

2018_10_28_pm1_Shamatha_LMC.mp4

3 phases to manifest fruit of practice: hear instruction, contemplate that and then recognize experiences as they arise, a tip for closing session by quickly restarting and recognizing as fresh

[00:02:29] So we'll begin this evening with the... recitation of the refuge prayer, turning our minds to refuge... in the Buddha. Away from all of our... refuges in our ordinary worldly things.

sangha [00:03:06] *reciting Refuge & Bodhicitta Prayer*

[00:06:10] In all of our Dharma practices... there are... *essentially* three phases... that are considered... requirements... to fully understand... and manifest the fruit of the particular practice that you're engaged in. And those three things, which are delineated in many places, begin simply with a conceptual understanding. For example... if I say the instruction is... to relax your body... and relax your mind... and then pay attention... to any experiences which arise. So, now when we say... pay attention to any experiences which arise... we are intentionally moving from the conceptual... like the phrase, *relax your mind*, which is a *conceptual* instruction... but then... having heard the instruction conceptually... the intention is that we *relax*. Which now is *not* conceptual.

[00:08:48] But as we implement the instruction to... sit quietly and relax... we are meant to invoke the second phase of the understanding, which is... to do a little contemplation, which is *distinct* from the meditation. The contemplation... is often... explained as... simply *mulling over*. Kind of turning over in your mind, your understanding of what it is you're meant to do. ... So, perhaps you look at the instruction to relax the body. ... And maybe that instruction is simple. And so, easy... to relax.

[00:10:09] But if you ponder the instruction to relax the mind... that may not be... so obvious. But the *intention* of the instruction... is to engender... a certain... experience or series of experiences. And you cannot do that... accurately and correctly... if you're wholly and completely... involved *conceptually* in trying to understand the meaning of the words. So, if the instruction is... relax the mind. ... And once the mind is relaxed... if you look carefully... you will see that you are having some kind of experience. It could be anything! It could be... that this is an 'interesting' exercise. It could be that you have other kinds of judgments about the exercise. Like, you can't do it. You don't understand it.

[00:12:01] Or it could be that it is... very simple and straightforward. And you notice the experience you're having... and you put your awareness on it. And you hold that awareness on the experience which arose. Not the experience that you felt like you created, but the *actual*... experience... that may well have come from causes and conditions that we are not aware of. Something you ate yesterday... could change your experience today. A conversation you had with someone last year... could play a role in the experience that you're having in this moment.

[00:12:58] So, we don't want to go back... into those previous places. We want to just... *recognize* an experience as it arises. And wholly, completely... put our awareness on that experience... devoid of conceptualization. ... And while your mind rests on that... experience... which is in itself, completely non conceptual... the experience that you're resting your awareness on... will at some point... not be there. You may have *seen* it... dissolve and disappear. If your *attention* is very still... and clear... you may see the experience dissolve. If you see it dissolve,

you will know that you saw it dissolve. If you did not see it dissolve, then you probably just noticed that it was gone.

[00:14:59] And if you... keep yourself awake... you will... have another experience. And in the same way, you can put your awareness on *that* experience. Likely the experience will dissolve quickly. Not minutes, but probably... seconds. ... But you will make discoveries in that period, which are important. Important discoveries... in the *non-conceptual* realm. Not so interested, now, in the conceptual. After you have followed a number of experiences as they arise... it will become *easy* to recognize the experience... as it arises. *Easy*... to place your awareness on that experience... until it dissolves. And after it dissolves, *easy*... to wait for the next experience, which is usually a very short duration.

[00:16:36] And then each experience as they arise... continue to put your awareness on it... as best as you can without judgment... without projection, without attachment or aversion of any kind. And if you can do this, which is... so simple to understand the process... you can take this small practice... and over a period of months, years... elaborate it into something... even more profound. So, to the best of your ability, we'll take... 15 or 20 minutes. If you can, do your best with this instruction, then later in the evening we'll have time to... explore your understanding of it. So now, as best you can, just... rest your awareness... and follow each, each of the experiences as they arise.

[00:18:20] *period of meditation*

[00:35:13] Now... beginning to... close this session... it's important... to recall that ending our meditation session from... a positive or a successful standpoint is important. It's definitely... counterproductive... to merely be discouraged, if indeed you are... and to, at that point, just give up and decide maybe you'll do better at another time. This has proven to not work out so well.

[00:36:09] So, the better way to finish the session... is to first... a little quickly, start fresh. In other words... begin the meditation again. Just in a matter of seconds. Of course, the mind is continuously generating experiences... so, it only takes a few moments, at most... to recognize a *fresh* experience. As soon as that happens, place your awareness on it. Since you're going to close the session... don't try to... carry this session on for longer than just a few moments. Before you're distracted... let the meditation dissolve. ... And just rest in the space that is liberated by letting go of the practice itself. So, for just a few seconds, maybe 10 seconds... rest your mind like that... and then close.

[00:38:02] And then one last thing is we will dedicate... the benefit and the merit of the practice to all sentient beings.

sangha [00:38:20] *dedicating the merit*