

The Meanings of Buddhho

October 23, 2012

Think of the qualities of the Buddha: his purity, his wisdom, his compassion. Make the word *Buddho* a symbol of that. Then as you breathe in think, *Bud-* and as you breathe out, think *-dho*. Think of the qualities of the Buddha coming in and out with the breath.

This way the breath nourishes not only the body but also the mind as you remember all the things that are really valuable in life:

It is valuable to have pure intentions.

It is valuable to be wise and discerning.

It is valuable to be compassionate.

These are the area in which we want to train the mind. These are good food for the mind.

The mind needs to eat just as the body needs to eat. Just as the body needs healthy food, the mind needs healthy food, too.

We spend all our time focusing on things we like and don't like, things we're afraid of, things we're deluded about: That's bad food for the mind. It doesn't nourish the mind properly.

Some of the things we like may taste good to the mind, but they're the kind of food that tastes good but doesn't really provide any good nourishment for the body and actually can be harmful.

But if we think of the Dhamma, of the qualities of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, that's good food for the mind. It reminds you of what's valuable in life.

We bow down a lot to the Buddha here. It's because he teaches us to respect something in ourselves that's worthy of respect. This is why we respect him.

We have a desire for true happiness. The world, though, says that true happiness is impossible. "Buy our things instead": That's what they say.

But the Buddha says No. You have to respect your desire for true happiness because it is something that you can find with your own efforts. So you respect your desire and you respect the fact that you can attain what you want through your own efforts.

For this purpose, qualities like wisdom, discernment, compassion, and purity really are important. These are the things that nourish the mind to keep us going.

Otherwise, human life starts having no meaning at all. People are born and then they eat and eat and eat and then they die. That's it. And they usually make a

mess of the place while they're here.

But if you think about the good qualities of the mind, then you realize that there is something valuable in human life. And it's something you want to take this opportunity to develop.

So you develop the perfections like generosity, the perfection of virtue, all the way down through discernment, goodwill, equanimity. These are things of real value in life. And you should respect your ability to develop these qualities.

This is why we bow down to the Buddha, as I said, because he has us bow down to the good things in our own minds.

So keep this in mind: That the mind really needs to be well fed if life is going to have any meaning, if it's going to seem worth living. When we talk about living well, it doesn't mean living with a lot of material things. It means living with a lot of virtue, with a lot of compassion, with a lot of wisdom and purity.

Thoughts like that are the things that nourish the mind, nourish all the good qualities in your mind that keep you strong.

So when we think the word *Buddho* with the breath, it has all these meanings buried in there.

It's like medicine for the mind, food for the mind. Always try to keep it in mind as much as you can.