

Successful Desire

March 31, 2016

To meditate well you have to want to meditate.

As the Buddha said, one of the bases for success is the desire.

Of course, the problem with desire is that sometimes it gets in the way. You have to learn how to temper your desire. You realize that there are causes and there are effects, so you focus your desire on the causes.

In the case of getting the mind to settle down, the causes are thinking about the breath, evaluating the breath, and being with the breath and nothing else.

In other words, this is the one topic that you're going to focus on. Everything else right now is irrelevant. So anything else that does come into the mind, you can just brush it away or you can just let it go away on its own.

But the important thing is you don't latch onto it.

Don't switch cars in the middle of the trip. Stay with this one right here: the breath coming in, the breath going out.

It's here you're going to learn something new. Your thoughts have taken you around, around and around enough already so that you know pretty much what they're capable of. But what about the breath? What's the breath capable of? If we don't pay much attention to it, we don't know.

So look into this. It *is* the breath of life. It's what keeps the body and mind together. And it can provide a source of well-being here in the present moment.

Even as parts of the body malfunction, you've still got the breath coming in, going out. You can be with that. It's something you really want to get to know.

Think in these terms so that you give rise to the desire to stay here, and then make sure the desire is focused on the causes.

In this way, the mind will settle down right away or not right away—don't make that an issue. Just keep working at the causes.

Think about the breath. Evaluate the breath. When you're evaluating it, if it's not good, you can change it. That's part of evaluation too.

Try to stay more and more consistently with the breath. Then the qualities that are the results will come. There'll be a sense of ease, a sense of fullness: just sitting here, not doing anything else.

You begin to realize that the sense of well-being we look for so much in the world is right here. You can tap into it at any time when you've developed the skill.

So start with the desire to do this well and to focus on the causes. That's one of the ways in which meditation arrives at success.