

An Attitude of Caring

November 28, 2011

When you focus on the breath, you really want to care about what's happening. This is one of the big problems in modern life, is that people don't care. They go through the motions, they multitask, just so that they can get the job past and moved on to the next person. As a result, nothing really gets well done.

You really have to care about something to do it well. So care about the state of your mind. And by extension, you want to care about your breath, because the breath is where you're going to be staying for a long time as you meditate. Put a lot of effort into being observant, being very sensitive, and caring about what happens. It's not just, "Okay, let's put in a few hours of meditation today and that'll be it, we'll take care of that," and move on to the next thing. You really want to pay a lot of attention to what you're doing.

I was a little disturbed a while back to read people saying they don't really care whether the Buddha actually said something or didn't say something. As long as they like it, then it's Dhamma. Of course, not caring about what the Buddha said translates into not really caring about what's going to be good for you and what's not. You want really look into these things. You want to take it seriously that the mind is suffering, while there are some people who really know what they're talking about when they talk about how to end suffering, and a lot of people who *don't* know what they're talking about. You've got to sort them out.

A lot of people go around putting words in the Buddha's mouth. He said that to do that was to slander him. That's pretty heavy judgment. But after all, when counterfeit Dhamma gets spread around, then the true Dhamma just becomes one more counterfeit as far as everybody else is concerned.

So when it comes to the problem of the mind suffering, you really do want to care, you want to look into things. Be careful about who you listen to, careful about what you do, careful about who you hang around.

If you can't find anybody else outside whom you really trust, just really be very careful about how you look here at the breath, how you take care of the mind right here in the present moment, because this has consequences that spread out in lots of directions.

So care about this breath, care about this breath: each breath as it comes in and goes out. Give it a lot of care. Because only with this element of what the Buddha called *citta*—really being intent about what you're doing—will you be able to succeed at the meditation. It's the only way that it's really going to make a

difference in your life.