

# LOVING, KNOWING, AND GROWING

## Growing with Rick Hanson: Part 4 Talk

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While I have found for myself that taking, as we did here, 10 minutes, perhaps even longer, for a sustained kind of marinating in a useful experience, it's not the only way to do it. Most of the time when we take in the good, it's on the fly. It's five seconds here, fifteen seconds there, in the flow of everyday life. So just because I'm taking some time here to unpack these methods and kind of practice with them and really, air them out and give some time with this, that doesn't mean that the only way to do this is in a 10-minute guided meditation.

To finish here, I'd like to talk about bringing this into everyday life. And I'm going to frame this as the five-minute challenge. So here's the five-minute challenge. It's got three parts to it.

The first part is, as I've said, a handful of times every day, look for something that's beneficial that you're experiencing, or could be experiencing and then help it sink in. That'll probably take about a minute a day, maybe a little more, all told. Second, know what your "vitamin C" is. Know what is at least one thing, it's okay if there are two or three, but keep it short, a shortlist here, that you're really trying to grow these days. What's, in effect, a kind of muscle you're particularly trying to develop in your life right now.

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And then look for opportunities to experience it or related factors of it. And then really value those experiences, they're important and take them in. That's the second aspect of the five-minute challenge. Maybe that'll take another minute or two a day. And then third, every day rest in what I call "deep green" for a minute or more. In other words, take a minute, authentically, to help yourself feel sufficiently safe, satisfied, and connected in that period of time. In other words, help yourself feel basically peaceful, calm, strong, at peace. Even as, you know there are challenges, you know there are threats, you know there are issues, but in the core of your being, in the innermost temple of your being, there is a feeling of peace. Similarly, feel satisfied enough so you can afford to have a sense of contentment. It's not, it's OK to wish for more. It's OK, while feeling an enoughness already. Contentment.

And last, in terms of deep green, a sense of feeling connected enough so that there's a feeling of love flowing out and flowing in. Resting in love. It'd be nice to have more people like you. Be nice to have, you know, a particular person maybe in your life that maybe you don't have right

now. And still there can be a kind of wellspring of lovingness bubbling up inside you already. Peace, contentment, and love, a minute or two, maybe more, that's what I mean by resting in deep green. That's five minutes. Five minutes. Many people won't even give it five minutes. And yet when we do give it five minutes, it changes the day because among other things, we're looking for opportunities to have a beneficial experience. And then if you spend a week like that giving each of those seven days, those five minutes. Wow. It changes your week.

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And after doing this routinely and repeatedly, it really will change your life. You know, it kind of goes to what I call the law of little things, that it's usually lots a little bad things that take us to a bad place. And so it's going to be lots of little good things that take us to a better one. And there's an old proverb that I've memorized that I just think about a lot, which is, "Think not lightly of good, saying it will not come to me. Drop by drop is the water pot filled." Likewise, the wise one gathering it little by little fills oneself with good. You know, big things they are often out of reach or beyond our control, the little things that's realistic. I can handle that.

And we can be frankly responsible for that, to look for those little things every day, those little experiences, not ideas, experiences that we can receive into ourselves, out of kindness toward ourselves, out of wisdom that this is what we need to do to heal, and out of a recognition of the greater good, since as we fill ourselves up as our own cup increasingly runneth over, more and more we have things we can offer to others, and we're less caught up in that ancient machinery of craving, because we don't need to grasp for what's outside ourselves, because it's woven into the fabric of our being literally hardwired into our nervous system already.

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This orientation to life that I'm talking about here, with a focus on, in effect, lifelong learning, is immensely hopeful, because it's about what we can do from here. And it's about things we can do inside ourselves that no one can defeat. You know, when we're kids, sometimes we play a game like, OK, if you can only have one magical power, what would it be? Well, sort of as a variation on that, if you could teach people just one thing, what would be the one thing you would teach them? And my own answer to that question is I would teach them how to learn. Because when we know how to learn, not the multiplication tables, but how to learn to be happy, how to learn to be strong, how to learn to be kind, how to learn to be gritty, and resilient, and tough in a challenging world, if we know how to learn, well, we can learn anything. And we can learn what we need to learn most these days. Or we can learn our way into those qualities of being that most draw our own heart.

And I think that's really, really hopeful and helpful. And frankly, it's a corrective to the many social forces that often make people feel pushed around. As we finish here, I'd like to name three people that I've learned tremendously from, Tara Brach, Joseph Goldstein, and Tami Simon, wonderful friends, wonderful teachers, wonderful benefactors. It's such an opportunity to be part of this program. And I also want to thank you for being part of this as well. I kind of schemed this up to me, you know, thinking about the three-legged stool of personal practice. And this vision I had for this program has come into a reality and it couldn't have become a reality if you hadn't been a part of it. And my, honestly, most sincere hope is that over time, through the practices and offerings in this program and through your own efforts, over time, you too will increasingly, and become better and better at, loving, knowing, and growing. May you be well and thank you very much for being part of this.