

Tuning In

July 10, 2016

Try to tune into your breath. Notice where you feel the breathing right now. When the breath comes in, where do you feel it? When it goes out, where do you feel it? It can be anywhere in the body. Wherever it seems most prominent: Focus right there.

See if you can find a way of breathing that feels good. If the mind wanders off, just tune right back into the breath again.

The breath is always there. It's like a radio station broadcasting 24/7. Sometimes your radio is tuned to that station and sometimes it's tuned to other stations. If you find it tuned to a bad station, you have the choice to tune it to a better one, one that's more useful.

Being with the breath right now helps the mind settle in, have a sense of belonging here in the present moment, a sense of well-being in the present moment. You tune into the sense of well-being that comes with the breath and learn how to make the most of it. Turn up the volume on that well-being a little bit.

What you're hearing on your radio has a lot to do with how you tune it. You see the world outside and there are a lot of bad things out there. There are a lot of good things out there as well. It depends on what you tune into.

First you've got to tune into the right frequency in your own mind, though, because if you're feeling full of greed, aversion, and delusion, it's very easy to see it in other people, too. But if you tune into your own goodness and say, "There's goodness here," then you begin to see it out there as well. And you can connect with that. What you're looking for, basically, is what you're going to find.

So learn how to tune your radio well. The problem is we tune it here and then we flip the dial, as we keep channel-surfing around our lives. No wonder it's all a cacophony. So try to make it something that makes sense. Tune into one frequency and stay there for the time being.

This is what mindfulness is for: It reminds you to stay in one place. That way your concentration develops, and you have a sense of feeling at home here. When the mind is at home with itself, the things you have to do and say and think are going to come from a much better place.

So tune into the goodness inside you. Tune into the potentials that the breath has in keeping the body and the mind together, keeping the mind calmed down, getting the body soothed, so that the news you get from your radio is useful news

that you can carry out into the world.

Again, when you're tuning into your own goodness, you find it easier to tune into other people's goodness as well, because what you're looking for with them is going to be the same thing: You're going to find what you're looking for. If you're looking for people's bad habits or bad attitudes, you're going to find them. But if you start looking for their goodness, you begin to find that as well. It makes it a lot easier to live with one another.

So, tune your radio well. All kinds of channels are being broadcast all the time, so tune into the Buddha's channel: the channel that teaches you what's right, what's wrong, what's skillful, what's not skillful, what's going to lead to your happiness, what's going to lead to your suffering. All too often we tune into channels we like, but they give us all kinds of wrong information. Then we get upset because we act on that wrong information and wrong understanding, and the results don't come out as we want them to.

You have to be very careful where you choose to tune your mind, so tune it well. Start with the breath, get the breath comfortable. And once that breath is comfortable, then it's a lot easier to tune into other good things inside yourself and the good things outside as well. The goodness of the world starts here.