

2018_01_01_1_NYrR_LMC.mp4

practice relaxing so not to be carried away by our moving mind, practice placing mind on unfolding experience

[00:01:11] Morning. And may you have a joyful beginning to your year... with joyful middle... and joyful end. And we'll do our best to... launch that today.

[00:03:04] We have a very loong recitation... a little piece that was written by the 17th Karmapa... that is meant to be recited at the time of the first light... on New Year's Day. So we're a little *late* for the first light. But... it's still light. It's not dark yet! And the idea here from His Holiness was to have a recitation that... every center and every person who is part of this lineage... could, on this day, recite this prayer. And if it was done at first light, then all during the day, of course, around the world, all the way around the globe, people would be reciting it. So that theme is a common theme. So, who's leading this? Pat. You brave soul!

sangha [00:05:05] *reciting the 17th Karmapa's 'First Light'*

[00:13:12] So let's begin by relaxing and settling our minds a bit... and then we'll begin with the refuge prayer. [short period of meditation]

[00:15:41] So now beginning the Refuge & Bodhicitta Prayer... we first imagine... that *all* sentient beings... due to our previous connections with them... gather together with us... and recite the Refuge & Bodhicitta Prayer together three times.

sangha [00:16:42] *reciting Refuge & Bodhicitta Prayer*

[00:19:46] The single most important aspect of the practice of calm abiding... is our ability to... relax. ... Relax the body. ... And relax the mind. ... And as we know, when we relax the mind... the mind is *not* necessarily *still*. Though a relaxed body is a support... for a still mind... there is no guarantee that the mind will also be still. When the mind... is filled with... thoughts and emotions... we say the mind is moving. To say that the mind is moving... is really only to... confirm what we already know. That generally speaking... in our minds... there are *always*... activities occurring. In the practice of calm abiding... and of the *many* different approaches to the practice... at the very least, our objective is to *not* be carried away... by the content of the mind, the content of the *moving* mind.

[00:23:00] The way we generally learn to do this is... by sitting still... preferably upright... and placing our awareness... upon some particular object or experience. As we said yesterday... to place the mind upon an *experience*... which is *unfolding* in the very moment that we place our awareness there... is a somewhat advanced objective. So you may not be able to do that successfully. You may find that you place your awareness upon an *unfolding* experience... and the next thing you know, you're distracted.

[00:24:44] So you could approach this... in *two* different ways. One is... step *back* from using the experience... and place your awareness on an object. An inanimate object, for example, like this bowl, or like a small coin or a stick, a statue of the Buddha... anything, which is... inanimate. And that can be... somewhat easier. You should not translate the easier into a judgment that it is therefore *less*. In *any* case, the objective... is to arrive at a stillness... which pervades the body

and our awareness. So pick some object... such as... an emotional experience, could be an expectation, keeping in mind that this is likely to be difficult. Bring your awareness to that experience. ... Place your mind on that experience. And just... thoroughly... relax.

[00:26:55] The *same* is true with using an inanimate object. You place your awareness upon that object. And it is somewhat easier. Actually, it's a *lot* easier. One thing is, unlike the inanimate object... placing your awareness on... an emotional state, you might find that you get a lot of... backtalk. You get drawn in to your own experience and you talk to yourself about it... while it's occurring. That is *not* the meditation.

[00:28:04] So this morning you might... for the next half hour... try either one of those. The awareness resting on... an inanimate object... or resting on... an experience, such as... an emotional state. Such as... an *itch* in the body... or some other physical sensation. Don't jump back and forth... between these various methods. Pick one. Pick the one that you are drawn to the most... and *work* with it. And when it doesn't work the way you expected... or the way you hoped... continue to work with it anyway.

[00:29:11] *period of meditation*
sangha [00:54:09] *dedicating the merit*