

John Makransky

Week 3, [The Healing Power of Innate Love and Wisdom: Meditations from Tibet for Westerners](#)

June 16th, 2014

“Listening Deeply”

Hi, welcome back. So we will take the meditations one step further for this week. First, I want to say that the meditation practice would be good to hold with a light touch. These meditations that I'm introducing are meant to unfold naturally at their own pace over months of daily practice, not just a week for each. Usually you'd spend a few months in daily practice on one—if you feel an attraction to it or connection—and then, when there's an inner urge to move on to the next kind of meditation, you would move into that in its relation to the prior one.

So we need to imprint the pattern of these meditations throughout this month in this way. But we also need to hold the practices lightly, realizing that they usually take time to deepen at their own pace.

One thing that some of you may have noticed is there may be a tendency when recalling a benefactor moment, and bringing that to mind for the prior meditation we did, a tendency for the mind to move to other benefactor moments looking for more benefactor moments; in a sense, not satisfied just with the first one. And when first introduced to this practice of benefactor moment meditation, that's quite normal. I think what's happening often is that the mind is seeking more points of entry into the spirit of the practice and looking for more benefactor moments, now that we've been introduced to this possibility.

So that's very normal and it's fine to do, although it's good to do that during our day in general, not so much during the meditation time. But once we've found more benefactor moments in our life and we can choose one that seems fairly straightforward to bring to mind and to re-inhabit in that moment, then it's good to keep the mind with that one benefactor moment. And when the mind becomes distracted as I said, which of course it will because that's the way our minds are patterned, then when we notice the distraction, the mind going off into other—thinking about other things. When we notice, we just bring it—gently bring it back right to the instruction.

Again, recall the benefactor moment, importantly, recall that the moment is not just a distant memory, but we sense it as happening now and we inhabit that moment now. If that moment makes us happy to recall, then the energy of loving connection is present to us in the moment as we sense it happening now.

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Another reason, though, that the mind may also be seeking other benefactor moments—that also comes up for some meditators—is an urge within the mind to move away from some of the feelings that are elicited when we think of our benefactor moment. Sometimes we may recall a moment with someone who has passed away, who’s no longer alive. Actually, most of the benefactor moments I think of are moments with people who are no longer alive. And for some people then, or many of us, this can bring up feelings of grief or sorry and loss and so forth. But what we’re going to do now, in the next meditation, is to take whatever feelings come up or are raised either by the benefactor moment itself, such as the feeling of grief that may come up, that we feel such loving connection with someone who is no longer physically here and also any other feelings of difficulty or suffering in our minds, feelings that may be familiar to us, all kinds of difficult feelings, like feelings of worry—what have you been worrying about the last some days or weeks? What’s been on your mind? Or feelings of struggle: What do you feel you have been struggling through in recent times or days or today? Feelings of fear, frustration, anger, betrayal, sadness, longing, loss, right? That’s lots of feelings. So any or all such feelings, especially the ones most familiar to us that are easily brought to mind, are invited into the next meditation practice that we’re going to do, which will also involve recalling a benefactor moment. Okay?

So it’d be good to be prepared to let feelings, including underlying feelings that have not even been fully conscious, really letting them come to mind and letting them be embraced in the field of loving energy and loving wish that we’re experiencing from within that benefactor moment. There’s a deep meaning to that aspect of this next practice because, in this way, we’re learning to host our feelings, all of our feelings, including unpleasant ones with a kind of kindness and compassion in this loving field of energy and wish. And that’s the same power to host others and their feelings with kindness and compassion.

This loving energy within the benefactor moment practice also helps draw us back to our pre-patterned awareness, the depth of our being from which to relate to others more and more in the depth of their being. So are you ready? Can you fasten your seatbelts? I assume you all have seatbelts at home on your chairs. We’ll sit up straight in a relaxed way. Eyes can be open, but gazing downward. Or if you feel more comfortable closing them for benefactor meditation, that’s okay. And just relaxed—kind of enjoying being able to relax in this way.

And we’ll do some of the cleansing breaths and let that also enter us into a brief practice of the three letting-be’s before we enter into another benefactor

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meditation. Inhale, tummy expands, mind drops down with the breath, hold and release, sensing all of your worries, anxieties, just releasing on the out-breath. Inhale and release. Inhale and release. Inhale, mind drops down below, holding, and release.

Good. And then just a brief letting-be in the body, feeling the body as a whole. And just letting the body draw you into oneness with it as much as you can. Feeling the breath anywhere in the body and letting be within the breath. Feeling it. Letting the breath draw you into oneness with it. Being breathed. And letting the mind now just fall open, relaxing the grip on oneself deep in the mind by just letting the mind fall open. And letting that openness of mind draw you into oneness with it as you can.

Which means letting the patterns of thoughts and feeling that arise just unwind within this compassionate openness, this space of deep accepting and allowing and letting all be. And now recall a benefactor moment is the moment with someone that makes you happy to recall and recall it not as a distant memory, but sensing it as happening now. Imagine that person or being present to you now in that way, communing or connecting with you, sensing you in the goodness of your very being, your deep worth and potential beyond any limiting thoughts or judgments, just taking joy in you, wishing you deeply well. Ride within that moment happening now.

And feel the happiness of just holding them in mind and explore just opening, accepting, letting them commune with you in the basic goodness of your being, just wishing you well. Seeing how much you can just open to, accept this loving wish and energy. Right now. And you can imagine their loving wish and energy as a gentle healing energy that permeates your whole body and mind and explore just accepting this loving energy, like a puppy lying on a rug in the sunlight just drinking it in.

Accepting this gentle energy into every part of your body, into every cell, every part of you loved in its very being. And you can accept this gentle, loving energy into every part of your mind, letting any feelings familiar to you in your mind just come up and be embraced in this loving energy. Every feeling of worry or struggle, or feelings of happiness—any underlying feelings of frustration or longing or sadness or joy—just letting feelings familiar to you come up and be permeated in this loving energy.

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Every part of you loved in its very being. Every cell of your body, every feeling of your mind, loved in its very being. Just accepting. And let us relax totally into that feeling of loving energy and connection or kindness, without holding onto any visualization of anything, just dropping all frameworks of mind. Just relax and merge into oneness with that gentle energy.

Letting the mind and body just fall totally open. And letting all the patterns of thought and feeling just unwind in this space of deep accepting and allowing. The natural kindness of just letting all be. Gong! That’s the gong.

So this is the moment of transition. We let the atmosphere of the meditation practice continue to resonate as it may wish to, as we enter into what comes next.

So in that meditation practice we, again, brought to mind a benefactor moment—inhabiting it as though it’s happening now. If that’s a moment that makes us happy to recall, then to experience that moment as happening now automatically comes with a kind of a power of loving connection or energy because that’s what makes us happy to recall it. And then we spend some moments just communing with our benefactors within that moment. And here we’re receiving the loving wish and energy from our benefactors more deeply into our body and mind as instructed, which also helps the mind release perhaps a little more fully with experience over time into the unconditional openness in the background of our experience, which is the source of the loving energy.

So what flows from this meditation into our lives and relationships and action in the world, or around us, when we familiarize with it over time? One is in the structure of this practice we’re learning to accept this loving wish and energy, which learning to accept it more fully and deeply, which is what’s instructed, just exploring at our—to whatever extent it feels that we can at the moment, can we accept it a little more deeply, a little more fully, the loving wish and energy for us? That’s what we’re exploring.

Each time we do the practice that’s the same question. Can we just accept it? Allow it? Receive it a little more deeply this time? Just exploring. And to do that is, I think, a radical act because by accepting our benefactor’s loving wish and energy from within that moment we are not just accepting something from outside of us. We are accepting that in us which is loved, which draws their care, their

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wish for our well-being. We’re not just accepting their wish and its loving energy. We’re accepting what it is in us that is always worthy of love. That’s what we’re learning to accept, our fuller humanity, our fuller potential, our fuller being, which is much more than anyone’s limited thought of us, including our own.

And that’s a radical act and it’s profoundly empowering action to accept that loving wish and energy and thereby accept our own worth for such love. Because it’s from that place that as we learn to deepen into that, accept more deeply our own basic worth or the goodness of our being, it’s from that place that we directly sense more and more the same basic dignity and unconditional worth and potential in others. It’s from that place in us that we sense into that place that’s in them. Not just by thinking about it, not just through our heads, but from the depth of our being. As we accept more the depth of our being that there is more of a depth of our being that’s worthy of appreciation and loving care, we’re accepting also the depth of everyone’s being. And it’s from that depth of our being that we can sense that more in their depth and relate to it in them. And this is really a key to developing deeply grounded and authentic love and compassion for others, coming from the place in oneself that makes that possible—not just the head trying to think of how to be a nicer person. You understand.

The second point is that, with repetition, the loving energy at the end of the meditation, the last phase in the instruction further helps empower the mind to relax and release its narrow patterns and open up into the ground of its experience. The basic openness, unconditional openness and spaciousness in which all the patterns of thought and feeling can further unwind and heal, which is a place of safety from which to become a safer presence to others and a more healing presence to others.

The next, third point, is that in the receiving part of the practice as we’re opening to this loving wish and energy from our benefactors in that part of the practice, we’re experiencing our feelings, which are invited into the practice more and more, to experience our feelings as embraced in that, encompassed in that loving energy.

And then in the last part of the benefactor practice, the part where we’re instructed to release any visualization, let go of frameworks of mind and let the mind fall open, in that part of the practice we experience our feelings as embraced within the basic compassionate openness of deep allowing, of deep letting be.

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So in both those parts of the meditation, both those parts are disclosing a power in our minds, a power of our minds to host our feelings, all of our feelings with kindness and compassion. And that is the same power of mind to host others—and their feelings—with kindness and compassion. And not only nice feelings, but difficult feelings: our suffering feelings, our feelings of struggle, our feelings of pain. To host those feelings with deepening kindness, compassion, and unconditionality is the same power of mind to host others and their feelings.

And there is no shortcut to this, I would argue. We are not going to become more of a healing presence to others in this sense unless we are deepening more and more into the healing power of our own mind towards all of our own feelings. Then when we are with others and they are experiencing painful feelings and sufferings, it is that same power of our mind that can host that space with kindness and compassion. Is that clear? Okay.

And then, finally, through this practice, the one we just did, all of our emotions and feelings are welcomed into a loving field of awareness that is larger than any particular emotion and not trapped by any emotion. I'll repeat that. All of our emotions and feelings are welcomed into a loving field of awareness that is larger than any particular emotion and not trapped by any emotion. And that empowers us to become more conscious of others emotions and feelings with kindness and without being trapped by them.

So for the next week you have your homework. So you can do the meditation practice that we just did each day—I think probably this one will take at least fifteen minutes or twenty minutes—and explore what unfolds more and more from this practice daily. And then I'll see you again next week.