

The Merit of Happiness

August 8, 2018

Close your eyes and watch your breath, all the way in, all the way out. Any other thoughts come up in the mind, you don't have to follow them. You're free to stay here with the breath.

And breathe in a way that feels comfortable. After all, nobody's forcing you to breathe in a way that's uncomfortable. And because the way you breathe has an effect on the body and the way you feel in the body has an effect on the mind, this is a good inexpensive way to create some more well-being in body and mind. The breath is totally free. You don't have to borrow it from anybody else, and it's right there all the time. So ask yourself, what kind of breathing would feel best right now?

This is one of the things that all the different ways of making merit have in common: They're ways of looking for happiness. You look for happiness by being generous, you look for happiness by being virtuous, you look for happiness by gaining some control over the mind.

Then when you dedicate the merit coming from that, it's as if you want to spread that happiness around. When you give a gift and you dedicate it to somebody, you're hoping that they will know about it and be pleased by the fact that you remembered them. The power of the mind that sends that intention to the other person: That's how the merit gets conveyed. You can't convey the cloth or the food or whatever, but you can convey the power of the mind. So try to get the mind focused so that the power is strong. And put it in a good mood so that the energy that you're sending is good. Because that's the kind of current that other people, other beings, would like to receive.

In this way, you remind yourself that not all happiness in the world is good for other people. You can look for happiness in certain ways that's actually bad for a lot of people. But if you look for happiness through merit, it spreads the happiness all around, it spreads goodness all around. And there's so little of that in the world right now that it's good to create as much as you can.

So be happy in the merit you've made, be happy to share it. In that way the happiness multiplies.