

A Reserve Fund

June 27, 2017

Close your eyes and watch your breath. Gather your mind around the breath. All too often the mind is scattered. It's got this concern, that concern. It's like a hunter checking his trap-lines. When your mind is scattered like that, it doesn't have much strength. Yet it's through strength of mind that we live.

We depend on strength of body, strength of mind. On a day like this, the strength of body is a little bit weaker than normal. The heat takes a lot out of you. But it doesn't have to take a lot out of the mind.

You work on developing your conviction that what you do is important. The decisions you make, the intentions you follow: These are the things that shape your life. So you have to be convinced of that, that it really is worth your while to keep coming back to the breath, coming back to the breath, getting the mind in good shape so that it can be in better shape to choose its intentions, choose them wisely. So you just stick with the practice, based on your conviction.

Try to develop your mindfulness to remember what you should be doing. If you find yourself suddenly wondering where you are, what you're doing, remind yourself, "Okay, I should be with the breath." Come back to the body in the present moment, give the mind a place to settle down.

You develop the strength of concentration when everything comes together. It's like having all of your funds in one spot. If a major purchase comes up or a major drain on your resources, well, you've got it all there in one spot. You can take care of it right away. In the same way, when illness comes, aging comes, disappointments, other things come in life, if you have a good fund right here in the present moment, these things don't have to have much of an impact on you. If your funds are scattered all over the place and you have to go running around trying to get enough, in the meantime whatever the events of life that have hit you hard are going to have a hard impact. Whereas if all your riches are gathered here together, you can deal with it right away.

These are some of the things that give strength to the mind: the discernment and the conviction that see that training the mind really is important. Even though it's hot or it's cold or it's whatever outside, remember that it's just air. Our minds get blown around so much just by air. The air does have an impact on the body but it doesn't have to have an impact on the mind.

So make sure that your mind is strong to make up for the times when the body's not strong. Because ultimately that's all you have to depend on. The body's going to leave you, and

at that point you really need strength of mind. So gather it up together as much as you can right now.