

Meditation: Seeing Impermanence with Insight Awareness

- We begin every day with meditation, using the breath as the primary point of focus. As the breath becomes calm, subtle, and relaxed, the mind becomes calm and relaxed.
- Our meditation is pleasurable. Each moment is a new moment. Each moment is a fresh moment. Each moment brings us new insights and new understanding. We begin to see things that we have never seen before. We attain what we have never attained before. We see things from a totally new perspective. Each new experience brings us refreshment, calm, coolness, joy, and happiness.
- Eventually, we may feel a calm and cool sensation spreading through the entire face, under the eyes, eyebrows, forehead, the middle of the head, and the back of the head. We don't do anything artificial or deliberate to gain this happiness. It happens naturally when the conditions are ripe.
- Then we may experience a very subtle, very peaceful, but very sharp and clear vibration in our neck, shoulders, and chest area. As we go on breathing normally, simultaneous with this vibration we may experience the expanding and contracting of the entire upper part of the body between the shoulders and the lower part of navel. We may experience each cell throughout the body vibrating and changing, rising and falling with an inconceivable rapidity.
- These sensations do not always arise in the same way and in the same order. Some people experience similar sensations elsewhere in the body or in another progression. It's important that we do not anticipate a particular experience or think that something is wrong if we do not feel it. The point is not the sequence of sensations. The point is what the experience means.
- The sensations remind us that nothing is static. Everything is dynamic. Everything is changing. Everything is appearing and disappearing. Feelings arise. Everything that we think is permanent is in fact impermanent and changing constantly. We cannot make anything stay the same for even two consecutive moments. One moment's experience seems to be pleasant, and the mind wishes to keep it that way. But before the mind even makes this wish, the sensation has changed. The mind moves with inconceivable rapidity. No matter how fast the mind moves to grasp the pleasant experience, the experience changes before the mind reaches it. Its arising is like a dream. Millions of tiny little experiences arise and pass away in an instant. They are like lightening. No, much faster than that. We cannot keep up with the speed of their change.
- We may think, "Let me see the beginning, duration, and passing away of this experience." But before this thought arises, the objects of our sense experience have arisen, reached their maturity, and passed away. Sometimes the mind can catch the beginning of an experience but not the middle or the maturity of it. Or sometimes we may experience the middle of a sensation but not the end of it; or we may catch the end of it but not the middle or the beginning. Nevertheless, we are mindful of the changes. That is good. At least we can notice the changes

taking place. It is even better to notice how fast things change We experience impermanence all day long, all night long, every waking moment.

- At this point, we may feel as if we are breathing with the rest of the world. We feel every creature from tiny ants to great elephants, minnows to giant whales, crawling worms to huge pythons. All of them are breathing to our rhythm or we are breathing to theirs.
- When we pay total mindful attention to the body, feeling perceptions, thoughts, and consciousness, we experience every tiny part of them constantly changing. When our mindfulness is established, the mind notices that every split second is new- Every molecule of the body, every feeling, perception, thought and consciousness itself --they are all changing at unimaginable speed.
- The breath moves in and out with this change. The sensations keep changing. Our experience of this change is changing too. Our attention and the intention to pay attention to noticing the change are changing. Our awareness is changing.

from *Meditation on Perception* by Bhante G. (pp 122-124)