

Thursday Morning Guided Meditation

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So, in this second foundation of mindfulness, it's a path to a fuller and fuller sensing of sensations. It very much has to do with entering into the body in a deep way, a full way. Maybe it could be described as trusting the body, trusting opening and sensing and feeling.

The surface mind orients itself to the surface body. The deep mind orients itself toward the deep sensations, the deep body. And to be immersed in this body, immersed in this deep body, is as if you would be immersed in a refreshing pool or lake, immersed in the field of sensations of the body.

Taking some moments to be available for the body sensations to show themselves, whatever way they are, throughout the global body. And maybe somewhere in the middle of this global body, in the middle of the lake of the body, there are the rhythmic sensations of breathing, almost like waves in the water.

And this is a path of becoming ever more sensitive to the sensations of the body. One of the purposes of this is to become more finely sensitive to the sensations of tension, the sensations of contraction, the sensations of mind-induced stress. Finally attuned to how stress, tension, attachment, and grasping feel in the body, so we become familiar with it.

So we learn to recognize when there is stress, when there is tension. Something tightens. Something closes down. Something resists.

To be deeply sensitive to this, not to push it away quickly, or not to come to some conclusion that something is wrong or supposed to be different. But to develop a greater familiarity with what this feels like in you, so that you might notice when grasping, clinging, tightness, tension represents a holding on to some idea, a holding on to some story, holding on to some identity. To see it clearly, to become more familiar with how this clinging works, until you can

see that maybe it's not necessary to cling to the ideas, the stories, not necessary to take them up, hold on to them.

Maybe to see that they limit us, limit our sensitivity, limit our connection to the whole. Limit our intelligence—the intelligence of all the attentional faculties working together.

And when there's this tension, stress, that comes from clinging, you can maybe feel how that takes you out of the lake, the ocean of sensations. There's a solidification around something. If you're deeply sensitive, you might feel that the clinging itself doesn't want to cling. The tightness and tension, in and of itself, doesn't want to be tight, tense. Then maybe it wants to return into the lake of sensations, to dissolve into the water of well-being.

When we cling, something is fixated, held tight, and it's like freezing the river so the river doesn't flow. What flows when we cling is the surface mind of thoughts and stories. That can sometimes work over time.

The more the clinging there is, where we lose touch with this deeper life within, we lose touch with this deeper flow, river of life, where everything is flowing. Where sensations arise and pass, come and go, appear and disappear. To trust the deep body is to trust in intimacy with how sensations come and go.

Maybe just seeing more carefully in the sensations of breathing, a deep sensitivity to clinging, to the tension and tightness, agitation of clinging, might show you that your reaction to clinging, your reaction to tension, is just more suffering. Your reaction to seeing clinging is more clinging to some idea, some preference, some idea of how things should be, how you should be.

The art of this practice is to not add to our suffering, not add to our clinging, not add to it by trying to get rid of it, but to hold everything in how it manifests as sensations. What it feels like in the body, which is always in the present.

Oh, the way that the surface mind clings to ideas and stories, it pulls away from the body. Sometimes to the point of being so involved in thoughts that it loses touch with the body. The deep mind, deep body, is always here, inviting the surface mind to rejoin.

And sometimes the bridge between the two are the sensations of clinging, of tension and tightness, that are being invited to soak in the waters of the deep mind.

This morning, there won't be a bell to ring to end the sitting. It is now nine o' five. Though in the deep body, the deep mind, there is no time.