

Abiding in the Present Moment: Developing Equanimity

Bhante Bodhidhamma · Retreat Talks · 2 min read

So here we are standing. Standing tall. Lifting up to the top of the head. Chin goes in a little. Relax the shoulders. Relax the jaw. Lips together, teeth apart. It helps to bend the legs a little to relieve the back. When the legs get tired, just straighten them up. The eyes gazing downward about a metre or so away.

Let us now bring our attention to the feet. What sensations can you feel on the soles of your feet? Can you distinguish two types? Sensations of pressure, the earth element. Sensations of heat, the fire element. Can you become more aware of how the sensations in the feet are constantly changing, due mainly to the body rebalancing itself?

In the same way, come up the body and see what sensations you can find, both on the surface and inside. And notice those areas where there seems to be no feeling at all. When you get to the scalp, do there what you did at the soles of your feet.

Now launch your attention outward. Keeping the eyes gazing downward, become aware of the colours and shapes, the sounds entering your ears, the atmosphere of the room, the sense of other people. Open up now the awareness to include all the body sensations and feelings as well, so that the distinction between inner and outer lose their strict definition. It's just all one mass of sensations and feelings. And relax into the present moment, wide awake.

Relaxing into the present moment like this, we're not trying to achieve anything. When we're trying to achieve something, we're doing something now for some future result. But being fully aware in this present moment, there's both the achieving and the result.

Relaxing into the present moment like this, we're not going anywhere. Fully aware of each moment, we lose a sense of past and future. So we've not come from somewhere and we're not going anywhere. But by being fully aware in this present moment, we've already arrived.

Relaxing into the present moment like this, just receiving, there's no need to react or respond. So when we are fully aware of this moment, there's no need to perform. There's no need to be a personality, a person.

Relaxing into the present moment, wide awake, achieving nothing, going nowhere, being nobody. When we're in this passive mode, we're developing four factors of awakening. Awareness, calmness of the body and mind, steadiness of attention or concentration, and *upekkhā*.

Upekkhā means openness, receptiveness, receiving whatever comes to us from a place of don't know, not sure. This is the basic ground out of which our curiosity can rise, untainted by conceptual thinking, untainted by history, to investigate the three characteristics of existence: *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā*.

In this mode of calm, quiet abiding, we can see intentions arise. If they're unwholesome, we can resist the temptation. We have time, we have space. If wholesome intentions arise, we can decide to empower them. In this very simple way, we can change ourselves for the better.

So you can see, developing this calm abiding in the present moment can have a revolutionary effect on our lives. Intending to sit.

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