

## *Determined to Let Go*

*July 27, 2016*

Close your eyes and watch your breath. And try to watch *just* the breath.

The sound of the birds, the sound of whatever, the planes: Just let that be in the background. You don't have to comment on it. Or if there is a comment in the mind, just let it die.

The mind likes to start conversations with itself, but there's no problem with cutting short the conversations. It's not like conversations with other people, where you have to be very careful about how you end the conversation. With the conversations of the mind, you can just chop right through them and leave them dangling.

Let your thoughts just go. If they come up, let them be unfinished. Right now you've got other work to do. You don't have time to sit around and chat inside. You've got to get the mind to a place where it really can watch to see clearly what it's doing. Otherwise, it's not going to be able to deal effectively with the problem of suffering that we all have.

So whatever else comes up, it's none of your business right now. And it has no business interfering with you. That's the attitude you've got to take. You have to be determined that this is something you're going to work on.

The Buddha talks about the determination of goodwill, the determination that's required to accomplish anything in life. Part of it requires letting go of things that you may like and really being true to your intention that you want to do something skillful here, you want to develop the mind in this particular direction. That requires making choices. It requires making sacrifices.

There's no cushioned path all the way to nibbana. There'll be easy patches and difficult patches. Just make sure that you're not the one that's creating the difficulties, and that you don't make difficulties out of things that are outside.

The weather's going to be hot again for another day or two, but that doesn't have to be a difficulty. The breath is still there; your mind is still there. That's all you need. Don't make an issue out of the air outside. It doesn't have to penetrate into your thoughts.

So be very determined that this is where you're going to stay. That quality of determination is what makes this something that really will change the mind.

Otherwise, the meditation just becomes one more decoration on top of your mind. It doesn't seep very deeply inside because it hasn't fought against anything at all. It just moves around wherever anything might push it. In that way it doesn't

get to seep inside.

It's like a relationship: Sometimes you have to have an argument early on to see how the other person deals with arguments before you know you can trust the person.

And it's the same with the mind. You can't really trust your meditation until it's met up with a couple of difficulties.

Or you don't have to have an argument with another person, but just go through some hardships together: That's when you get to know the other person well.

So take the meditation and go through a couple of hardships together. If it comes out that you can trust the meditation, then you feel a lot more solid with it. And it's going to go a lot deeper into the mind.