

## **7 PRINCIPLES TO BALANCE BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT**

Refresh on the Mountain

David P. Milligan, Presenter

Lesson I

### **Introduction to the Seven Principles**

Everything is spiritual.

Spiritual practices assist us to experience the sacred.

The ultimate goal of spiritual practice is awakening.

The experience of awakening is to know our true Self and our relationship to the sacred.

This results in the following:

- The heart begins to open
- Fear and anger melt
- Greed and jealousy dwindle
- Happiness and joy grow
- Love flowers
- Peace replaces agitation
- Psychological and physical health improves

Spiritual practitioners experience greater self-control and self-actualization

Spiritual practices transform hearts, minds and lives

- Within ourselves we find our deepest self, our true Self and recognize that we are not only more than we imagined but more than we can imagine
- We see that we are a creation of the sacred, intimately and eternally linked to the sacred and forever graced and embraced by the sacred

The discovery of your authentic Self is the discovery of the sacred

There are two realms of reality

- The everyday realm of physical objects and living creatures
- This realm is accessible to us via the five senses and studied by sciences such as physics and biology
- Beneath the physical realm lies the realm of consciousness and Spirit. This cannot be known through the physical senses. This realm creates and embraces the physical realm and is its source
- Space or time or physical laws do not limit this domain, since it creates space, time and physical laws. It is unbounded and infinite, timeless and eternal

Human beings partake of both realms

- We are not only physical beings but also spiritual beings
- We have bodies, but also at the core of our being a center of transcendent awareness
- This center is described as pure consciousness, spirit or Self
- During our earthly incarnation we cannot favor or ignore any part of our being

Human beings can recognize their divine spark and the sacred ground that is its source

- This is the purpose of spiritual practices
- When the mind is still and clear, we can have a direct experience of our Self
- This is not a concept of or an intellectual theory about the Self
- It is an immediate knowing, a direct intuition in which one not only sees the divine spark but identifies with and recognizes that one is the divine spark and in oneness with the Sacred

Realizing our spiritual nature is the highest goal and greatest good of human experience

- This is the beginning of the end of searching for a way to meaning and a way to journey into deeper experience of your authentic personhood and a broader knowing of the sacred.
- We underestimate ourselves. We are sadly mistaken when we see ourselves as merely temporary bodies instead of timeless spirit.
- You are more than you think! Look deep within, and you will find your ego is only a tiny wave atop the vast ocean that is your real Self.

- Look within, and at the center of your mind, in the depths of your soul, you will find your true Self, that this Self is intimately linked to the sacred, and that you share in the unbounded bliss of the sacred.

#### Understanding the art of practicing

- We do not practice in order to make ourselves better
- We do not practice in order to gain favor with God
- We do not practice with specific goals and agendas
- Our practice will be unique
- Our practice will be without timeline
- Our practice will lead us to unexpected places
- Our practice will not lead us to a place of superiority
- Our practice will always reflect in our living
- Our practice will deepen our sense of interconnectivity

#### **Seven Principles for Balancing Mind, Body, and Spirit**

- **Principle One: Understand your desires and redirect your drive**
- **Principle Two: Ground your emotions by opening to love**
- **Principle Three: Live justly with flexibility of mind and heart**
- **Principle Four: Still the mind**
- **Principle Five: See the sacred in all things**
- **Principle Six: Grow into wisdom**
- **Principle Seven: Live your life on behalf of the world**

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Lesson II

### **Principle One: Understand your desires and redirect your drive**

Everybody wants to be happy

Few understand what makes for happiness

Basic needs must be met (food – shelter – clothing – safety)

Further income and possessions add remarkably little to our wellbeing

There are four areas of striving in life

- Material possessions
- Sensual pleasure and love
- Moral understanding and community duties
- Spiritual liberation

Integrating these four areas of striving ensures that the first three are not pursued unethically or excessively, and orients all of life and its many delights to the inconceivable delight of enlightenment

There is a substantial difference between desire and attachment

The attraction of attachment

Attachment is the cause of suffering

The dilemma of attachments – dueling desires

Attachments are fueled by illusions

Attachments become addictions

There are two ways of handling attachments

- Try to satisfy attachments
- Change your mind

Ways to reduce attachments

- Recognize pain as feedback
- Examine the experience of craving
- Reflect on the cost of craving
- Recognize the underlying thoughts and beliefs

Our attachments are unnecessary psychological and spiritual baggage

We fear that relinquishing our attachments will leave us apathetic and joyless

There is a balance between asceticism and attachments

Find your soul's desire

Discovering higher motives

- Make a commitment to learning
- Become firmly grounded in this incarnation
- Move past competing cravings
- Develop a mind that is calm and clear
- Outgrow our compulsions
- Our heart and mind become transformed

This is not about giving up but taking on

Ways to redirect our desires

- Think of a long time
- Dedicate your activities to a higher goal
- Discover your future self

The delight of effortless being

## **Principle Two: Ground your emotions by opening the heart to love**

Emotions can be difficult

Challenging emotions such as fear, anger, jealousy, and despair are among the most difficult, sometimes destructive, of all experiences

Difficult emotions are a natural part of life

Our emotions are essential to survival

Unskillful emotional responses

Judging or condemning difficult emotions

Ignoring or defensively repressing emotions

Indulging or inflaming emotions

We can become passions slaves

The goal is balance not suppression

Every emotion has value and significance

A life without emotional response is isolated from the richness of life itself



We can learn to experience the inevitable ups and downs of life without being thrown into wild emotional swings

Two of the most powerful and difficult of all emotions are fear and anger

The fantasy of fear

There is fear in the face of danger

There is fear of the future

It is a fantasy of what your imagine will happen

We respond to fear with avoidance

What we are unwilling to experience runs our lives

We do not usually fear reality, what is actually happening, but rather our own thoughts and fantasies about what may happen

The Agony of Anger

Anger is an emotion of enormous power

Uncontrolled rage is one of the greatest causes of suffering and barriers to awakening

When anger becomes a way of life, it can devastate not only the mind but also the body

Buddhists compare anger to a forest fire roaring through the mind, consuming what is good

How do we master and reduce difficult emotions?

Move from victim to creator

Explore the emotion

Recognize the high cost of the emotion

Learn to release emotions through relaxation

Develop open communication

Live a life of forgiveness

Learn the art of reconciliation

Cultivate love itself

Gratitude: The doorway to love

Say grace for everything

Recall loving people

Be willing to receive from others

Practice kindness

Love connects us beyond ourselves

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Lesson III

### **Principle 3: Live justly with flexibility of mind and heart**

The Golden rule is the beginning and end of all moral behavior

Moral behavior is not based on fear and guilt but on the benefits of virtue

Moral behavior is not a fixed set of rules but a deep connection to humanity

Unethical actions disconnect us from others and ourselves

Unethical actions inflict an immediate emotional cost

Unethical actions tend to be self-perpetuating

Unethical actions take on a life of their own - beyond our control

Unethical actions place us in an unjust relationship with those around us

Ethical living connects us to our authenticity and to each other

Ethical living brings happiness and also awakening

Ethical living heals our minds

Ethical living fosters qualities of love and generosity

Ethical living is crucial for ongoing spiritual work

What we intend for others we create for ourselves

“If you contribute to others’ happiness, you will find the true goal, the meaning of life.”  
- The Dalai Lama

What is an ethical life?

Right Speech

Good words are worth much and cost little

Warm words can heal, unethical speech can destroy

This requires us to develop a sensitivity to other people and to our own motives and emotions

Right Action

Doing that which is beneficial to everyone, including yourself

The trap of ritualism

When goodness is lost, there is morality  
When morality is lost, there is ritual  
Therefore, the masters concern themselves  
with the depths and not the surface

Do no harm

Heal the past

Undo any damage

Avoid attack - aim for solutions in which everyone wins

Communicate

Learn

Tell the truth

Give up gossip

Live to heal

Live with a flexible mind and an open heart

#### **Principle Four: Still the mind**

Our minds are restless creatures

We jump from past memories to future fantasies

We occupy our thinking with plotting and planning, pursuing pleasures and fleeing fears

We end up feeling frazzled during the day and exhausted by the end of it

Any attempts at taming the mind show us that the mind has a mind of its own

What we put into our minds is just as important as what we put into our mouths

What we concentrate on we become

Once we can control attention, we can concentrate on anything we wish

The challenge of mastering attention is not so much that it is a painful process but rather that it is a slow one

Meditation is a universal practice to master the mind

Multiple ways to meditate

Choose a focus for attention

When attention wanders gently return it to this focus, again and again and again

Gradually the mind becomes less fickle and attention remains more focused

Transforming the busyness of daily life

Do one thing at a time

Transform daily activities sacred rituals

Transform interruptions by a mindful choice to engage

Sustain awareness of your breath

Never judge yourself or the mind for its wandering ways

With gentle love and respect keep returning your attention to your focus/breath

Establish a mindfulness routine

The concentrated mind is not only calm and wide, but also clear.

A calm mind offers a clear mirror with which to look out at the world and in at ourselves

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Lesson IV

### **Principle Five: See the Sacred in all things**

The Jewish Talmud observes, we do not see things simply as they are, but also as we are

What we perceive is selected by our desires, colored by our emotions, and fragmented by our wandering attention

What we see outside us reflects what is inside us

We often live semiconsciously because our awareness is clouded and our spiritual vision asleep

The costs of unconsciousness

Absentmindedness

Self-Alienation

Automaticity

Life in illusion

The benefits of living mindfully

Interpersonal sensitivity

Refining the senses

Knowing one's mind

Freedom from automaticity

The healing power of awareness

It inhibits unhealthy mental qualities such as fear, anger, greed and being judgmental

It cultivates and strengthens healthy qualities such as joy and love

It cultivates a healthy balance between body, mind and spirit

Ways to be more mindful

Mindful eating

Mindful music and entertainment

Mindful listening

Mindful awareness of beauty

Mindful awareness of your body

Mindful speech

Seeing the sacred in all things

Developing a new manner of seeing

The sacred within

The sacred world

The sacred in relationships



## **Principle Six: Grow into wisdom**

We are inundated with information

It is an ever more difficult task to synthesize all that we know

The key to unlocking this vast sea of input is wisdom

What wisdom is not

- Intelligence
- Knowledge
- Dramatic experiences

Personal Power

Defining wisdom: Wisdom is deep understanding and practical skill in the central issues of life – those crucial and universal concerns all of us face simply because we are human

Finding meaning and purpose in our lives

Managing relationships and aloneness

Acknowledging our limits and smallness in a universe vast beyond comprehension

Living in inevitable uncertainty and mystery

Dealing with sickness, suffering, and death

Wisdom as vision and understanding

Clear vision penetrates below surface appearances to recognize the deeper nature of things

Clear vision sees things as they are, and understanding is born from actively investigating and analyzing the way things are

Clear understanding is able to identify crucial principles for living well

The visionary sees and explores three things: life, mind, and the nature of reality

### Life

The causes of happiness

The causes and cures of suffering

Commitment to finding a better way to live

### Mind

The power of the mind to both create and cloud our experience

Understanding the untamed nature of the mind

Training the mind becomes a pressing priority

### The Nature of Reality

Deeply probing experience to see into the fundamental nature of reality

Discovering the difference between theoretical knowledge and direct experience

Accepts that our understanding is finite in an infinite universe

Wisdom as practical application

Practical wisdom is skill in living, especially in responding to the central issues of life

At its deepest it is living in harmony with the sacred

Wisdom leads us to live harmoniously and compassionately with others

The wisdom of ignorance – empty so that you can fill

Sources of wisdom

In nature

In silence and solitude

From the wise

In ourselves

From reflecting on the nature of life and death

Life is inconceivably precious

Life is short and death is certain

Life contains inevitable difficulties

Our ethical choices mold our lives

The wisdom of pure consciousness

Nondual wisdom – The inseparability of spirit and matter, of mind and manifestation, of inner and outer, personal and transpersonal, sacred and mundane, Self and God

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Lesson V

**Principle One: Understand your desires and redirect your drive**

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We all want to help

Conflicting forces can cause generosity to whither

Generosity grows as the heart opens

Three stages of generosity

Tentative giving

Friendly giving

Royal giving

The joy of service – “helpers high”

Service as the supreme practice

Service is not only an expression of awakening, but also a means to awakening

## Principles for cultivating generosity

Seek inspiration from others

Find how you would like to help

The right motivation for giving

Start small

## Principles of awakening service

Acting for a higher purpose

Release attachment

Learn for all that you do

## Exercises in generosity and service

Turn work into service

Use the power of dedication

Change pain into compassion

Practice all-embracing kindness

Give anonymously

## Service and spiritual vision

## A world in need

## **Putting it all together: awakened heart – awakened mind**

Enjoy yourself

Just begin

Make practice the priority of the day

Find spiritual friends and communities

Find a guide

Don't be discouraged by apparent setbacks

Start again

Practice for the benefit of everybody