

## 2019\_03\_17\_pm1\_Shamatha\_LMC.mp4

*stillness - both the benefits of and that it's okay to help body get accustomed to it*

[00:03:27] So, first of all, good evening to all of you. And I also want to say thank you to Sally Alworth who is sitting here this evening with me. And she will also share in the discussion period. Is that true? Yes. Okay. Just to make sure. Wouldn't want to embarrass you, [laughs] at least not unintentionally. So, our schedule this evening is our usual schedule at this time, which will be a period of shamatha. Also known as calm abiding. Followed by a break and then our open... discussion of *all* things.

[00:04:35] So, first of all, as usual, we will begin by turning our minds from all of our usual worldly activities to... refuge... *from* all of those worldly activities. Placing our awareness and our sense of who we are... in the context of refuge in the awakened mind itself. So, we'll recite the liturgy together three times.

**sangha** [00:05:22] *reciting Refuge & Bodhicitta Prayer*

[00:07:00] So, I'd like to begin with a reminder this evening, which we often either skip or forget... intentionally or otherwise. It's helpful sometimes when we're sitting for a period of half an hour or an hour... that some... of us have some trouble sitting for that duration. So, I'd like to invite you... if you *have* trouble sitting for the duration... just quietly get up and move. There's space in the back of the room. You could go back there and walk back and forth for a little bit. Just to get your legs accustomed... and you're back accustomed to being very still for a time.

[00:08:11] The stillness is important. The pain is not a requisite. The stillness will... stand... as... a kind of measure... of your mind stillness. ... So, it may feel a little bit awkward to stand up in the middle of the meditation, but I want to say that it's actually a good thing to do. Of course, it's not required. If you sit for the whole time, that's also good. But one thing is definitely not so good. And that is to make a... kind of *sporting event* out of it where you feel like you really just *must* put up with the discomfort and with the distractions that go along with it. So, please avail yourself of that if you feel any inclination whatsoever to do it.

[00:09:28] When we sit down to practice shamatha... we often think of settling our minds. As if our minds *needed* to be settled. And in one way, we could say definitely our minds need to be settled. If we are going to... enjoy the fruits of the meditation, stillness is very important. But it is also often the case that when we sit down to meditate... we find a few crumbs of stillness in an ocean of distraction. ... So, it's helpful to not think of that as an *unusual* state. The truth is, we say about the nature of mind... it is never really still. It runs day and night... 24/7... before even we were conceived... and long after we have left this body. So, take your meditation with... a dab of humor. A little bit of curiosity. Sit down. Be as still as you can. Move when you need to.

[00:11:25] *period of meditation*

**sangha** [00:47:23] *dedicating the merit*