

Your Own Territory

December 23, 2015

Try to put down everything else you've been thinking about and be aware of the breath. Tune into the presence of the body right here. Make that your reality. As for the issues happening outside, leave them as unreal for the time being.

In other words, as far as you're concerned right now, they're just thoughts. You can let those thoughts blow away. Try to stay anchored right here.

This way, the mind can gain some strength from being here in the present moment. When you breathe with a sense of well-being it's soothing for the mind. And at least for the time being, you don't have to take on any other considerations, any other responsibilities.

Of course, you're not being irresponsible by doing this. You're strengthening the mind, because when the presence of the body feels good, that's nourishing for the mind. It's food for the mind. It allows you to let everything else go like clouds or breezes going past. Just let them pass through, pass through.

In this way, you can gain some strength, you can gain some stability. Then as you leave meditation, try to keep this sense of stability with you as you go through the day. It's not the case that you meditate only when you're sitting here with your eyes closed.

The Pali word for *meditation* means to develop. You can develop this sense of being with the presence of the body and carrying it into your other tasks as you go through the day. In this way, you approach those tasks with a sense of being grounded, a sense of your own inner strength and nourishment. That allows you to deal with your tasks in a more effective way, in a way that's less damaging to you.

Otherwise, you tend to pour everything outside and don't save anything inside here. No wonder you feel ungrounded, at risk, threatened by things outside. Because you're basically outside of your own territory.

Remember that image of the quail. The quail stays in the field where lots of stones have been turned up, so it can hide behind the stones when the hawks come through. If the quail wanders out of that area, then it's not safe. In the same way, as long as you're with the body you're safe. You're in your own territory.

If you don't feel that your body is your territory, do what you can to breathe in a way that feels good. Think of the energies going through the body in a way that feels soothing. Then it does become your own territory.

You have a home, and it's a home you can carry with you throughout the day.

So try to get acquainted with what the body needs right now. That will make

the sense of the body, the presence of the body, that much more nourishing for the mind. It becomes something you want to carry through the day because it feels so good.