

## *Finding Your Own Place*

*May 9, 2016*

Our minds have been roaming around this morning. Give them a chance to settle down, like a flock of birds who've been flying all around. When the time comes to land, they can land actually on a very small space if they know what they're doing.

You know where your spot is: the spot in the body where the mind feels most natural to stay, most natural to be focused. If you know that spot, go ahead and focus there. Notice the breath there.

Try to take an interest in what you're doing here. Give it your full attention. The Buddha says you can't succeed at anything unless you give it your full attention. He has a list of four qualities altogether that lead to success: There's the desire to do it and then there's the persistence where you really stick with it. Then there's the intentness, where you really pay attention to what you're doing and the results that you're getting. You don't let yourself get distracted.

Finally there's circumspection, where you look at what you're doing and the results you're getting and decide: Are these good enough? If not, what can be changed?

You've got to take an interest in these things for them to really improve. Otherwise, the breath just keeps coming in, going out without having much effect beyond the fact that it keeps you alive. But the fact that you're paying attention to it means you can get more use out of it.

The mind can have its own place. We all need our own place. We have lots of responsibilities out in the world, and it's good to have a place where we're just by ourselves.

Probably one of the best Mothers Days would be to allow the mother to go off and be by herself for a day, and not have any responsibilities. But we all need that kind of quiet place. So find it inside. Make this the spot where you're on your own, looking after yourself and then you're developing the skills that enable you to look after yourself with ease.

We have that phrase that we chant: "May I look after myself with ease." Well, this is what it means: "May I be at ease with my own mind, at ease with my own body." We wish that for ourselves, we wish that for others. But then it falls to the responsibility of each person to learn how to be at ease with yourself.

It takes some work in the beginning because there are lots of different parts of the mind that we tend to bounce off. We settle in the present moment and

suddenly find something we don't like and we bounce off to the past, bounce off to the future.

You've got to learn how to sort those things out so that you do have a place where you can settle down here and feel that you belong here, that this is your spot.

When you're coming from a place of ease inside, a place of well-being inside, then your actions in the world outside are a lot more likely to be skillful. In other words, they're harmless: not harming you, not harming other people. They actually work for a positive good.

So look after this spot well.