

## Thursday sit with instructions

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If you're driving a car and you keep your foot on the gas, maybe pushed all the way down to the floor, but you'd like to slow down, maybe even stop, but you don't lift your foot, the car might go faster and faster. You have to take your foot off the gas pedal for things to slow down. So for suffering to fade away, for attachments clinging to fade away, there is lifting the foot off the gas pedal, off the strong wanting something or wanting something not to be.

And it's not just fading away that happens. As attachments fade away, suffering fades away, there's room for something to grow. If I had a dream, dreamt that the lottery had grown to \$10 billion, in the dream that might catch my desire. And I have a clear sense, I know where the winning number is going to be sold. It's in a store an hour away, but they're closing in an hour.

So of course I would just race to my car, race along, gas pedal to the floor, zipping in and out of traffic. Who cares about red lights? Because of all the stop-and-go traffic, I go the wrong way down a one-way street. I race, the cop is chasing me. It's just really intense. The whole body tensed up and tight, tense. This is so important.

But then the traffic is just completely stopped up, and I get pretty impatient and furious. At some point, what occurs to me in this dream I'm having: wait a minute, Gil. You know, if you know a thing or two about attachment, and it occurs to me, maybe, maybe, I don't need that \$10 billion. And so I sit quietly, and I start noticing my body relaxes, softens. It is a long way to go, but it begins.

I even park the car and get out, and oh, so nice, the fresh air, the blue sky, my body feels more free. Isn't this nice? And as I relax, I start noticing more what's going on. And I notice that there are these wonderful people walking around. Look, they're talking nicely, they're smiling, they're sitting on park benches and enjoying the nice day.

And they greet me in a nice way. They say, hello, how nice. And I feel kind of cozy and nice and appreciative. And I relax even more. And then my appreciation of them grows, and I say, wow, these are nice people. Even the ones who are not nice are nice.

And I say hello to them. And I relax some more and soften, and I decide, well, maybe I could be one of the people sitting on the bench. And it's so nice to be on the bench, nowhere to go, nothing to do, no one to be. So now all the tension is gone from driving. I've taken the foot off the gas pedal, in the mind. And it's been replaced by a wonderful feeling of calm, peace, love, appreciation, freedom. Just sitting there, ordinary.

And it occurs to me, wow, I feel like I won the lottery. It's so good. So here we are. All of you have at least, if you haven't pulled your foot off the gas pedal, have pulled it back. Things have faded. What has replaced it? What has grown in you?

Has there been some growth of calm, some growth of awareness that maybe is more ready to appreciate this moment? Maybe a fading away of preoccupation enough that you appreciate being aware, being conscious in a simple way, maybe slowing down, having time. There's been room for something that maybe looks like love, compassion, kindness. Maybe there's a growth of some degree of contentment. Contentment with just being alive, aware, breathing.

That both helps you to see where you're still pressing on the gas, maybe lightly, and where you can lift up the foot more, maybe fully, and let further fading away. Maybe you've learned that fading away is supported by keeping an allowing attitude, staying open, available, not to get rid of things, but to allow it to lessen, to fade away, and being available for something to grow, something good to develop in you, maybe slowly. Being available for the fading away of something you don't even know about, deep within, almost like making space and allowance for the unknown to fly away like a bird being held in your palm. Then when it's ready, it flies away.

Keep your palm open and be available for what's unknown, unknowable still, to grow in you. Maybe you can't even imagine how beautiful it is that can grow. How open, how available can you be? Resting in awareness. Resting in awareness that doesn't interfere with the coming and goings. That doesn't interfere with the becomings and the begoings.

With awareness available that allows the fading away, allows for growing, available to the present moment where things arise and pass. In a way this present moment is always here. We sit in the present moment between the past and the future, that's always here. This is where the lived life is lived now, and for the time being, is associated with 9-10.