

## Guided Meditation: Accompanied by the Wise

**Gil Fronsdal**

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Hello, welcome.

And there's a way in which, when we meditate, maybe with our eyes closed especially, maybe if you're in your own place alone, that meditation is a personal affair, something we do very within ourselves. And... it's wonderful to feel like we're doing it in community, that we're accompanied by many other people doing it.

And this week, reading the poems of the nuns, some of them talk about their meditation. It's a reminder that we've been accompanied for thousands of years by people doing this kind of inner exploration, inner movement of meditation. And around the world currently, many, many people are meditating. It has persisted down through the ages because it's a wise thing to do. Wise people have found it beneficial to meditate. Wise people have found it beneficial to be very patient with the meditation, to give it its time, to not rush it, to not judge it, but to engage in, for some people, a sacred or special activity done by the wise.

And now it's our turn to sit this way. And metaphorically, at least, the idea of sitting up straight when you meditate is an idea of really taking our place in this life, in this world, really showing up and being here with no apologies, no hesitation. But in these minutes, to really sit up erect is a way of giving a certain kind of importance to what we're doing. Not tension, not tension, but a kind of uprightness that allows something very deep inside to settle, to be reassured.

And for those who can't sit upright, there are other ways of doing this: leaning back into a chair, laying on a bed. Some people do their meditation standing. Some people even do it doing walking meditation because nothing else works. But the same principle applies: to somehow adjust the posture, the body, our state of mind, to make this an intentional uprightness. It's kind of an inner uprightness, that here we are doing this practice, the practice of the wise, and rejoining and accompanied for us to be wise, for us to be present.

This is our turn. So, to gently close your eyes and feel from the inside: are there small adjustments you can make to have this uprightness, literally or metaphorically? Maybe a sense of participating in something that the wise have done for centuries, and rejoining them, and they're accompanying us to dive into this moment's experience, here and now, just here, just now.

Okay. As if the past and the future are two-dimensional, being lost in thought is one dimension, but the present moment is three-dimensional or four-dimensional. It has so much in it, and we're diving into the fullness of here, taking some long breaths, relaxing as you exhale. These longer inhales and exhales, see them as an invitation, a welcoming invitation, to dive into this present moment through the lived experience of your body.

And letting the breathing return to normal, and to the degree that you can, make yourself simple, so that how you accompany the present, how you dip into this three-dimensional, four-dimensional present moment, is through a radical simplicity of being in the middle of it. Here we are, moment by moment.

As we come to the end of the sitting, maybe if you wish, consider that coming out of meditation, there's a choice to bring your mindfulness, your attention, your presence into this world, to accompany others, to be present for others. Maybe not with words, maybe not with advice, but to really be present, to accompany, to share this life with others, to let them know they're not alone. Because you're standing close, you're standing attentive, you're standing aware of them with the fullness of your being.

May this practice of mindfulness that we do support us in stepping into this world to make the world a better place. Let's not wait for someone else to do this work. Let it be your work in the small little activities of your day. In your way, contribute to the welfare and happiness of this world.

May all beings be happy. May all beings be safe. May all beings be peaceful. May all beings be free.

Thank you.