

~ *Analytical Meditation* ~

By Mingyur Rinpoche

When I was young, I had panic attacks. I learned some meditation teachings from my father in order to deal with my panic. That was when I was 9 years old.

Then, when I was 11 years old, I went to India. I studied a traditional text that discussed analytical meditation — not just resting, being mindful, or being with awareness, but also asking questions. The questioning is to try to understand the nature of reality.

I did this analytical meditation with my panic. First, when I observed my panic there were a lot of sensations. With mindfulness meditation or awareness meditation you just observe the sensation, you do not ask questions. But with analytical meditation, I asked questions, and I could see that the essence of panic were not really there, I could not really find it.

What I found were pieces: an image, voice, physical sensation, belief, so panic became four pieces, and I could not find the essence. Then I asked more questions. I asked with mindfulness and with awareness. This is what we call “analytical meditation.” In the end, I could not even find the pieces.

The panic is actually awareness, which has no essence, and the awareness is really pure, present, and genuine, yet it is open to everything. Panic is allowed — pleasure, pain, thoughts, emotions — everything comes out of that basic awareness. Awareness has no essence, it cannot really be pinpointed. In that moment, my mind became so open, so free, and that really helped with my panic.

Therefore, analytical meditation is really important to apply.