

~ Meditating with Emotions ~

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Emotions can also be used as a support for meditation. Emotions have a lot of bodily sensations. There are a lot of things, like temperature, pleasant feelings, unpleasant feelings, or a tight sensation. Sometimes there are headaches, sometimes relief, sometimes it is pleasant, sometimes unpleasant — there are so many different sensations. As soon as you see something you like, there is a pleasant sensation in your body. If you do not like it, there is an unpleasant sensation in your body.

When I was young, I had these panic attacks. With the panic came a lot of unpleasant sensations. My heart was beating faster, and I felt tight around the throat, things like that. Then my father taught me emotion meditation. Emotion meditation has been really beneficial for me.

How do we practice this emotion meditation? Actually, it is very easy. Just be aware of the emotion. That becomes emotion meditation.

You do not have to do anything particular. There is no need to control, no need to create a good emotion, no need to stop a bad emotion. You are just watching.

Awareness is more than an emotion, more than a thought. Awareness is like the sky; it accommodates clouds, different weathers, all of these things, right? It lets them come, lets them be, lets them dissolve. You can do the same thing. All these sensations and feelings are just like clouds. Sometimes there is a beautiful cloud, sometimes an ugly cloud, sometimes a storm with lightning, or a tornado, or a hurricane. It is okay. The sky is still free. They cannot change the nature of the sky, right? When the sky becomes completely blue with the sun shining, the nature of the sky does not change. Even though the sky becomes completely dark — there is no sun, no moon, it is completely covered by clouds — the essence of the sky cannot be changed by these clouds, this darkness. The sky is always free. It is always there. It is pure and genuine. Your awareness is just like that. But, normally we do not recognize awareness,

and we are lost in thoughts, feelings, emotions, and sensations like we are lost in the clouds.

When we watch the sensations, when we watch the emotions, then automatically, our awareness becomes bigger than the emotions, bigger than the sensations. There is space. When you see the river, you are out of the river, right? But you do not have to create that space. Space comes automatically if you watch the emotions — as a byproduct of watching. This is important. Many people say, “Oh, I have to create some distance. I have to make space. Where is space? I cannot see the space.” There is no need to do this. Just watch. If you cannot see the emotion, if, when you look at the emotion, the emotion disappears — great! There is a gap. This is open awareness. Be with the gap. Either case is okay.

Therefore, now you have already made friends with emotions. This is very good! But, of course, you cannot make friends with strong emotions, big emotions, in the beginning. You cannot do that. You have to start with a small emotion first.

When I was young, my major emotion was panic. I could not watch my panic in the beginning. I felt it was too much. It overwhelmed me. So, I created anger. Anger is different from panic. I created anger and watched anger instead, and I felt, “Mmm, I can do this.” Then slowly, slowly, I could watch the panic.