Paying Attention Inside

April 30, 2016

Focus on your breath. Watch it all the way in, all the way out.
When the mind starts thinking about other things, say, “Nope. I’m going to
stay right here with the breath.”
Because the mind thinking about other things is a mind looking for trouble.
And here we’re looking for some peace.
As the Buddha said, there is no happiness aside from peace. People will argue
with that and say, “There’s lots of happiness in things that are not very peaceful.”
But the question is, “Is it genuine happiness, and where is the happiness in those
things found?”
It’s found in the fact that the mind can stay with them for a little bit.
Otherwise the mind is constantly pushed off, pushed off every place that it
focuses. There’s no happiness in being pushed off. Here, though, is a place where it
can stay.
When you stay with the breath, you can stay for a long time. As long as you’re
alive, the breath will be right here. And you find that the longer you can stay, the
greater the sense of well-being.
Our lives, especially in the modern world, are being pulled in all directions.
Our attention is being pulled in all directions. It’s as if they’re shouting things at
you and blaring things at you, not giving you any time to think and be your own
person.
So here you get to close your eyes and be your own person. The mind gets to
be its own self. It doesn’t have to take on any other responsibilities right now. It
can minimize the input with which it’s bombarded.
In that way, it gets to know itself a lot better.
Our problem is that we spend too much time paying attention outside and
not enough paying attention inside. Actually, inside is where all the important
things in our life come from. The choices you make that shape your life: They
come from right here inside. If you’re not careful about how they’re made, you
don’t know what kind of life you’re going to have.
So you want to be right here, have a sense of well-being right here, so that you
can make those choices with a sense of well-being, not with a sense that you’re
being constantly pushed into something.
So spend some time right here. Breathe in, breathe out, in a way that feels
refreshing, that feels soothing, that feels comfortable—whatever the body needs
right now, whatever the mind needs right now. Give it some good breathing.

That way, you’ll be able to find the peace that comes when you’re not constantly being pulled into paying attention outside.

And from that peace comes a deep and lasting happiness.