

## *Learning from Our Failings*

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When you apply appropriate attention to the present moment, it's a matter of looking at what you're doing and gauging whether you're doing it well, whether you're making the most of the opportunity you have right now.

The problem is that often when we look at ourselves, we don't like what we see. Our attention then veers off from us to other people: "As long as I'm no good, well, other people are no good either." That's the attitude we take. And we end up taking the mud inside ourselves, as Ajaan Maha Boowa says, and slinging it on other people.

We've got to learn to look at ourselves and see, "Okay, I've made a mistake," and don't get riled up by it, don't get depressed by it. Simply realize you've made mistakes and you're in a position, though, where you can change.

That's the good news of appropriate attention: You don't have to be stuck in the way you are. What-you-are is the result of habits, and habits, of course, come from actions. So work on your actions right now.

The fact that you were able to see that something was a mistake puts your mind in a higher level. Focus on that: the fact that you were able to recognize the mistake and that you're willing to correct yourself so that you don't have to keep on repeating that mistake.

So an important part of the meditation is learning how to look at your own errors, look at your own failings, and not get depressed, not get upset—and especially not turning around and getting upset about other people.

We're here each of us to train our minds and to look at our own actions, to become more and more skillful in our actions.

That's when your attention to the present moment actually becomes useful and can make a difference. You've got the opportunity to make these choices so make them well.

And if you see that you didn't make them well, just take it like a good sport and try again.

It's in that way that we grow and our meditation grows at the same time.