

Meditating on Basic Goodness (Sessions 10-18)

In this series, we will explore the principle of basic goodness, the idea that all the peace, confidence, and other positive qualities that we seek are to be found in awareness itself. Below you will find more information on these topics, as well as suggested readings from Mingyur Rinpoche's books, simple instructions for daily meditation practice, and links to related teachings and downloadable guided meditations.

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Nurturing the Spark of Awareness

Meditation is a path of discovery. By giving ourselves the space to explore our hearts and minds, we gradually recognize that awareness itself is filled with all the qualities that we often feel are lacking in our lives. Recognizing the presence of compassion, inner peace, wisdom, and other positive qualities in each moment allows for the full expression of our basic goodness and its spontaneous manifestations of compassion and wisdom.

Reading: *Joy of Living*, pp. 46-53

Sessions 10-12: II.A.1 (opening session); II.A.2 (deepening session); II.A.3 (practice session)

Nurturing the spark of loving-kindness and compassion

Loving-kindness and compassion are rooted in the desire to be happy and free from suffering. Though they may not always be expressed in a skillful manner, these basic desires are present each and every moment. Once we recognize them in our own experience, we can nurture these qualities as manifestations of our basic goodness. In time, we can extend our impulse to be happy and free from suffering to all beings, who share these same desires.

Reading: *Joy of Living*, pp. 104-109

Sessions 13-15: II.B.1 (opening session); II.B.2 (deepening session); II.B.3 (practice session)

Nurturing the Spark of Wisdom

Like a mother bird away from her nest, when we do not recognize our basic goodness we experience a sense perpetual homesickness, a subtle feeling that there is a source of true and lasting contentment that is just out of reach. Though we don't always look for happiness in the right places, an inner compass lets us know when we are off-course. We can allow this insight to guide us back to our true nature, in which we discover an inner peace that does not depend on the outer circumstances of our lives.

Reading: *Joy of Living*, pp. 53-58

Sessions 16-18: II.C.1 (opening session); II.C.2 (deepening session); II.C.3 (practice session)

Daily Meditation Practices

*Sitting meditation practice**

Begin by *resting in open awareness*:

- Relax your mind and remain present.
- Don't try to focus on anything in particular or control your mind, yet do not get lost in thoughts either.
- Leave all of the sense doors open, without trying to block any aspect of experience.
- After a few minutes, *bring your awareness to the impulses that arise in your body and mind*:
 - When you feel the desire to move, or to react to a thought or feeling, notice that every impulse is an expression of your basic goodness, of your desire to find true and lasting happiness.
 - You do not need to change or alter your experience in any way. Simply embrace each moment with spacious awareness.
- End your session by letting go and *resting once again in open awareness*.

Meditation in action

- When you wake up, form the intention to recognize your basic goodness throughout the day.
- Remind yourself of this intention as often as you can:
 - Pick moments to remind yourself throughout the day, such as during breaks, at meal times, or when you get up to do something.

* If you are new to meditation, we recommend that you start by meditating twenty minutes each day, either in one session or two ten minute sessions.

- Place reminders, such as sticky notes or stickers, around your home and office in places where you will see them frequently.
- When you remember this intention, notice the desire to be happy and free from suffering in whatever you are doing, and recognize that this desire is the manifestation of your basic goodness.
- Once you've recognized your basic goodness, let go and rest your mind in open awareness as you continue your activity.

Teachings, Guided Meditations, and Other Resources

Online Readings

- We Always Have Joy [<http://learning.tergar.org/2011/11/21/we-always-have-joy/>]

Online Videos

- What Meditation Really Is [<http://learning.tergar.org/2011/07/08/tergar-community-members-accompanied-mingur-rinpoche-on-a-trek-to-his-childhood-home-in-the-mountains-of-nepal/>]
- We Are Always Looking for Happiness [<http://learning.tergar.org/2011/11/18/always-looking-for-happiness/>]