

# 2020-09-17 Mindfulness of the Body (4 of 5)

## Physically Calming the Mind

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### SUMMARY KEYWORDS

mind, relax, body, relaxed, holding, mindfulness, tight, thoughts, hand, calm, thought, tense, notice, resisting, supporting, tighten, sensitive, tranquility, release, relaxation

### SPEAKERS

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So mindfulness of the body as a foundation from which to understand the mind, to relax the mind and to free the mind. That as the body becomes more relaxed, but not limp, relaxed and so that's why relaxed might not be the best word I think I said the other day. The more the Buddhist words are calm or tranquil and that there can be clarity in tranquility, a crispness even, and to have the body have a sense of crisp, clear. tranquility gives us the more the body's relaxed and has it is tranquil. The more we notice when the body is gets tense when we tighten up. And, and certainly it can be big movements, you know, suddenly you know, some, you know, some car comes barreling down the road in a way that's a little bit frightening and we tense up. And that's reasonable because we're getting ready to jump out of the way. But there's all kinds of ways in which we tense up the body and we have, you know, hundreds of little muscles in the body and they're all somehow connected to our feelings or emotions or thoughts, or reactions, and they're all part of the whole working. And as we get more and more settled, and the muscles are relaxed, those muscles can tighten up. If they're already tight, then it becomes the status quo and we don't really see the changing shifts. Nature what's happening inside if we're completely tense all the time, we don't notice really that we're maybe even notice we're tense. Sometimes we don't, we don't even know sometimes that's where we're tight. I know for me, I still to this day, sometimes when I sit down to meditate, only then do I notice that my shoulders are tight. Or some part of my body, there's a little bit of holding in the breathing, I can feel it's inhale, the top of the inhale, it's a little bit held back, there's a resistance there. And it's kind of the way I've been living my life being busy doing things and, and, and then meditation, I feel that and then I can relax. And I have that because I have a contrast. I know what it's like to have an ease for relaxed breath or relaxed shoulders. So to so the more relaxed the body gets, the more sensitive we become, to movements in the mind of clinging, of tightening. of resisting. We're more sensitive, we get to how we pick up our thoughts and be involved in thoughts. And that is really the name of the game, or something, the heart of it. It's not really the, the, what we're thinking about so much, but how we think how much we're into invested in our thoughts or reacting or thoughts, resisting them or grabbing hold of them or pushing them. And that how we our relationship to thoughts you can feel in the body if the body has become really relaxed and soft. And so because then you can see the difference. If the body is tense, you might not see the difference because it's just, you know, just all part of the same thing. So part of the benefit of really getting calm and concentrated and still and quiet is a whole different relationship to them. mind when we see little bit kind of if we have access, we have a toehold into how to work with

the mind. Not by necessarily shifting what we're thinking about, or changing how we're feeling. But by noticing the tensions associated with the mind, the attentions of the mind, and then relaxing. And even if we can't relax it, there's something about in relaxed way, holding the attentions of the mind, in awareness in mindfulness.

Maybe not trying at all to relax, but simply to hold it in an awareness that things begin to release themselves when they're held. It's kind of like if someone carried has a fist, a tight fist all the time. And they just, you know, so afraid are so angry and they're just like, oh, holding it in, you know, tight tie tight, and they don't even know that they're doing it. And someone comes along and says here, my friend here and they take their hand and they put it in rested in their hand and the person takes to relax your hand to relax your weight, let me get my hands support you. Generally, the tendency for that hand is to begin to open to relax like that. And the person is not doing the relaxing, not forcing the hand open, but just holding it and supporting it. And knowing it's accompanied, allows the hand to relax. The same thing with the contractions, the vise grip, sometimes it can be felt in the mind, the smallness that can the narrowness of the mind that if we just hold it in awareness sometimes and mindfulness just kind of help it feel safe and accompany with it, then sometimes something begins to release and relax and effects Some of the deepest forms of mental relaxation are calming there is letting go keep us from letting go. is so subtle, that to be the agent of doing the relaxing, doing the letting go is a coarser activity than what is needed at that time. And so it it just kind of goes in the opposite direction. And that what's really needed is not any doing on our part, but just that holding and just being and feeling. And then at some point, something begins to release itself. So we don't want to overdo being the agent of relaxation, relaxing and making ourselves calm. If we are pursuing that all the time, we're really missing the opportunity of really in a more deeper way, cultivating mindfulness, attention, even cultivating concentration, but relaxation is allowed to relax to come in so to feel the activities of the mind, physically, not easy. And some people I think are it's very foreign idea. But it starts becoming available when the whole system is more relaxed. And we start that mindfulness has become stronger and the heightened sensitivity to feel and sense what's going on. And there can be a slightest little movement in the mind to be even begin thinking. And it can be felt, I just I've ever so slight beginning of pressure somewhere in the mind, very soft, very relaxed. You know, it wouldn't be not unnecessarily uncomfortable, but you can feel the beginning of pressure. And then if you are there and relax that pressure just there and notice it carefully in mindfulness, that pressure can release. And the fun thing about this is that you'll never know what that thought was. Going to be. In other words, if you're really quiet and still very sensitive, you can notice the physical changes and associated with just the beginning of thought before a thought has been really formed. And it's that subtle the physicality associated with the mind. So the mind we it's easy to think of the mind as being disembodied, and being this abstract thing or this, this, I don't know what formless kind of thing that has no connection to the body. But in fact, the mind is very closely intimately connected with the body and the workings of the body, influence the mind affect the mind and exactly, which has priority which has the beta roll.

I think we should be very careful not to decide exactly how it is, in particular not to decide the major role for whole life and how we live is in our minds. The minds and body are closely related. So mindfulness of the body is a way of taking care of the mind, is a way of taking care of the good heart. And so to develop mindfulness of the body, both by relaxing and by just really seeing and sensing and feeling the body fully is a very significant way of caring, healing, supporting, and ultimately freeing the mind.

So I hope that in all these talks about mindfulness of the body so far, my hope is that you value your body That you become your friend of your body, that you really kind of trust the inner body, what the how the body feels like from the inside out. And don't give so much, especially in meditation, so much attention to what the body is from the outside in. You know what it looks like without feet, you know what you think about it, but just really feel it. And that's a powerful, opening a doorway to all kinds of benefits mindfulness of the body. Thank you