

# LION'S ROAR

UBUNTU: I Am Because We Are

Sitting with JEALOUSY

Both Christian AND Buddhist

Explore Buddhism: ENLIGHTENMENT

# Finding Calm

## in Times of Anxiety



### LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

If you tune in to your body's warning messages, says **JILL SATTERFIELD**, you can catch your fears before they take over.

**THE BODY IS CONTINUALLY** speaking to us in the form of sensations. We actually sense an idea or an emotion physically before it's thought, yet we're generally too involved elsewhere to notice. But if we pay close attention to it, the body is the best ally in our ability to understand the mind in the wordless language of sensations.

Most of us aren't taught to consciously reside in our bodies, so befriending and listening to our bodies can be foreign at first. If we want to include the mind and body in our meditation practice, it can be helpful to acknowledge the *nama* and *rupa* elements of what the Buddha taught.

Typically translated as mind-body, *nama-rupa* can also be understood as mentality and materiality. The body is the material form of consciousness, and with intention, time, and direct experience we can be open to the intelligent signals it sends us. Through a more conscious body, it's possible to locate our center within life's storms.

Anxiety is a tangle of emotions and thoughts usually configured around something uncomfortable that hasn't yet happened. The fear that

mounts isn't soothed easily, because the story the thoughts weave is believable and easily hooks us. The repetitive nature of becoming hooked deepens the conditioning and primes it to rerun.

Sensing the beginning of potential entanglement in our body is the precise moment we can prevent anxiety from taking over. When we combine this with the cognitive ability to track a reaction back to its initial stimulus, we become aware of how the feeling started and what resulted. This combination of sensing and making sense can be the key to liberating the neuronal and somatic patterns that bind us.



**JILL SATTERFIELD** is a meditation teacher whose Applied Embodied Mindfulness Trainings are part of UCLA's Mindful Awareness Research Center.