

# 'AUTO WALK' ~ demonstrated by SHINZEN YOUNG

00:00:00 So, I like to give people the option of practicing every kind of meditation technique that has  
00:00:16 ever been developed in the history of world mysticism. And I have this sort of grid where  
00:00:23 I classify all the techniques, like a periodic table of meditation strategies. So, I try  
00:00:34 to include in that everything that was a major invention or a major innovation. Some things  
00:00:45 in meditative technology have only been discovered once, many things have been discovered many  
00:00:51 times in different cultures. So, one thing that, as far as I know, was only strongly  
00:01:00 emphasized once is the notion of expressing spontaneity through how you move, how you  
00:01:14 speak, and the motor part of how you think. This is an aspect of liberation practice that  
00:01:25 was very much appreciated and developed within the Chan school of Chinese practice. It's  
00:01:36 particularly associated originally with a master named Mazu, and that eventually evolved  
00:01:42 into the Linji or Rinzai, as it's called in Japanese school of Zen. So, they put a big  
00:01:54 emphasis on manifesting impermanence, manifesting emptiness, manifesting non-self in how you  
00:02:04 move the body, how you sort of channel the words that are coming through your lips, and  
00:02:14 eventually also learning how to think without thinking. So, there's sort of like, if you  
00:02:22 do without thinking, there's a just happeningness and it's merged with the dynamic emptiness  
00:02:30 of nature, yang and yin. If you speak without thinking, same thing. A little trickier is  
00:02:39 to think without thinking, but it's the same general idea. It turns into thoughts that  
00:02:45 are spontaneous, creative, wise, and so forth. So, traditionally in Buddhism, they speak  
00:02:56 of the three karma-dvara, the three gates of action, kaya-vak-citta or kaya-vak-mana,  
00:03:06 means bodily motions, speech actions, and thought actions. So, I have in my repertoire  
00:03:15 of techniques a quadrant of training that I call spontaneity training. And I teach people  
00:03:25 how to access spontaneity in body movement, speech, thought, and even all three at the  
00:03:33 same time. So, my word, just to have a convenient word for this just happening, empty but rich  
00:03:42 dynamic quality in motion, to have a word for it, I call it auto from the original Greek  
00:03:49 meaning spontaneous. Corresponds to certain Asian concepts, the Chinese notion of ziran,  
00:03:58 which is shizen in Japanese. And there's many words in Tibetan that have this connotation  
00:04:07 of effortless just happening. Anyway, I call it auto to have a word for it. So, there's  
00:04:14 a technique of auto-walk or more broadly auto-move, auto-speak, and a specific example of that  
00:04:24 would be auto-chant, which is relatively easy to do. And then I even have an auto-think  
00:04:29 technique. So, the way you do auto-move is you just sort of tune into some motion that  
00:04:37 your body already knows how to do. And you just sort of follow the reflex. You taste  
00:04:44 the reflexness, the fact that the motor circuits know how to do it without there needing to  
00:04:51 be much of a thinking ego for it to happen. So, it's like being a little kid. When little  
00:04:58 kids walk, they just walk for the fun spontaneity or they run for the fun spontaneity or they,  
00:05:05 you know, like play around in puddles of water or whatever because it's just like, it just  
00:05:12 happens and they enjoy the just happeningness of it. So, to do the auto-walk, you tune into  
00:05:23 the fact that your body knows how to walk without needing a you. And it's a little intuitive.

00:05:32 I can't really describe quite how to do it, but you just sort of get a feel for it with  
00:05:38 time. In the monastery, the way that people learn about this is by watching other people  
00:05:46 do it during the work periods or as you're walking from place to place. People do this  
00:05:51 sort of just walking thing, the more senior monks, and then you sort of pick up on it.  
00:05:56 So, I'm going to show you my particular way of doing the auto-walk. I'm pretty poorly  
00:06:08 coordinated so it's not going to be very elegant, but there will be a kind of spontaneity to  
00:06:14 it. So, you just sort of let your legs carry you. You know, I sort of defocus the gaze  
00:06:21 and it's just sort of happening and it's sort of fun. It's like you're being a little kid  
00:06:28 again. Now, I add a feature that is not required, which is I engage the visual field. It seems,  
00:06:41 in addition to this sort of, my legs know how to carry me without me. As I'm moving,  
00:06:48 it seems like the visual field is expanding in front, but the thing that I just saw an  
00:06:57 instant ago is collapsing behind me. So, it's like being a bolus being carried in this funnel  
00:07:06 of expanding light in front and contracting light behind. Then, I combine that with the  
00:07:15 sort of spontaneity of the movement of the legs and it's like space itself is just sort  
00:07:22 of carrying me as I'm walking along. I'm exaggerating now. I don't look this silly usually, but  
00:07:30 you get the general idea. It's just sort of expansion and contraction and the legs are  
00:07:37 just sort of moving on their own. You could just like play like this for a long time and  
00:07:43 it's rich because it's dynamic, it's bouncy, but it's empty because there's no one there.  
00:07:54 That was me making Shinzen do auto-walk for everyone on YouTube. Shin heads everywhere.  
00:08:03 And tomorrow, I'm going to get him to do auto-walk while auto-talking, auto-speaking, while auto-thinking.  
00:08:12 So, stay tuned for more.