

2018_05_27_pm1_Shamatha_LMC.mp4

recognizing our experiences arise and disappear like clouds without attraction aversion or commentary

[00:04:55] And so we have scheduled... a session of meditation and then a break and... another short session and then some... opportunity to... raise questions and... ask for clarity around certain aspects of the practice. ... So, good to remind ourselves, as we usually do... that going for refuge... is perhaps the most profound antidote... to the obstacles that keep us from realizing... our deepest and purest nature, which is the thing that we call the awakening mind. So, going for refuge, being... the single most profound method to enter into that activity. We follow it with... the little short liturgy about bodhicitta, which is the aspiration to attain *complete* awakening... for the benefit of all sentient beings. So we'll begin with that recitation together three times.

sangha [00:07:27] *reciting Refuge & Bodhicitta Prayer*

[00:09:15] Since our meditation is... meant to be the practice of... calm abiding, or zhinay... this evening, maybe the... same way we started this morning, might be helpful. Using a kind of... theme for this evening. ... Normally, the practice of calm abiding involves placing our awareness... upon something... perhaps inanimate... like a little statue or a picture, a stick or a stone or a coin. And then, when the mind is distracted, we bring... our awareness back to that little object. But it *can* be for us, that we are missing... an important piece of... that practice. Or, we might say, missing an opportunity.

[00:10:56] And so this morning we recommended... just a very slightly... modified approach to calm abiding. And that is... to rest your awareness... as you *would* do... in the practice of calm abiding... and then, while remaining in that state, as best as possible... experiences will, of course, arise. And generally speaking, when... we notice those... various experiences, we are attracted to them. And we began to... talk to ourselves perhaps, about those experiences. Or even the memory of past experiences, or the wish for some future experience.

[00:12:29] These can all be the *root* of distraction. So this evening, the suggestion is... try this alternative approach. Not as a replacement for all other... practices, but just as an alternative. When an experience arises... especially those which are *charged*... with some... attraction or aversion. Perhaps we had a difficult conversation with someone. Or we received some good news, or some bad news. ... Then the practice is to... make an effort... to recognize... that event, that experience.

[00:13:57] The recognition of the experience, for example, of... an emotional experience... might be, to just... recognize the experience... without any... conversation about it. ... And then, to... neither hold on to it nor push it away. ... As usual... relax. And as experiences arise, which they do *continuously*... due to the nature of... mind itself... experiences, the flow of them, is continuous. The ones which are not charged, which are not... imbued with emotional attachment... we don't notice much. The ones that are the most valuable... are the ones that... we *do* feel... strong attachment, or strong aversion to. The very things that we... try to avoid in our meditation.

[00:15:42] So here we say... not necessary to avoid... *any* experience. Best *not* to avoid... experiences that are arising, whether they're in the body... or in our minds. But just to *recognize*... experience as it arises. And after some time... dissolves. Appears to disappear. Like a cloud... disappearing in the sky. ... And when the experience... dissolves like that, then we just rest, naturally. Relaxed. ... And usually after a few short moments, another experience arises. A memory. A thought that we were working on. A wish for something in the future. A regret for something in the past. And so on.

[00:17:16] Now, the practice is... just simple. Recognize its appearance like you would recognize the cloud. ... If you see a cloud in the sky, you don't say, Oh, cloud. And yet, you know. You recognize it. And the next time you look, it's probably gone. So in that way... with intention... and with some energy... relate to your experiences as they arise. Recognizing them as they arise. Recognizing their natural dissolution... also. ... Continue like this... for the duration of this session.

[00:18:30] *period of meditation*
sangha [00:37:57] *dedicating the merit*