

Guided Meditation: Allowing the Influence of Breath

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So good morning, everyone. I trust that you can hear me and see me. My laptop seems to be on, but somehow I can't reach YouTube on it today, or on my phone as well. Okay.

I have another laptop open as well, which it is connected. So I can't see the chats. I'm hoping that I'm on and you all can see me. During the meditation, I'll maybe try to—maybe my computer needs to be restarted.

One of my fond associations with meditation is that the meditation hall, the temple, the monastery, the world, is right here in this body as we meditate and sit. And so, to come back here. The *Buddha* said that the whole world is found in this body of ours.

And I think what he meant was our own personal world, the world of our direct, immediate experience. Things that you don't see and touch and directly hear are things you know about and learn about. And there's a distance, there's an abstraction, there's memory, there's constructions in the mind.

And meditation is about stepping back from the world of aboutness, the world of constructions, the ideas of things, what you've learned about things, and living in that world of those ideas. But to live in the world of our direct experience here, and to call it our meditation hall, our temple, our monastery, is to make it important, to make it special.

So, to gently close the eyes and to feel this body. To feel it, explore it, get to know it, discover what it is today. And within this body, as part of this body, to take some long, slow, deep breaths.

Then, letting the breathing return to normal, and gently, without agendas, without avoiding anything, without preferring what's pleasant or unpleasant, in the middle of your experience, in the middle of your body, be aware of the body breathing. And the influence, the gentle,

maybe influence that breathing has on your body. Maybe simply with the movements of the body as you breathe, and allow yourself to receive that influence.

Maybe as if you're standing in the sun on a cool day, receiving the warmth. Stay with the breathing, receiving the influence of breathing on your body.

So then, as we come to the end of the sitting, to check in again with your body feeling. Is your body different now than at the beginning? Is your body—are you different now? Is the influence of breathing on your body different? Is your ability to be receptive to the influence of your body, is it different?

And might your receptivity to the world around you be different now than when you sat down to meditate? To gaze out upon the world, and to gaze upon the world kindly, wishing it well, wishing everyone well.

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

Thank you.