



Session 23 – Family

Family. For many people, can be the most challenging of relationships that there are. When I'm talking about family, I mean your mother, your father, your brothers and your sisters. That's what I'd like to reflect on in this session.

When I say it's the greatest challenge, some people might be born into families where most things move really fluently and a very stable and happy and a lot of security. And that's wonderful. But they also will have their challenges. Don't underestimate that.

Most people are born into families that have a lot to learn and that can be one of your frustrations for the whole of your life. So my first piece of insight would be, don't ever let that be the greatest frustration of all your life.

Meditation is about observing things as they are. You came into the family that you came into that was not of choice. We're not talking about friends here or the partner that you chose, we're talking about where you were born. Some of you got great opportunities. Some of you didn't. Some of you were handled well. Some of you weren't. But to understand these relationships helps very much to reflect on the acorn and the oak.

If we look at an acorn, we know that it is made of exactly the same material as an oak. It's beautiful, it's the seed of greatness. It grows over many hundreds of years to become something fabulously beautiful. And in your family and in life, there is also the acorn and the oak. We would never look at an acorn and think, *'God, you're annoying'* or *'what a frustrating acorn'* or *'you're nowhere near as good as the oak'*. They're just two different things that are the same.

When we learn to look at our family as they are, not as we want them to be, exactly what you're doing with meditation. So when you sit down, you're observing your thoughts. They are as they are, not as you want them to be, maybe. So looking at family members like that brings a certain kind of detachment and maybe a renewed love, no matter what has happened in the past. Yes. You've been abused or you've been hurt or they've been terrible things going on. But that is as it was. And every time you see your mother or your father or your brothers or your sister, it's a new moment. And no matter what has happened in the past, it really is up to you to stand in your centered energy from kindness and to be there from your own balanced mindset.

I know that I'm asking a lot, and many of you, as myself have gone through years of psychotherapy to try and figure this stuff out. But with all honesty, it was meditation that helped me with it in the end. Why? Because I realized with meditation that I couldn't even change my own thoughts sometimes. You know, so I started to stop trying to control things and change them. I started to accept things as they were. And when we're in these sometimes very murky relationships, we don't. We keep saying *'oh there they go again. I can't believe they*

didn't do that. Why do I always have to do it? Yeah, you should have done it. That's mine. No, I want that.' And it just it just never stops.

Is that really how you want to live? If you're really honest with yourself and this is confrontational what I will say, it's up to you how you are with your family. Everybody is allowed to behave in any way that they want. If you get entangled in complicated relationships, that has been your choice. And it was very confrontational for me to get that. But it also was incredibly wonderful because I didn't have to get entangled in it anymore. I started observing my patterns because that's what you get with meditation, you observe your patterns. I recognized it when I was starting to get those things, you know, and I recognized when my family got that.

It doesn't make the relationships immediately good. What is good? Or as you want them to be. That's not the point. But it brings you an inner calm and that's what observing the silence behind the awareness is all about.

It doesn't mean that you don't care. I'm much more caring than I ever used to be when I was so involved. Now the heart opens and you're involved, very often if it's difficult relationships, with silence just by being there. And that'll be very strange for people who know you, because you might have got involved in all kinds of crazy arguments that you know were a total waste of everybody's time. Only sucking mental energy. And now you choose to stay calm and to be helpful. But you also know where your limits are because you're starting to recognize how much can I do and how much can I not do.

I'm encouraging you to use your meditation to heal anything that's happened in your family and to drop into the same state that you sometimes feel when you're meditating, when you go to your family, if there are any irritations.

If you're one of the lucky ones that you have a family, that there are hardly any irritations, but there's love and fun and laughter and you can't wait to see each other, then be even more creative in how much you can show your love, because creation of showing our joy and appreciation never, ever stops. That's the stuff that brings such immense energy and the stream of life to you from spirit all the time.

And it doesn't mean that we never get into an argument or have disagreements that's not what I'm saying. That can be healthy and it can be...you learn a lot from it. The difference is there is not the anger and the spite. It's much more a dialogue and it's not even a discussion. And if the other person is an acorn, so they're just beginning as a seed. Why would you expect them to be an oak? And sometimes you might think you're an oak, but maybe you were just a little acorn.

So there's no being superior or inferior to anyone in your family or anyone in life if we're honest. That's also very important to check in on, because if you do that, you're never going to find any inner peace within yourself. Look at everybody like the beautiful acorn or the beautiful oak they are including every single family member that you have.