Breath of the Earth Meditation | Monday Night

Jack Kornfield · Notable Dhamma Teachers — Jack Kornfield · 21:57

And so tonight, let's begin with a meditation, a very simple one.

Let yourself settle, be comfortable and at ease for the next twenty or twenty-five minutes in a posture that feels stable and steady. When you're ready, let your eyes close gently. Take a couple of long breaths and exhale whatever wants to be let go of, so you can be just here and now.

When you take your seat in the middle of the turning world, as your world travels around its star, the sun, in this moment you take a seat of listening and stillness. To help invite and establish that stillness, it is good to begin with attention, a mindful loving awareness of the breath—not to become a good breather, but with each breath that you feel through the nostrils and throat, whether the rise and fall of chest or belly, with each breath a gentle whisper in the background: calm, ease, allowing the whole body and heart and mind to settle. Nowhere to go. Just this breath, this moment.

If it's at all hard to sense the breath, you can put your hand on your belly. Leave it there and feel the belly rise and fall in the palm of your hand. Ease and calm with each breath, an invitation.

As you quiet, there will naturally be waves of thoughts and plans and memories, waves of emotions—sad and happy, worried and excited—waves of sensations, all the things that come and go, and sounds. Let these rise and fall like waves of the ocean around the breath. Rest with the breath like a still point between the waves of the sea. Let the other things come and go around the breath. The breath brings a stillness. With this breath, a steady, calm ease.

The breath breathes itself, its own rhythm, long or short, shallow or deep. Your breath is the earth breathing herself through you. Relax. Easy come, easy go. Let the earth breathe herself through you and invite a deepening stillness, openness, ease. Spacious, vast, easy—with each breath an invitation to open to presence and stillness.

Now, for the last minutes of the meditation, sitting quietly as the earth turns about the sun, let yourself reflect with the returning of the light. What beautiful qualities would you like to bring into the world in this year ahead? Not as a New Year's resolution, but the qualities you already carry in your heart: steadiness, calm, and stillness; caring attention, presence, compassion. These are gifts you can carry from this place of stillness and bring forth from your heart and your being—beautiful gifts into this mysterious, magnificent, troubled, amazing world.

From your own inner beauty and wisdom, what is it you wish to offer?

Add a smile to your lips, a half smile of the Buddha, as you sit. Feel what energy and gifts can come from you and through you. You can know.

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