

Introduction to 5 hour Meditation

Friday, August 14, 2009

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Good evening. Tonight the format of the class is going to be different than we've done for these classes in the past. I hope you'll find it refreshing.

I'll give a brief talk here, then we'll sit for an hour, and then after that first hour I want to have a little feed back from you. So you can plan on being called on. And then we'll proceed with more sitting, and then we'll see. OK?

I promised you a fairy tale tonight. The fairy tale is the story of Sleeping Beauty. It may be slightly different, and a little more filled out, than the standard one you are used to.

A little background would maybe be in order first. Traditionally, in spiritual teaching, the feminine is recognized as the unborn, the un-manifest, our true nature, or wisdom, however you like to look at that. And the masculine is always representing the manifest; awareness or attention. And only when the two are present, awake, and resonating together do we have the experience of "presence."

The story begins with the false queen. The false queen is actually, of course, the wicked witch in disguise, the false feminine. If the true feminine is wisdom, what would the false feminine be? What pretends to be wisdom? Would it surprise you if I said knowledge?

The story goes that the false queen gives the true princess (wisdom) a poison apple. The princess eats the apple, and this causes her to fall into a deep sleep. And the only way the princess can awaken is to be kissed by the true prince of awareness. Additionally, something else that may be different than your favorite version of this story, the false queen surrounds the princess with ghouls, soldiers, dragons, lions, tigers, bears, wolves, and all manner of dangerous creatures. So when the princess sleeps, all the creatures sleep along side her.

So there she is sleeping in her bed, and all the dangerous creatures are sleeping as well, surrounding her bed, and along comes the prince of awareness. And as he moves into the area where the princess is sleeping, she begins to resonate with this awareness and it awakens her. That is what his kiss represents. It awakens her. But at the same time that it awakens her, it awakens all the soldiers with their weapons, the lions, the tigers, the dragons, the ghouls, and the wolves. And as they awaken they immediately begin hunting for the one who disturbed their sleep of ignorance, with the idea of chasing off the source of their disturbance, the prince, and/or killing him, whatever is required in order for them to get back to sleep again.

Our task tonight then is to keep the princess awake by keeping the prince present and not letting him get chased away or killed by the challenge presented by the

ghouls, the dangerous representatives of the false queen. The monsters surrounding the princess are those elements of our selves that masquerade as facts, as wisdom, as what is, when actually they are only substitutes for the real. And because they are so good at this false representation, they are very threatening and dangerous for us. But none-the-less, our task remains as it is; both the princess and prince must remain present and awake.

Last time we held this five-hour meditation class, I began by taking you through the primary practice of awareness meditation. I think most of you were here, though some were not, but all of you should be familiar with this by now. Tonight, as usual, we have three aspects of practice. We'll do Ki Breathing first, for a period of time, and then we will do Ki Meditation for a period of time, and then last we will do simple relaxed following of the breath. And then we will walk as a group for a few minutes, as I showed you Wednesday night. Then we will sit down, have a little feed back session, and then begin sitting again.

Two things are going to happen for you during these sessions this evening. And these two things will happen no matter which of the three methods of sitting we are engaged in. The first one (and please listen carefully because the distinction between these two, and what you do when these arise is very important) is that you suddenly return to awareness and realize that you have been following a story line in your mind, some fantasy, or you've been concentrating on a sensation, your knees hurt, your shoulder hurts, your back is sour, stiffness, ache, some physical difficulty, or some noise is bothering you outside, the bouncing of the basketball, some sensation has taken you and you suddenly awakened from that. Or it might be anxiety, some sense of emotional disorder that you've gotten caught up in. Suddenly you awaken from one of these three types of distraction and you are back in the present. In this case, you simply return to the exercise, which is being in the breathing or the experiences relating to Ki Meditation. If this is what happens, then that's the solution – just return.

The second thing that will happen is that you will be in attention, in awareness, you'll be experiencing presence, the princess will be awake, the prince will be present, but some one of these three distractions I just mentioned, a compelling thought/story, a sensation, or an emotion, will come up. In that case, you don't ignore it, because it hasn't taken you anywhere yet. You don't ignore it and go back to the exercise. You include it in the exercise. You leave it alone. You recognize that it's part of you, and allow it to be there with you. You don't do anything with it at all. You don't look at it, you don't witness it, and you don't watch it. Don't let there be any separation between you and it. It's part of what's happening. So you just include it, whatever it is.

Obviously number two is the higher way, the more beneficial. But both will happen to all of us tonight. As you get more and more into the practice, more of the second event will repeat itself again and again, and hopefully the first one won't be such a problem. The more calm your mind, the clearer, the less chance you will have of running off with one of these ghouls to never-never land. OK. Let's begin.