

Practice Notes: Leaving Oneself Alone

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And to say a few words about this practice, one of the really wonderful gifts of this practice that we can experience for ourselves is if in some kind of wonderful way you learn to leave yourself alone, if you could simply sit here and let breathing, leave breathing alone. Just let yourself just breathe. And what I mean by leaving yourself alone is we can be so involved in thoughts and ideas and our feelings and emotions and our body that we're constantly in relationship to it. And even if we have no particular, you know, not trying to do anything, still we're in relationship and we're bumping up against it. And there's a little bit of a clinging attachment, a little bit of pressure, a little bit of agitation, excitement.

And you can just feel that just in the breathing, that somehow the breathing is a little more forced, fuller, tighter, maybe being held a little bit. And to have the experience of the breathing being left so alone that the breathing just gets calm, it just gets settled, it's just peaceful. And it feels like it's doing its own thing in a very peaceful way, and you're not, somehow your thinking is not connected to it, not interfering with it. There's such a strong channels of connection between thoughts and breathing and emotions and the body and concerns and past and future, that we don't even know, we don't understand how integrated or connected they all are, so that certain trains of thought, certain involvement, certain concerns, preoccupations, have their tentacles that reach down into the breathing and affect it and reach into the body and create tension and desires and wants.

And so meditation is often associated with calm and peace, and I think of it as the calm and peace of leaving yourself radically alone. Just to be here, just to be alive. Just to be alive is enough and sit here and allow yourself to experience the radical simplicity of this moment of being alive. So maybe that's interesting for you to consider as we go through this day, and maybe you keep the day, the morning, very simple, simple presence, simple just beingness.

And what does it mean, what does it mean to leave yourself alone? How do you interfere with yourself that is not really necessary? And may you leave yourself alone this morning and in the process of doing that, gain yourself. Thank you.