

Your Foremost Treasure

September 30, 2016

Take a few minutes to be quiet.

Our minds are talking to themselves all day long, all day long. And with all that quantity, there's very little quality. So you want to get your head above water, get out of all those conversations. Just have one conversation, the conversation around the breath.

What kind of breathing would be refreshing for the body right now? What would be nourishing for the body right now? Look after that. If the mind and body are not refreshed by the breath, they're going to go look for their pleasures elsewhere.

That's what a lot of those conversations are about, "Where can I get what I want? Where can I get what I want?" The mind's constantly asking that. You have to remind yourself that the potential for what you want is right here: the potential to be at peace with yourself. It starts with the breath and then moves into the mind.

When the mind can finally settle down, then you realize that the Buddha was right: There is no happiness other than peace. All the dramas and all the other things that we do to find happiness actually get in the way.

So take some time to settle down, find some quiet inside. See if you can get some of that peace inside, and then you can carry that around as you go through the day. That becomes your possession, that becomes the thing you want to protect.

And it's not just a matter of protecting it from people outside, it's mainly protecting it from things going on in your own mind. All the unskillful conversations that go on in there: Those are the things that destroy your peace of mind. So you've got to learn how to step out of those. Don't believe everything you think. That way, those voices lose a lot of their power.

Then the sense of refreshment and peace and quiet inside: That can grow. You find that it's true: As the Buddha said, the happiness you're looking for is right here. It's just that you didn't know how to look. You let a lot of other voices give you instructions on how to get out of your suffering.

As he said, there are two reactions to suffering: One, is bewilderment and the other is, "Is there somebody who knows a way out from this suffering?" Because we're bewildered, we tend to listen to the wrong people. And we internalize their voices.

So internalize the Buddha's voice, the one that reminds you to keep looking right here. And when you get something good right here and there's a sense of well-being, ease inside, protect that as your foremost possession, your foremost treasure—not just while you're sitting here with your eyes closed, but also when you get up and go through the day.

Don't let anything that you do or say or think destroy that. Don't be a traitor to yourself.