

## *Certainty Inside*

*August 6, 2018*

Close your eyes and give your full attention to the breath. At the moment, nothing else matters, just awareness, breath, right here. Anything else that creeps in, just cut it away, cut it away. Say you don't have time for that right now, you want to develop the qualities of the mind that need to be developed.

We live in an uncertain world. So we need to have some certainty inside of what's really good for us. That's the place we can take our rest, the place we can take our shelter, a place where we can gain our energy.

All the Buddha's teachings are there to energize the mind. Generosity is meant to energize the mind, as are virtue and the meditation.

Generosity: You realize that you're not just a guest here in the human realm. You have something you can give it. You become part of the goodness going around in the realm, one of the agents that makes this a good place to be. Rather than just living off the goodness of others, you participate in creating goodness here. And that means you belong here. You become part of the group of people who are really working to make this a good place to be. This gives you a sense of stability, a sense of belonging here.

The same with virtue: You don't give into any impulse. No matter how badly people have been treating you, you don't have to treat them badly back. That gives you a sense of having your independent wealth, your independent worth.

And the same with the meditation: You've got a solid place right here inside, so you're not blown around by the world. Rather than being just on the receiving end of the world, you're creating something good here.

So it's in the creation of something good that you find your sense of well-being, you find your sense of belonging, you find your sense of having a good solid place to stay, a good solid place that you're coming from. Your goodness doesn't have to depend on the goodness of other people. It's independent. That gives you a sense of well-being right there. It gives you a sense of strength, realizing that you don't have to be the victim of things outside. You're more the agent who brings about good change.

It starts by changing your mind. Instead of just wandering around in whatever, you make up your mind you're going to stay with the breath. You're going to do good things with the breath. The breath becomes yours.

In the same way, when you're generous with your time, generous with your knowledge, generous with your belongings, that generosity becomes yours. The belongings of the world, the things of the world, come and they go. But when you give, you give yourself a real sense of ownership, ownership of the goodness.

The same with the precepts; the same with the meditation. So lay claim to your goodness. That's your most valuable possession. It's a possession that gives you a strength that really is yours.