

~ *Meditating with Sleep and Sleepiness* ~

Mingyur Rinpoche

For sleeping meditation, you need to feel sleepy. Normally, we think feeling tired, bored, or dull is useless, right? But now you can make friends with them, and they can become quite beneficial for meditation.

First, I will do a demonstration. I will create some drama. [Mingyur Rinpoche snaps his fingers and the backdrop goes dark.] Okay! [Mingyur Rinpoche puts his robe over his head.] First, relax your body and mind, and close your eyes – I am doing this, now not you. For now, you just look at me. When you relax, sometimes you feel sleepy if you are lucky. What do I feel now? I feel relaxed. Let everything drop and just be. Now I am feeling a little bit sleepy. Be aware of sleepiness, or tiredness, boredom, or whatever. [Mingyur Rinpoche appears to be drifting into sleep.] Continue to be aware. [Mingyur Rinpoche pretends to fall asleep and starts to snore and then laughs.]

So, what will happen is that if you continue to maintain awareness with sleepiness, dullness, or any other feeling, then sleep will come. [Mingyur Rinpoche makes a demonstration with his hands.] A little bit alert, a little bit sleepy, a little bit alert, continue to be aware. In the end, you fall asleep. [Mingyur Rinpoche grabs one hand with the other to show how sleep catches awareness.] The moment you fall asleep, sleep will catch awareness, the meditation. Then all sleep becomes meditation. If you sleep for one hour, you are meditating for one hour. How nice, right? But, if first, you are aware, and then, at the moment of falling asleep, your mind thinks of pizza, then sleep does not catch the meditative state of mind. Then that becomes normal sleep.