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*Concern without Panic*

Week 4: "Discovering the Melody of Silence"

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Greetings and welcome to the fourth week. Today's topic is discovering the melody of silence. In the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, and particularly in Dzogchen tradition (the tradition of great perfection), our body, speech, and mind are called three doors. They are called the three doors because each of them is a door to enlightenment, personal development, and discovering deeper qualities.

So they are doors but sometime in our everyday, ordinary life, they do not serve us as a door or entrance; rather, they become more like an exit. This happens when we disconnect ourselves through our body, where we don't pay any attention to our body, where the body does not listen to our self, our inner voices. Or in our speech, where we say all the things we don't want to say and then we criticize ourselves for saying the wrong thing. So somehow, ourselves and our voice and our speech are very disconnected. It's the same thing with our mind, we always think and feel ways we don't want to feel, we're trying to run away from something, but that's exactly what we're feeling all the time. So these are the three doors.

The melody of silence has something to do with speech. Speech is energetically connected with our throat chakra. There are so many kinds of speech: positive speech, negative speech, virtuous speech, non-virtuous speech. Criticizing, lying, harsh words, and the like are negative speech. But expressing yourself with kindness, love, and joy, that is positive speech. The reason why sometimes a lot of positive speech arises spontaneously, sometimes without any planning, or negative speech arises, is because of our connection or lack of connection to our inner silence.

When we are connected to the inner silence of speech, the right voices arise from that silence. When we are disconnected from our inner silence, the wrong speech arises all the time. So this is always a question: am I connected to my inner silence, am I aware of my inner silence? So, in some sense, "why" matters, right? Why matters, it is very important. Because the energy of the noises drains is so much.

So, think about any given moment when you are sitting in meditation. Or you are by yourself in a beautiful park, and you are watching the lake and trying to rest. Or you have a break in between events in your busy schedule, you have a moment to take a break, you just try to rest. What happens during that rest? Maybe you're lucky, it's wonderful. You experience the deep silence and nourishment through that silence. But when you are not lucky, when you have patterns, addictions, during that moment, immediately you begin to have chattering voices in your head: the voices of self-judgment, self-criticism, or judging someone else, judging yourself, what went wrong, what is going wrong, and what might go wrong. So all the negative world is engaged by your inner voices, and that creates a lot of noises and these noises really drain you energetically and physically.



Many people are exhausted even before they start a project. Why? Because their inner noise exhausts and drains them. So that's important to recognize. Thoughts of darkness, of depression, any negative thoughts obscure inner awareness, as darkness obscures light. So these noises, these voices, these emotions and thoughts, they obscure our inner light. That is important. The inner noises and inner negative images of your thoughts have something to do with obscuring your inner light, obscuring your true self, obscuring your wisdom, obscuring your potentiality. That's also very important to know, how these noises obscure our true selves.

But when you detect negative thoughts, self-judgment, and self-criticism in yourself, and then if you criticize the criticizer, if you judge the one who is judging, what happens? Two judgments instead of one judgment; two criticisms instead of one criticism. So somebody is criticizing, and then you are criticizing that someone; somebody is judging, and then you are judging that someone or you're trying to run away from it. So that is not the method to address all these noises of self-criticism. You need to hear them fully. You need to be aware of them fully. You should not judge them, suppress them, manipulate them, trying to change the story, none of that. You need to be fully aware of that voice, or fully aware of that noise and go beyond that voice, go beyond that noise, and hear the silence beyond that.

Every sound arises from silence. Every sound never loses a connection to the silence. But every sound can sometimes obscure the inner silence. So what we're trying to do in meditation is not allow these noises to obscure it, rather use these noises to penetrate and hear the silence behind it.

So when you hear a sound, if you feel it is like a noise, you're trying to go beyond that, because when you're hearing it as noise it's not that the sound is noise, but you are experiencing it as a noise. So you have to be aware of who is interested in listening to the noise. When you release it, when you let go of it, then you begin to hear the silence, but through that sound.

It's very important to not judge the noise, not to judge the self-criticism. If you don't judge, what do you do? You do what we call a mantra called "Leave it as it is." This is something my teacher always tells, leave it as it is. Of course, it does not mean that you don't try to change, don't try to improve, don't try to become better. No. But during that moment when you are experiencing something like that, just learn to leave it as it is. "I'm hearing a voice. I'm hearing a judgement. I'm hearing self-criticism. I'm hearing my pain speech. My pain speech needs to be heard. My pain speech is becoming louder and louder in my life because nobody's paying attention and listening to it. I am finally open to it. I am finally accepting it. I am finally listening to it. I am finally hearing it. It is finally releasing its tension." Because somebody is processing, observing,



acknowledging, accommodating, and respecting it, and it's kind of dissolving that noise gradually.

As you allow that noise to gradually dissolve, what do you feel? At that moment you feel a deep sense of silence and peacefulness because you have been able to fully see, recognize, connect, accommodate, listen, hear your inner noises, your inner voices, your inner pain speech. Healing begins here. Healing begins because the moment you hear it, it dissolves into the silence. Until you hear it, it remains noise. And it can remain noise for so many years.

Think about the noises you have that wake you up at three in the morning and don't allow you to go back to sleep. Without any invitation, these thoughts spontaneously manifest during the middle of a beautiful, peaceful meditation, and they do not let you go and interfere with the meditation. Maybe it's a beautiful Sunday, very clear, with the sky open and the sun feeling free and hopeful, and suddenly we have one single thought: a voice in your head of concern and worry, and it destroys the rest of your day. Think about some of these thoughts. Maybe you've had them for ten years, 20 years, 30 years, 40 years. It's still there.

Why are these noises returning again and again? Because nobody's listening. It's the same thing in a dream yoga practice, right? Some people have recurring nightmares that return again and again for so many years in your life. Why is this happening? Because you are a bad listener. Until you hear the pain it will keep on continuously returning and affecting your life negatively. It becomes worse and worse. So it's important to hear our pain speech in order to discover our true voice. It's important to hear these voices. When we are truly able to hear these voices and these noises in our pain speech, they dissolve. When they dissolve you find access to inner silence. When you find access to inner silence, they are not only silence, they are melody. They are music. They are joyful. They are inner light. They are inner strength. There is a liveliness in that silence, there is joy and vibrance in that silence. That silence is the power source. Silence is not just an empty absence of sound. It's not like that. So it's really important to recognize the power of the silence.

So in summary the teachings from all these four weeks are interconnected. I hope you understand that. And I hope that this series is meaningful and helpful. I send my love and blessings and my prayers to all of you who are attending this course and listening to these talks. I am keeping you in my prayers. May these teachings help you, may these teachings transform and you improve your life. This is my prayer to all of you. Thank you very much. I'm very honored to collaborate in this way with Tricycle and I want to thank all the Tricycle team for making this wonderful talk happen. Thank you very much.