

## *Not Pushed Around*

*January 10, 2018*

Let's meditate for a few minutes. Take a little time to gather your thoughts and bring them to one thing, the breath. Pay full attention to the breath. Be very alert to what the breath is doing and what the mind is doing in relationship to the breath.

Is it staying? Or is it beginning to nibble at other ideas? Tell yourself, those other ideas are not really good food for the mind. The good food comes when the mind is able to rest, gain a sense of well-being inside in its own proper territory.

The territory outside, they say is not your territory. It belongs to greed, aversion, and delusion. You may make some forays out there, but realize you're out in enemy territory. In other words, it's so easy to get attached to things outside, and then they pull you out, pull you out, pull you out, away from your center inside.

What you're trying to do now is to put your center of gravity in here and not out in the world. That's when you're safe. You've got good food in here, the food of a mind that can be still and stay with something.

As the Buddha said, there is no happiness other than peace. What he means is that happiness comes from the mind's being able to stay with something and not being pushed away. If you go outside, things are pushing you around all the time. You come inside, and if your own mind is pushing you around, then you're really in bad shape. You've got to learn to train the mind so it's not pushing you around all the time, so you can have a place where you can stay.

And the breath is right here. As long as you're alive, the breath is coming in, going out. Even when it gets very, very still, there's still a sense of breath energy in the body that you can stay with. That's an area that belongs to you and no one else, and you don't have to be pushed around. You begin to realize that the pushing around from the world is nothing compared to the pushing around from inside the mind. This is one of the first lessons you learn as you meditate. Once you can learn how to get the mind to calm down, you feel the push to go outside again. When the mind pushing around, what's it pushing for? It's looking for happiness, looking for pleasure. So you can give it some pleasure right here. That way it can gather in and be one.

They talk about concentration as a place where the mind has a single place to gather. Well, this is it: the breath. Or you can gather around goodwill—there are lots of topics you can gather around. But you want to be here in the present moment in the body. That's the safest place to gather. Nobody else can move in— unless you bring in their words, bring in their ideas, bring in their actions. But you can leave them at the door.

Right here the only thing that's important is what you're doing right now. So pay careful attention to that. When all is said and done, it's your own actions that determine whether you're going to be happy or not. And whether your happiness is blameless, whether your happiness is solid depends on what you do. So be right here so that you can watch what you're doing, in a position where you can make sure that you do it well.