

A student asked, “How do we meditate on impermanence?”

Watch. Watch what happens. Watch what happens with what arises in your mind and what comes out of your mouth; watch your moods and emotions and bodily processes; watch what happens with your activities and the activities of others, even a gesture, a word, a glance. Watch what is happening in the world. In nature, watch everything. In the course of the day watch the light, in your sleep watch the dream. Just watch.

Do this for twenty-one days and then inquire within: What have I observed? And then: What sees this?

When you tire of this (which you will, since impermanent curiosity cycles around with impermanent ennui), take up a new contemplation: now consider the concept of *permanence* and your experience of it, its meanings and manifestations in your actual lived experience. After a while, let this open out into contemplating *presence*. What is permanence? What is presence? Are they the same or different? How? And then let the three dance together for a while in your mind: impermanence, permanence, and presence.

Return to this contemplation again and again, mind relaxed, friendly, and receptive.

And from time to time: What sees this?