Nourish and Connect Meditation

Jack Kornfield · Notable Dhamma Teachers — Jack Kornfield · 27:23

Let yourself get ready to sit now in meditation in whatever way is comfortable for you. Taking your seat halfway between heaven and earth in this remarkable human form, this human incarnation. Sit with a sense of graciousness and ease, upright so there's a sense of presence, but also relaxed.

Perhaps if you're ready, let your eyes close gently or lower your gaze and take two or three long breaths in and out. Take your time to release whatever wants to be let go of in this moment.

Here you take your seat amidst the great turning of the spheres, the time of the solstice. Let yourself become loving awareness itself, a mindful loving awareness. In a simple way, if it's helpful, you can begin to feel how the body is breathing itself with all other beings—the in-breath and rising of the belly and chest, the out-breath all happening on their own. You can relax and calm with each breath, a loving awareness.

First, as you sit, just let things settle, simply, graciously. As you feel the body breathe into breathing with all life, breath shared with all the other creatures of the earth, relax and trust. It knows how to breathe. It knows how to nourish and connect, and you can come to rest.

As you relax and feel the breath come and go, there will often be a stream of thoughts. The mind produces images and words. It secretes thoughts the way the salivary glands secrete saliva. It just does it, kind of wondrous. When you notice the thoughts becoming predominant, as if to bow to them with your loving awareness, you can say to yourself: I love it when it comes, and I love it when it goes. Just let them come and go like waves of the ocean. Rest quietly just where you are.

Just as the breath breathes itself, you can rest here and now in the reality of the present with life breathing you. And just as the waves of thought will arise—pictures and words—you can notice them with loving awareness. Oh yes, the thinking mind, planning mind. As if with a bow: I love it when it comes, I love it when it goes.

You are the loving awareness, the space of awareness itself, consciousness, the witness of all that arises and passes. Rest in mindful, loving awareness.

Just as the breath breathes itself, this breath rising and passing, just as thoughts—picture thoughts and word thoughts—appear and disappear, and you are the witness, the loving awareness, notice too the feelings and moods that can arise like waves of the ocean. Sadness, excitement, longing, love, fear, anger, contentment, joy. Let each rise and pass as it will, like the breath itself.

You are the loving witness. Loving awareness, just here at ease. Gracious. Silent.

If you like, you can put a half smile on your lips, as Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh recommends. You sit as the Buddha that you are, the wise being, the compassionate one, resting in loving awareness. Rest in it. Letting all things appear and disappear. I love it when it comes. I love it when it goes.

Quieting, centering. With each breath, an invitation to ease, calm. You are the loving awareness itself—consciousness witnessing the breath and the rise and fall of experience. Silent and open.

As the ease and peace deepen, let yourself sense or feel or imagine that it can spread from you in every direction, like the violin that's placed on the table whose strings resonate with another violin being played in the room.

May the resonance of peacefulness and stillness, steadiness amidst all the waves. May the stillness of your heart, its steadiness just now, spread out in every direction and resonate the strings of the hearts of all beings, near and far, that they might find a deeper quiet, a loving presence, and inner well-being and peace amidst all things.

Being peaceful even for a moment, you naturally offer your blessings for peace and well-being that resonate across the universe.

And now let yourself imagine the sound of a big and beautiful bell being rung to signal the end of the meditation and to send out with its sound the same waves of peace and resonance and beauty across the world.

Let your eyes open when you're ready.

I'm so grateful we get to sit quietly at this time of the great turning. Sit and listen—calm, steady, loving awareness.

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