

# Guided meditations from the summer camp 2007 Tradition

These guided meditation are based on the Kalama Sutta

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## **Viewing Space between Hands (5-10 minutes)**

Good morning, start with open eyes, sitting -

We are in the tradition of 'The Buddha knowing the Dhamma', waking up to the present moment:

looking around who's here --- noticing space --- light --- notice how I feel right now ---

resting in body breathing ---

With eyes open, feeling the grounded-ness of the body --- can you do a little experiment?

Bring the palms of your hands together like this --- and now slowly move the hands apart, just an inch or two - noticing the **space** between your hands. --- Breathing into that space. ---

Move your hands slowly further apart, until the space is as wide as your face. ---

Now see, whether you can keep the focus of your eyes on near-sight, watching empty space between your hands, empty space with your hands as boundaries ..., or whether you can shift the focus to far-sight, watching the things or people who appear in this gap? Can you play with this, shifting the focus of your eyes a few times back and forth from near-sight to far-sight, from **empty space** to **space filled with 'things'**?

And while you are doing this, can you still feel your body sitting on the ground, breathing?

Watching from whole body-awareness. --- Very good.

Now, for the next step, make sure that you are firmly grounded in whole body-awareness, the body being like an axis in which you are centered: Please start **turning** the upper body first to one side, then to the other, watching the landscape between your hands shifting ---, quite a distance away from your inner axis. --- Keep breathing into that open space, still aware of your hands on both sides. ---

And when you feel well centered, you can open the space between your hands even wider and wider, like embracing the whole space, and still having your hands in sight as boundaries of this space. And in slow motion and well centered, keep moving your upper body with arms and hands fixed, allowing different angles of the room to come into view. --- . Keep breathing into this space, and from your center, allow to meet others in space. ---

This is a very open way of receiving, embracing space, embracing the presence of others. So, it's very important that you keep your body awareness, your centered-ness. ---

If you feel you lose your centered-ness, you may want to narrow the space between your hands, like closing the window a bit, looking out from a smaller window. ---

Keep exploring, meeting people from an angle which feels right. ---

(If there is time, they can stand up and explore this angle-viewing while walking freely. In a small room with many people, the angle needs to become smaller for this. Not to get lost in circulation.)

End with sitting with closed eyes for a minute, listening into space in centered-ness, breathing.

- bell -

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## **Body and Boundaries** (5-10 Minutes)

Hello, who's here? Sitting together after a full day ...

I will give some **general meditation instruction**, just as a reminder:

Starting meditation with an open mind, open eyes, taking in space, and what is in space ... -

then bringing awareness to the body, finding a comfortable position, back upright and relaxed, so that you can sit awake and comfortably for 5 minutes or so. Small children sitting with an adult. --

Please try to keep quiet for the meditation, and - very important - don't disturb your neighbours. When we sit with eyes closed, we need to feel safe and trusting.

To have a guided meditation for all different age groups together is a challenge. Please help with your attention and patience. Then, it will work for you, whatever age you are.

With **eyes still open**, look at the space between your body and your neighbours' bodies. Bodies seem to have clear, visible boundaries. (Although since we know about atoms, it's just particles moving in space ...) But if I'm not aware of my obvious physical boundaries, I can hurt myself or others. Walking, sitting, moving, I need a body-awareness which tells me where my body ends: I don't want to knock my elbow against the edge of a table or step on somebody's feet.

But how is your sense of body boundaries with eyes closed? - Please **close your eyes** to find out.

With eyes closed, do you have an idea of where the different parts of the body are? I'm sure you have.

Let's start at the top: You remember where your **head** usually is. But apart from that memory of 'my head' - what can you actually feel of your head right now? What are the sensations on top of your head? Do you feel a clear sense of boundary, a clear line, or what is it that you can feel there? --- A bit blurred? Not sure? ---

And where your **eyes** use to be - what is the actual sensation there? --- It may help, if you roll your eyeballs a bit, then the sensations are getting stronger. Feel something moving there? ---

And what do you feel of your **mouth**, when nothing is moving? --- You definitely know where it is, but what are the sensations there now? --- Can you feel your lips touching each other? --- If you move your lips a bit, does that help to feel them more clearly? ---

Good that your **breath** is going in and out. - So it's easy to feel where your nose is. --- A stream of air moving in, coming out again. - Can you feel if there is a difference in temperature between in- and out-breath? --- Where do you feel that? --- A sense of boundary there? ---

Please direct your attention to **whole-body awareness**. --- Do you get an overall sense that **one piece of body** is sitting there, with clear boundaries? --- Or is it more of a sense of different **islands of more intense sensations swimming in space?** --- **And areas which are not so clear in between?** --- A bit fragmented or transparent? ---

How do you feel about that? Is that a bit **funny** when you can't feel the boundaries of your body so clearly? --- Just be aware of how this affects you. ---

You can move your hands over the surface of your body, rub a bit - that helps to feel that **everything is in place**. --- You have known that anyhow. I'm sure. -

Take a deep breath. ---

- bell -

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## Forest Puja

Short reflection on environment / tradition:

Can you imagine: what was in this place 1000 years ago? Back by 1000 years, what would you see here? (let them guess) --- yes, probably all covered with thick forest ... Where is the forest gone? --- We speak about tradition and bring the positive values to mind. But there is also a more hidden tradition, a **shadow-tradition** of destroying nature, exploiting nature. Everywhere in the world, the forests are cut down.

So today we have a bit of woodland left here and try to make it healthy again. There was a school here for 35 years, and they led all the sewage into the woods, which was too much for the trees, so the trees got sick. And people carved their names into the bark of trees and hammered nails in. If you look more closely at the trees which look sick, you can find signs of that.

Can somebody read out what **Chief Seattle** has said about the Earth?

When we go into the woods now, I ask you to go with respect and stay on the main path.

I ask you all to do a quiet **walking meditation**, starting here and ending at the big tree down in the woods. Notice the ground under your feet, how is it changing from here all the way down: what is it made of? How does it feel when you walk on it? How is the atmosphere changing when you enter the woods? How is the light, the sounds, the feeling of space? Sense, listen, smell, use all of your senses to receive how the woodland is talking to you.

Please give space to each other and choose your own pace. When you arrive at our meeting place under the big tree, just stop and listen.

Let's go now, slowly.

Arriving at the big tree, wait until all are there.

A bit of sharing: What have you noticed on your way down here? --- What is this ground made of? How does it smell? Have you seen an animal on your way? - Why not? ...

How old, do you think, this tree is? - 100 years, 200, 300 or more? --- (let them guess)

What kind of tree is this? ---

It has seen many generations of people and animals, two or three wars, good and bad. Some ashes are buried here as well. An old tree is a powerful witness. A good place for meditation.

You must teach your children

that the ground beneath their feet is the ashes of their grandfathers.

So that they will respect the land,

tell your children

that the earth is rich with the lives of our Kin.

Teach your children

what we have taught our children,

that the earth is our mother.

If men spit upon the ground,

they spit upon themselves.

This we know:

The earth does not belong to man;

man belongs to the earth.

This we know.

All things are connected

like blood which unites one family.

All things are connected.

*Chief Seattle*

**Chorus:** *I am a child of light and I'm shining for you.*

*I am a child of light and I'm singing for you.*

Open your eyes to the magic of the skies,

Look to the stars above.

*I am a child of light and I shine for you.*

(repeat chorus)

Deep in the earth is the mystery of life

Rising and passing away.

*I am a child of light and I shine for you.*

(repeat chorus and first verse)

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### **Awareness of Liking, Not-liking, Attachment**

Good evening, look what is in the room, feeling how you are after a full day ...

Bring awareness to the body, comfortable position, close eyes.

Feeling body sitting, breathing, centering in that, then opening, listening ...

Meditation is a tool to understand the Dhamma, the truth of this moment. First, we let the mind come into the body and calm down a bit. Then the mind is still and clear to understand.

For example: Why are we happy or unhappy? What is the cause of stress, of Dukkha?

So, let's have a look. In this moment, is there anything coming to your mind which you **don't like**? Anything from now or today or yesterday? --- One thing or experience is enough: What is it that you wouldn't want to experience again?

--- Just allow an answer to come up in your mind. ---

And what is the reason why you don't want to experience it again? What is it that you don't like about it? --- And if it would happen again, what feelings would it bring up in you? Even as you **think** about it now, where in your body can you feel tension creeping up, discomfort? Can you feel that? --- If you dwell on it a bit, if you repeat for yourself why it is so wrong if that would happen again ... can you make this feeling of discomfort even stronger? ---

Isn't that interesting: We are able to wind ourselves up, to increase the level of discomfort, when we repeat for ourselves, what is wrong with this experience. When we think this thought again and again. --- Did you know that? If you do it with awareness, it's good for learning. If you do it out of habit, you are a victim of your thoughts.

Think of things you really **hate**. - How often have you told yourself that you hate to experience these things? --- How much do you believe it now? How much do you attach to that belief? --- Good to know. ---

Imagine there would be a way to **free** yourself from hate and stressful thoughts. - What could that be?

Let's try one. Say, there is a **sage** hidden in yourself who is able to switch your perspective from "I don't like this" to "Actually, this is a useful experience! Can you imagine just one reason why that what happened to you and which you don't like, could also be a useful experience? ---

I can give you an **example**: I get a flu, and I really don't like to get sick. "There is so much I need to do, and getting sick now is just making it all worse! Really!" This is what I tell myself. - **Is it true?** Can I absolutely know that this is true? - I ask my inner sage: Could there be a reason why it may be **good** to get sick now??? --May be, she would smile and say: "Have a good time out. You were doing too much. You need a break. Enjoy!" - Thank you. That makes me feel better immediately. Yeah, have a rest for a day or two ... And have time to reflect on why I was in stress. ---

Think of your bad experience today. Why was it **so bad** when that happened? - Now ask your inner sage: "Is there any reason why this could also be a good experience for me?" - And listen what the sage comes up with. --- May be, there's **something to learn** from it? --- Really listen and see if you can find a welcoming answer, and if that makes you feel better. ----

What thoughts do we believe in? Which thoughts will make you feel happy and which ones will make you feel unhappy? ---

Can anyone be happy when you **hate** reality? When you battle with reality, who has the stress? --- Find out for yourself.

Is it better to be **interested** in reality, to see what it can teach you? ---

Just sit with this for a moment. - Are you still breathing? -bell -

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### **Kalama Sutta: Discernment of unskillful states (greed)**

Good morning. Good to see you all ...

When we want to meditate, it's good to find a comfortable position, get a sense of who and where our neighbors are, what the atmosphere is like, listening ...

And then we can close our eyes ...

Start turning your attention inwards. Connecting with the ground. ---

A bit of **body-sweeping**: Just sense, notice, what are the sensations in my feet ... , my bottom, belly, chest, neck, head, nose ... breath coming in, going out, soft, calm. ---

With a bit of body sweeping, the mind can calm down, attention alert and focused on sensations in the body. --- That is a good starting point for discernment. Discernment of what? - Of what we can know for ourselves. In the Kalama Sutta, it is told that the Buddha was asked for advice for what is the truth. And he said, **"What do you think, Kalamas? When you know for yourselves that, 'These qualities of mind are unskillful ... these qualities of mind, when adopted and carried out, lead to harm and to suffering' - then you should abandon them."** And he asked the Kalamas, **"When greed arises in a person, does it arise for welfare or for harm?"**

So this is, what I ask you to reflect upon now. What is your experience with greed? ---

Greed is not like being hungry, when you haven't had your meal yet. When you are hungry, you need to eat something, and then it's ok. That's normal. You don't have to go hungry. - No, greed is more like never being satisfied with what I have. Always wanting something better, wanting what your neighbor has got ... - more like that. Do you know that from yourself? What do **you** do when you are greedy? --- Do you experience greed as a pleasant state of mind or a rather unpleasant one? --- How do other people react when they notice that you are greedy? --- What do you observe other people do when they are greedy? --- Do you like being with greedy people? ---

When the Buddha asked the Kalamas, **"What do you think, Kalamas? When greed arises in a person, does it arise for welfare or for harm?"** - the Kalamas replied, **"For harm, Lord."** And the Buddha continues exploring with them, **"And this greedy person, overcome by greed, his mind possessed by greed, kills living beings, takes what is not given, goes after another person's wife, tells lies, and induces others to do likewise, all which is for long-term harm and suffering."** And the Kalamas agree. ---

Would you agree as well? --- That's pretty strong, isn't it? Do you know anybody who would go so far in following his greed? ---

I think you are pretty lucky that you live with people who try to keep the **5 Precepts**. We can trust each other. - The 5 Precepts are our protectors. ---

So what do you do when you feel you are going into a greedy state of mind? - How would you protect yourself, let's say, from taking something which is not yours? ---

Are you still breathing? ---

- bell - (any questions?)

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## **Non-Judgement**

Hello. Did you have a good day? ...

Let's make ourselves comfortable for a short meditation. --- Ready to close your eyes?

Take a few deep breaths --- feeling the body breathing --- listening into space from your grounded-ness --- alive ---

Are you ready for some discernment? - Think of something today when you felt somebody was doing something **wrong**, something they shouldn't have done. --- What did you tell yourself why it was wrong?

--- From your perspective - what **should** they have done instead? ---

What do you think, was the reason for the **other** person to do what they were doing? --- If you would have been that person - would it have felt right or wrong what they were doing? ---

Mh. - So, is it possible that something seems wrong to you, but right for the other person? --- What to do in such case? ---

Do you know how **war** starts? --- My personal war starts with **me**, thinking the other did something wrong, and I have to defend myself. Imagine, somebody saying to me: "Sister Cittapala, I don't like your guided meditations. They are boring." - Huh. If I have a bad day, I don't like to hear that. So may be, I start attacking: "How can you say that to me, that is a mean thing to say. I do my best here and you put me down. It's your own fault, when it's boring for you." - Possible? --- And if I would believe my judgmental thoughts, I would get grumpy with that person, and each time, I would look at them I would find something wrong with them, I am sure! ---

Sounds familiar? Do you have judgmental thoughts about somebody here on the Camp? - What are your judgements about them? --- Do these judgmental thoughts make you feel happy or resentful? --- If they don't lead to happiness, if they lead to suffering, why not drop them and find thoughts which would lead to happiness? ---

Come back to the person who doesn't like my guided meditations. If I had a good day - how would I respond? --- If somebody doesn't like something, I believe they have a reason for that. Why not find out? Instead of feeling defensive, I could be **interested** why they don't like it. I could ask them: "What is it that you don't like? What would you like instead?" --- I'm sure, we would have an interesting conversation, and I would learn something about the other person. ---

I may still continue with the guided meditations, but I'm sure, I would change it a bit, so that the inspiration I got from this person, is included. --- (Just to let you know)

Now, go with your attention to the sensations of your body breathing. Listen to the stillness. ---Think of a person here on the camp you feel judgmental about. What was it what they said or did which you don't like? --- Would you have the courage to go to them and find out why they reacted that way? --- Imagine, you ask them, what they felt when they said that or did that? You could ask them what they need. --- Just sit with this for a moment. ---

Breathe into your heart, making space. ---

- bell -

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## **What do you trust?**

Good morning ... - Good to be here together ...

Relax into who you are and where you are ... and slowly, slowly close your eyes. ---

Can you feel the **ground**, trusting that it is receiving your weight and is holding you? --- Good old mother

earth, holding all of us. --- (wait for longer)

Can you feel your **breathing**, gently receiving air, releasing air? --- Are **you** breathing, or what is it, that is breathing? Nothing to **do**, just allowing it to happen. --- Even during the night, when you are not aware of it, you can trust, that something is breathing. ---

Listening into **space**. --- So many people in this room, whom you can trust, so that you can dare sitting with eyes closed. --- (I hope.) A social space, trustworthy like this is wonderful. -

And **nature** - weather changing - darkness of night, dawn, daylight, sun moving (so it seems), clouds moving, rain coming, going, temperature cold, warm, leaves starting to get yellow ... - Can you trust that nature is changing? -----

And **your feelings, your mood?** - How do you feel right now? --- Can you trust that you will feel happy all the time? --- Or can you trust, that they will change all the time? --- On what is that depending? ---

Your **body?** - Can you trust that it will stay the same? - Being born as an adult? -

Always healthy? Always sick? - What is trustworthy in your body? --- Cells coming and going, form changing? - Can you have trust in that? ---

Your **thoughts?** Can you trust your thoughts? - Thoughts happening: Good thoughts, bad thoughts? - What seems to be right today, will that still be right tomorrow? ---

Your **mother, your father, your friends, your teachers?** - Can you trust that they will be there for you and love you - today, tomorrow, always? -----

And what about **yourself?** - Do you trust yourself? - What is it in yourself that you can trust in? - Can you trust that you can know what is **skillful** and what is not? - That you can stop yourself from actions that will bring painful results and choose those which will have helpful results? ---

If **everything** is changing, if everything **which has a beginning will have an end** - what then can you really trust in? ---

What about **awareness?** That in you which knows the conditions as they are, right now? - Can you trust that? --- **Buddha** means 'that what knows'. Do you want to bow to the Buddha? ---

- bell - (read: Shh! Don't tell Mister Wolf)

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## **Truth - Know for yourself**

Sitting in your body, grounded, breathing - how does that feel? --- This is the very simple truth of know. Just knowing so much. --- Listening into space inside ..., outside - welcoming what is. ---

Finding out more about truth?

As you are resting in this stillness of now, I will give you a list of words. Simply notice what comes up in

your mind with each word, what feelings and own experiences with each issue:

immoral ... - blameworthy ... - criticized by the wise ... - actions which lead to ruin and sorrow ...

Notice and feel the impact, these words have on your mind -, and then allow it all to cease. ---

Coming back to the sensations of the body breathing. Making space around all new thoughts and images, let them dissolve into space. - Just stay in spacious awareness. ---

And again, you will hear a list of words. Please notice what arises in your mind with each of them, allowing feelings and memories of your own experiences to come up:

moral ... - blameless ... - praised by the wise ... - actions which lead to well-being and happiness ...

Notice the impact these words have on your mind, feel it and let it dissolve into space..., coming back to the sensations of the body breathing in space. ---

In the **Kalama Sutta**, the Buddha was asked by the Kalamas in which kind of truth they should believe in. - He didn't recommend tradition, views and opinions and reason or logic or following the teacher you like - but, from his understanding, in order to find clarity about what is skillful and what is not, you better pay attention to the results of your own actions and listen to those people who have already mastered that skill. So, **this** was his advice:

*"But indeed, when you know for yourselves - these things are immoral, these things are blameworthy, these things are censured by the wise, these things, when performed and undertaken, conduce to ruin and sorrow - then indeed do you reject them." ---*

*"When you know for yourselves - these things are moral, these things are blameless, these things are praised by the wise, these things, when performed and undertaken, conduce to well-being and happiness - then do you live acting accordingly."*

Notice the impact these words have on your mind. --- Body breathing in space. ---

- bell - (read story for children: **The really rude Rhino**)

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## **Metta - Experience well-being in your body and the love to heal**

Hello - full of impressions of the day? - Ready for meditation? ...

Take a deep in-breath and, on the out-breath, close your eyes and allow your attention to settle into the body, feeling what is sitting there. ---

Feel the sensations of breathing ..., the gentleness of the breath coming in, going out, coming in, going out, effortless - calming - sense of well-being. ---

Where in your body do you feel well-being? - A sense of warmth, relaxed-ness, happiness? - A sense of sweetness ..., softness? --- It may be around the heart ..., the belly ..., the nose where the breath is coming in and out ..., it may be your hands lying in your lap, warm, soft? --- Just rest your attention in that place where you feel most at ease with yourself. ---

Start breathing towards that place, breathing in, draw all good energy of the universe towards that place, and, breathing out, spread the sense of warmth and well-being through your whole body. -

Make this place a powerful breeding place from where you can radiate love and well-being throughout your body, like a sun. - Keep doing this for a while.

Now think of all the good and kind things you have done today, helping somebody, helping yourself - in a big way or a small way. ---

And from these memories of your own goodness, is there a sense of joy and warmth welling up? -With each in-breath, start drawing this joy and warmth into your breeding center, and with the out-breath, spread it out through your whole body. ---

Is there any part in your body, which hurts or feels a bit tense? - Then direct the flow of good energy with the out-breath towards that part and allow the breath to wash out all discomfort. ---

Are you willing to go a bit further? - Then think of somebody who was in pain today. Bring the memory of that person up in your mind and, with every out-breath, spread love and well being to that person. --- Your love heals. ---

Don't be afraid that your center of well-being is getting empty when you are spreading love. The goodness of your love-spreading allows you to receive all the love of the universe. Feel it. Breathe in love, with your love-giving, you have made space for it. ---

For one moment, you can now breathe in love from the universe and breathe out love through your whole being, becoming a radiating sun of love for all beings in the world who are in pain and stress. --- Feel the warmth of your love spreading in your body and beyond. ---

May all beings be free from pain and suffering.

May all beings realize the joy of spreading love.

- bell - (read: Greedy, grumpy Hippo)

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## **Awareness, the only refuge in a world of change**

Good morning ...

Coming to the body sitting here, breathing sensations - gentle, soft - sense of well-being. ---

Knowing the truth of now, the Buddha knowing the Dhamma. ---

Today is the big day, **presentation** in the afternoon, many things to prepare. - What are your feelings around that? --- Where in your body can you feel that? ---

Listening into the stomach - what is the feeling-sensation there? - Any tension, bubbling excitement, ...? - Whatever feeling is there, breathing into that ..., making space around that feeling. --- Awareness embracing sensations. Awareness of the way it is, listening into space - open for change? ---

**Celebrating our goodness and friendship.** Presenting what we have done this week. - Any feelings with that? - Joy, gratitude, anticipation ...? - Where in your body can you feel that? --- Being aware of these feeling-sensations. - Awareness embracing what is. ---

**Things changing, ceasing** - the Camp is coming to an end, you know that you have to leave your friends ... - any feelings about that? - If there is sadness, not wanting to leave, trying to stay cool ... - whatever feeling - can you let it be there, notice, embrace it with awareness? - Can you have the courage to feel it? - Awareness makes you strong, awareness is not afraid of anything, but it can know sadness, it can know resistance. This **knowing of what is now** is your island. Buddha.

**Beginning and ending.** Can you feel your **breath**? Awareness of in-breath beginning, in-breath ending, out-breath beginning, out-breath ceasing. --- Is it true that everything which has a beginning, has an end? --- Just notice your body breathing. ---

**Does awareness have a beginning and an end?** --- Or is it always there? - Is it more that sometimes I am conscious of awareness, sometimes not? If I am not conscious of awareness? where is my consciousness instead? Is it lost in thoughts or attached to what is happening in some events out there? ---

Simply coming back to awareness of the body breathing, the body sitting on the ground. --- Resting in conscious awareness. ---

- bell -

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