

THE LONGING
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The Ninth Gyalwa Karmapa, Wangchuk Dorje, wrote in the Mahamudra text “The Ocean of True Meaning.”

“When the experiential signs of the resting mind have manifested, direct your attention to them. In that moment a sense of peace will arise. You will develop confidence in yourself, feel happy, and mentally be very blissful. You will not want to do anything else. You will often long to meditate.”

Nice work if you can get it. “Longing to meditate” does not mean longing to do what most of us call meditation which, because we are still beginners, has far too much trying and effort in it.

It is meritorious that we have made the effort to learn meditation and to practice meditation, but at some point we have to stop trying to meditate and just relax and let the mind rest. It is like pushing a sled at the top of the hill in the snow as a kid. At some point we have to stop pushing, hop in, and just ride.

Actual meditation is, as the 9th Karmapa points out in the above quote, more like not being comfortable or clear except in that relaxed state of clarity and luminosity true meditation provides. What most of us do now is what is called practice. We practice meditation. Nothing wrong with that, but eventually we have to stop practicing and just meditate.

True meditation requires that we try to learn the basic meditation technique, but then stop ‘trying’ to meditate, just relax, and allow actual meditation to take place.

We know we are making progress when we find ourselves looking around for what to do with ourselves and nothing feels just right, nothing except allowing the mind to settle, and then rest in that. Here is a poem I wrote a couple of years ago that addresses this:

MEDITATION IS NOTHING

The books say:
Seek a place of solitude,
And meditate,
But it’s just the other way round.

When meditation,
Naturally occurs,

There is no place in the world,
That you feel comfortable,
Try as you might.

Not here or there,
Not doing this or doing that.

Only nothing feels right.

You just want to hold real still,
Let the mind rest,
And then park yourself,
Somewhere out of the way,
Like on a cushion,
Or
In a place of solitude,
Because:

Nothing is going on.

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