

The Disturbances Inside

June 17, 2014

We come to the monastery to find some quiet. And the surroundings do help. The mind gets some sense of quiet. But you also have to learn how to put aside all the things you've been bringing with you.

There's what's called physical seclusion, when you're in a quiet place like this, not disturbed by many people and the activities are not all that distracting.

But then there's also mental seclusion, and that's what really counts. Mental seclusion means that you're not hanging out with your memories of the past, your thoughts of the future. You're getting some seclusion from them as well.

So try to stay with the body right here. Anything that doesn't relate to being with the body right here right now you can just put aside, put aside.

Leave it out there at the monastery gate. And when you go outside, you don't have to pick it up again if you don't want to.

But while you're here, you definitely want to put things aside, because our life nowadays is so scattered and so distracted. Everywhere you go, you see people looking at their little screens. It's as if their brains are being sucked out through their eyes.

So we want to turn our gaze around and look inside to see what's going on here. Because the real trouble is right here. If the problem were outside, then we could put all our attention outside. But the real problem is in here. So you have to focus as much attention in here as you can.

What's going on right now? Why do you want to keep going out to the monastery gate and picking up that baggage again? What is it about it that's so enticing, that's so interesting?

Can you tell yourself, can you reason with yourself to the point where you can really securely let it go? It's only then that you can find some real peace. Because as I said, the disturbances from outside are not the real problem. It's the problem coming from within.

The disturbances inside: the greed, aversion, and delusion that make us susceptible to outside things to begin with. That's where the problem comes from and that's where it has to be solved.

So, when you're being with the body right here right now, at least you see the mind right here right now.

And our standards for judgment at the moment are going to be that anything else that doesn't have to do with being right here, right now, is not relevant. You

don't have to think about it.

If you *do* find yourself going out for thoughts like that, you have to ask yourself, "Why?" And try to get to a quick "why," so that you can cut through the cause and come right back.

If the outside thoughts are really persistent, you have to be pretty persistent too, very persistent, more persistent than they are. Make up your mind that you're going to stay right here, right here, right here. It's only that way that the mind gets any real peace.