everyone. Thank you.