

## Daylong Sit 5

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Oh, to go a little bit further, one step further with this idea of profound sensations, is that it's one thing to recognize they're there. It's another thing to appreciate how some of these profound sensations a little bit have a life of their own, meaning that rather than being in the control tower, kind of focusing on them, being aware of them, it's possible to kind of dip into them and receive them, let them move through us. And the classic analogy for this in the ancient text is an underwater spring, a lake that has an underwater spring. Maybe in the middle of the lake, there's a spring of water that flows up into the lake. And it's refreshing, kind of mountain-clear water that's flowing up and moving through it, water moving through water, a gentle movement of water that's moving through the still water.

And so in the same way, there can be a little bit sense of movement, of upwell, of flow, of glow, that something is unfolding. Sometimes it's possible to feel like there's a directionality or there's a gentle kind of opening. Here, here's where it's opening. Here's where it's going to flow. And it's a little bit challenging because sometimes there are difficult emotions that might be there waiting to be expressed. But here, what I'm talking about is something subtle and peaceful, something that feels kind of lovely and calm that's being expressed through us.

And so rather than practice being that you're practicing something, when the subtle sensations are flowing and moving through us, it feels more like we're being practiced. It feels more like we're on the receiving end of something that's moving through us, something that's opening, something which is deepening, something that's becoming more and more intimate. And it begins to soften the sense of being the agent or soften the sense of being the one who's experiencing things, the doer or the victim, where we have a lot of sense of self around the practice itself, the one who's doing it, responsible for it. But that begins to

quiet down because something else begins moving through us. There's an opening, there's momentum. It's experienced in different ways at different times, so I don't want to say it's one way.

But at times for me, it's felt like a ball rolling down a hill, or I had the idea of a snowball rolling down the hill. It's getting bigger and bigger as it rolls. So there's a natural movement. And so the degree to which we are doing the practice, at this point, at some point, the practice becomes getting out of the way, just not interfering, just not judging, not making something happen, not fixing, not trying. Just being attentive, you don't do any of those things. Get out of the way. Just make room for this natural unfolding to happen.

So I don't know if this makes sense for you. But let's see where the next meditation goes. So assume a meditation posture with your eyes closed and not doing anything more for the time being, not making any efforts. Don't even meditate in the sense, but instead, sitting still with your eyes closed, survey your inner life. How is it now from these hours we've spent so far? Is it as it usually is?

Is there a little bit more intimacy? Do you feel a little bit more connected to your inner life, your physical life? Is your thinking life a different quality of thinking, maybe quieter, less abstract? And let your attention wander around your body. Just taking a survey of your sensations, your emotions, your mood, your state, not needing it to be any particular way, just noticing how it is for you.

And then doing next to nothing, almost doing nothing, notice what comes to awareness, comes into attention effortlessly. What comes into the sensing body, if you're attuned to sensations? What sensations appear effortlessly for you? And what's it like to be aware of sensations while you do next to nothing, just allowing what's effortless to come?

And then, without doing too much, in what ways do you experience your breathing effortlessly? In what ways do the sensations of breathing just appear in awareness, not trying to make anything happen except noticing the sensations of breathing, then make themselves known? If you find yourself thinking, can you feel the effort of the brain to do the thinking, the energy, the pressure, and to relax the thinking mind, to quiet the thoughts, to allow there to be less effort? What is your mind like when you're not making effort there, but what in the mind arises effortlessly is known and nothing more?

And then being open again to the sensations of breathing, around the edges of breathing in your body, what subtle sensations are known effortlessly? You don't have to go looking for them. Just relax with the breathing and open to what is just beyond the sensations in

your body. As the inhales come and go, as the exhales come and go, the sensations shift and change. Have them be like the gentle waves lapping up on the beach.

Have it be like a gentle opening, moving in and out of the sensations beyond the edges of breathing, as you sense the sensations of breathing and sense the subtle diffuse sensations that are all around them. Is there any feeling or sense of a subtle momentum, movement, flow, upwelling of sensations, of energy below your breathing, to the side of a breathing, in the midst of your breathing? And if so, stay open to receive it. Let it flow and maybe spread through your body.

If your way of being mindful is more with the knowing, there's something similar with the knowing, where an effortless knowing of what is occurring has a pleasure to it, has its own flow beyond the edges of the knowing. The knowing is, which awakens a smile, a contentment. We'll take about a 15-minute time for walking meditation or a break as you need.

And there's maybe a way of offering you something to maybe consider or stay close to in preparation for our last sitting and a short talk, is as we settle down into these subtle sensations, especially as we start getting concentrated, get subtle, get kind of really in the flow of them rather than the flow of our discursive thinking, what becomes easier and easier is smiling. There can be a smile of joy, of delight, appreciation, or a smile that doesn't have to have a reason. And that's one of the fascinating things about these deeper, more subtle, positive feelings that can well up as we get settled in in meditation. There can be joy, smiles, kind of for no reason. And that's pretty special.

So maybe that brings you a little bit of a smile, just hearing the possibility, and maybe carry that with you, close by. During this 15 minutes, walk with it, be quiet with it, be contemplative in such a way that, in theory, you're not very far from your smile.