

Entanglements Inside

November 2, 2015

After a busy day, it's good to disentangle yourself. Any thoughts that come up about things you need to do, for the time being just put them aside.

We complain about entanglements outside, but the real entanglements are inside: the ideas that come out and say, "I'd like to do this, I'd like to do that," and then the conversations that go on inside. Some of the things are useful—this is how we get by in the world, how we survive in the world—but a lot of them are just excess entanglements. And we have this habit of being able to connect one to the next to the next to the next to the next and they get really entangled in a mess.

I noticed with Ajaan Fuang that one of his skills was how to teach people what they needed to know and then just leave it at that, without stitching things any further along. There were some people who didn't like that. They wanted the stitching along. But the ones who'd really meditated, the ones who really had a sense of what was valuable in life, were glad to have the instruction and then glad to be left to do the work themselves, to come back for advice whenever necessary.

The Dhamma isn't about entanglement. Its whole purpose is to free you, to help you find what you need to lead to your freedom and work on that. You find that the freeing that needs to be done, of course, is freeing yourself from your own entanglements inside. Outside entanglements basically come from the inside ones. So look at the tangle inside and see how you can untangle it.

One of the ways is just learning how to cut through any thoughts that come up. This is an important skill you need to develop just to stay with the breath, and you find that it has useful applications all over the place. If you find yourself in an inner conversation that's taking you nowhere, you have every right to just drop it and leave.

Remember that: You don't have to tie things up; you don't have to be afraid of leaving loose ends, because it's in the effort of tying up the loose ends that we get further entangled. So any thoughts that come up when you're meditating right here, just cut them off, cut them off. You don't have to get involved with any of them. No matter how great they say they are, no matter how important, the mind needs its time to be by itself. That's more important. It needs its time to appreciate what it's like to just be by itself, be aware. And not be the slave to all these entanglements that keep welling up from within.

So even though it seems like the world outside just has lots of traps laid for you, the traps are there for the mind that likes to get entangled. If you develop the

habit of getting disentangled, then there are no traps outside at all.