

Sunday sit with instructions

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So two different mutually supportive forms of attention that, as we move towards *samādhi*, it's helpful to have this idea that that's part of the bringing these together, so they somehow are mutually supportive of each other. One is the ability for the attention to get centered at a grounding spot, a steadying place, a place where things get very simple and quiet inside. Maybe a place where there's a gathering of attention or a settling, the ability to have, in some schools of Buddhism, what they call one-pointedness, that I've heard think of as the resting place for attention. And it can be a place that feels very soft or tender, feels inviting. There's a welcome mat for all of who you are, at the center of all things.

And then complementing that is the panoramic attention, the peripheral attention, the wide-angle attention, that is not so much centered on something very kind of specific and small, but it has no boundaries maybe. It's more like the mood music. It's more like the general atmosphere. It's a feeling of attention being quite broad and open, expansive. But not just open awareness, but also kind of an expansive mood of well-being or peace. Maybe happiness doesn't have to be dramatic. It just can be very soft.

Maybe a kind of sense of well-being that's wider, more broad, that can hold all that is not happy. Yeah, the suffering that's held by what doesn't suffer. There's something that's kind of very precious about this sense of space and silence and stillness beyond the edges of our body, in which there might be a flow of warmth, compassion, or goodness, where the mind kind of relaxes outward in the way that you might relax into a very soft bed, settling back, sinking in. The mind in all directions relaxes outward.

So these two movements, to a simplifying, to a centering spot in the middle of your universe, and then the wide attention. And if there is suffering, if there is self-preoccupation, it's somewhere there between these two, held by both, cared for by both, where we realize there's

more than suffering here in this world. Suffering that's held. Suffering that's given the invitation and possibility to relax, to finally be accepted in such a way that it can take a break from all the heavy lifting it does for us.

And there's this kind of very amorphous way that this wide sense of well-being, and the welcome mat, the settling mat, deep within where, maybe at the end of the exhale, where the inhaled begin, maybe in the heart, deep in the belly, there's a clear sense that this centering spot is also being held by the wider field of goodwill, happiness, well-being, peace. And as all things move towards the pull of gravity, if nothing blocks it, all things within you can flow towards that stilling place inside, the grounding place, the place maybe where breathing feels most tender and intimate. All things begin to free themselves from their holding, their resistance, their tension. Not so they disappear, but so that they dissolve, roll down the river.

A greater and greater intimacy with the simplicity of the moment. And intimacy with that within, which is deeper than any thinking you do. And maybe in this resting place, deep within, letting that be also what stays with the whole length of the inhale, the whole length of the exhale, all occurring within a wider field of goodness, well-being, peace. That is here to reassure whatever needs reassurance. It's okay.

Here, now, between the wide, spacious, boundaryless space around you, and the settling spot deep within, if there's anything that's being tense or holding on, invite it to relax, to let go. So there can be a settling gathering around the settling spot. And then the clock on the stage has on it nine, ten...