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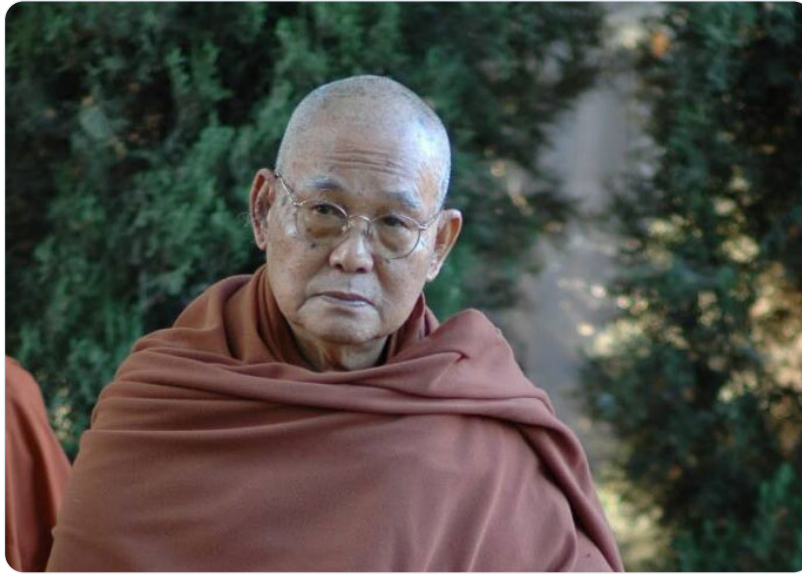
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I meditated 15 hours a day for 6 months straight with one of the toughest Buddhist monks on the planet.

Here's what I learned:



This is Sayadaw U Pandita. He was notorious for his unwavering belief that enlightenment is possible in this life & his ruthless expectation that his students get there. We slept 2-5 hours/night. No reading, writing or speaking. Lots of pain. Lots of insight. Let's get into it 📌



1. Finding your true self is an act of love. Expressing it is an act of rebellion.
2. A sign of growth is having more tolerance for discomfort. But it's also having less tolerance for bullshit.
3. Who you are is not your fault, but it is your responsibility.
4. Procrastination is the refusal or inability to be with difficult emotions.
5. Desires that arise in agitation are more aligned with your ego. Desires that arise in stillness are more aligned with your soul.
6. The moment before letting go is often when we grip the hardest.
7. You don't find your ground by looking for stability. You find your ground by relaxing into instability.
8. What you hate most in others is usually what you hate most in yourself.
9. The biggest life hack is to become your own best friend. Everything is easier when you do.
10. The more comfortable you become in your own skin, the less you need to manufacture the world around you for comfort.
11. An interesting thing happens when you start to like yourself. You no longer need all the things you thought you needed to be happy.

12. If you don't train your mind to appreciate what is good, you'll continue to look for something better in the future, even when things are great.
13. The belief that there is some future moment more worth our presence than the one we're in right now is why we miss our lives.
14. There is no set of conditions that leads to lasting happiness. Lasting happiness doesn't come from conditions; it comes from learning to flow with conditions.
15. Spend more time cultivating a mind that is not attached to material things than time spent accumulating them.
16. Sometimes we need to get out of alignment with the rest of the world to get back into alignment with ourselves.
17. Real confidence looks like humility. You no longer need to advertise your value because it comes from a place that does not require the validation of others.
18. High pain tolerance is a double-edged sword. It's key for self-control, but can cause us to override the pain of being out of alignment.
19. Negative thoughts will not manifest a negative life. But unconscious negative thoughts will.
20. To feel more joy, open to your pain.
21. Bullying yourself into enlightenment does not work. Befriending yourself is how you transcend yourself.
22. Peak experiences are fun, but you always have to come back. Learning to appreciate ordinary moments is the key to a fulfilling life.
23. Meditation is not about feeling good. It's about feeling what you're feeling with good awareness. Plot twist: Eventually that makes you feel good.
24. If you are able to watch your mind think, it means who you are is bigger than your thoughts.
25. Practicing stillness is not about privileging stillness over movement. It's about the CAPACITY to be still amidst your impulses. It's about choice.
26. The issue is not that we get distracted. It's that we're so distracted by distractions we don't even know we're distracted.
27. There are 3 layers to a moment: Your experience, your awareness of the experience, and your story about the experience. Be mindful of the story.
28. Life is always happening in just one moment. That's all you're responsible for.

29. Your mind doesn't wander. It moves toward what it finds most interesting. If you want to focus better, become more curious about what's in front of you.

30. Life continues whether you're paying attention to it or not. I think that is why the passage of time is scary.

31. You cannot practice non-attachment. You can only show your mind the suffering that attachment creates. When it sees this clearly, it will let go.

32. Meditation can quickly become spiritualized suppression. Be careful not to use concentration to avoid what is uncomfortable.

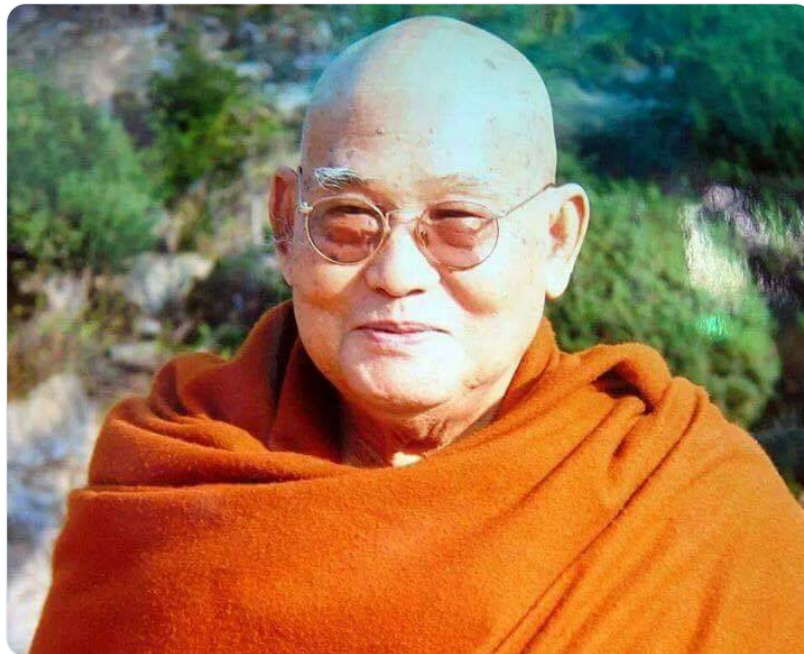
33. One of the deepest forms of peace we can experience is living in integrity. You can lie to other people about who you are, but you can't lie to your heart.

34. Be careful not to let the noise of your mind overpower the whispers of your heart.

35. Monks love to fart while they meditate. The wisdom of letting go expresses itself in many forms.

36. You can't life-hack wisdom. Do the work.

Sayadaw U Pandita passed away in 2016. While I often resisted his style of teaching, I had the deepest respect for him. Through his teachings, my life changed in ways I can't describe; a sentiment echoed by thousands of others. I am forever grateful.



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