

Thursday Morning Guided Meditation

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Settling in to your med— to your meditation. And today, I won't provide any guided meditation or guided instruction. Instead, the instruction, the guidance, is available for you in the absences that are here, in whatever silence there is. There's the absence of noise, sound, and the absence of movement. There is stillness. In the absence of things, there is space.

And in the sacred absence of clinging, there is freedom. Align yourself with the absences and follow the path that's there. Yeah. Oh. Yeah.

There's a little over forty-eight hours left for the retreat, and all of you are experienced practitioners, so you'll have to manage the next two days in a wise way so that you're ready for the end. To begin, maybe become a little more active. Maybe sit a little bit less, sit on the deck, have tea more, just walk around more. Stay silent, but begin to get ready in whatever way seems wise for you. Some people need a lot of time to integrate. Some people don't, and are happy to stay deep in the retreat till closer to the end. But whatever you choose, don't choose based on your clinging.

Ten years ago, a little bit less than ten years ago, I sat a month-long retreat, a self-retreat, and I was packing up and packing my car to leave. And I remember how special I felt when I arrived, unpacking my car. It was like I'd entered a sacred domain. It was so special and still, and just the place was meditative.

And as I was leaving, doing the opposite, I remember how I felt when I came and when I was leaving. Like, this is an ordinary place, nothing special, you know. Like, I'm nothing special, you know. I guess nothing happened to me. I just feel like my old self, and, you know, I guess that was a waste of a month.

And so I went down to the office to check out, and I went up to the desk. I couldn't speak. I just, I was just like—I wasn't frozen or anything—but just like, only at the end did I realize I

was still deep in. I had just become habituated to it. So, who knows how you are, but take care for these next two days.

It's a wonderful thing to be on a retreat like this. It's unusual. You all did very, very well, each in your own way. So now, be careful for the next couple of days so you're ready. Thank you.