

Home Decorating

June 10, 2021

Try to settle in right here. What have you got right here? You've got the body breathing; you've got the mind thinking and aware. So try to put those things together. Think about the breath and be aware of the breath coming in and going out. Then on top of that, you can decide how to make this comfortable. If you want to stay here for long time, you have to make adjustments.

It's like moving into a new house. At first, it's not going to be all that comfortable because you haven't decorated it as you want, you haven't arranged it the way you want, but it *is* something that you can arrange.

All you're experiencing right now in the present moment is not totally the result of past actions, it's also the result of present actions as well. In fact, your present intentions are the things you're aware of even before things coming from the senses. We tend to cover up those intentions, which means we don't make the most use of them. But we can change our intentions right here, right now so that they're good and skillful—so that no matter what comes up from your past actions, you don't have to suffer from it.

That's something that you always have to remember. You have choices in the present moment. Sometimes the range is wide, sometimes the range is small but the choices are there. And you can always choose to do something skillful. Keep that in mind as well. That way, you can skilfully decorate this house, the home with the body, or what the Buddha called *vihara-dhamma*, the quality that creates a home for the mind.

It's much better than a lot of homes you've been moving through. Because it's from this home that you can look at the others and you can see them clearly. Something else comes up and invites you to move away someplace else, Say, "No, I've got a home here. I don't have to travel around. This is a good home." When you're well based like this, then your actions, your words, your deeds are well founded, are solidly based.

So, do your best to maintain this sense of being at home here. You can adjust your breath; you can adjust your attitude. Ajaan Lee talks a lot about adjusting the breath; Ajaan Suwat would talk a lot about adjusting attitudes. Come with a sense of conviction that this is the right thing to do. Have a sense of yourself lifting the mind to a new house, a better place to live.

The image the Buddha gives in the Canon is of a person who has ascended a tower and looks at the world below. You see things as they're happening, but you're not pushed around by the things that are happening. You have your separate place, and from your separate place, you can make some wise

observations, so that when you have to deal with other people, you can keep that perspective of the separate place in mind. That way, you're not totally sucked in by other people's attitudes, other people's demands. You realize that you have your freedom.

That's what comes from having a house of your own. If you're a homeless person wandering around, you're subject to weather, you're subject to people's moods. Sometimes they allow homeless person to wander around and sometimes they don't. But if you've got a home, this is your place. Nobody can push you out, so you're safe and you're free. You're free to make the right choices—and that's the kind of freedom that really matters.