

## 1. The Power of One-on-One Guidance

Editor's Note: *A long-time practitioner who had been working one-on-one with Marcy for over a year requested, for the first time, that Marcy lead her through a guided meditation during one of their coaching calls. After the practice session ended, the practitioner reported experiencing a significant increase in concentration and sensory clarity compared to when she had tried using the same technique on her own. Marcy commented on her own experience with one-on-one guidance.*

I find it really supportive to have guidance like that, too. I found that on a lot of retreats early on, I was consistently surprised - it's kind of funny that I was consistently surprised, you'd think that once something happened then you wouldn't be surprised over and over again - that every time I'd go on retreat and the teacher would offer technique instruction, it was so much easier and the details would be greater and my concentration was better.

It's really significant, the power of practicing with someone else guiding, especially when it's one-on-one. There's a difference when we both know that it's just the two of us. It's not like you're just tuning in to a webinar or in a room full of practitioners and the teacher doesn't even know you're there. Plus, in a one-on-one, a skillful teacher can customize the guidance to meet the practitioner where they are, right there, in the moment.

There's something really beautiful about it. The system automatically rises to a higher level of capability, and it automatically brings out a higher level of attentional skills when you have those opportunities. It's just harder when we're on our own. There's no accountability. That can sound like a word with a negative connotation, but I don't mean it that way. It's just that there's something about human nature that when we're alone there are so many things competing, and when you're with somebody who's showing up for you, who's with you, it's so much easier to let other things go and be completely with what you're doing to the best of your ability.

And when we're alone, we always have to be directing ourselves to do something, do this technique or come back from wandering, a kind of control that doesn't need to be there.

So, one-on-one live guidance greatly enhances CC&E [*ed: concentration, clarity, and equanimity*]. Your attentional skills are heightened and it's wonderful to have that experience; it points at what we're working towards. The level of CC&E experienced when we're practicing together can become a new baseline; with continued practice, what is heightened becomes the new normal. You get to a place where you can work at that level by yourself, without someone else in the room, and then the level of CC&E with another person guiding becomes even higher.