

## *Facing Difficulties*

*December 8, 2011*

Try to get your attention focused here. Make sure that “here” doesn’t slip off to someplace else.

When the Buddha talks about samsara, that’s what he’s talking about: the process of the mind that keeps going looking for something new, drags all kinds of things into your awareness and pulls you around.

This is why we suffer, because we don’t see that there’s a potential right here in the present moment that we haven’t really investigated enough, we haven’t really dug down into enough. So this is what we want to do: We’re digging down into the present moment to see what different layers of good things there are down there.

Now, we’re going to run into some unpleasant things, too. Ajaan Lee’s example is of digging down into the ground to get gold, but there’s a big rock in the way. In other words, there are pains and distractions and other problems. But there is gold down there. You have to figure out some way to get around the rock, go through the rock, whatever’s required to get down there.

So you have to be very careful about the thoughts that go wandering off someplace else. That’s what the mind has been doing for who-knows-how-long: just wandering, wandering, wandering around, hoping to find something good. But it’s never going to find anything that’s nearly as good as if you dig down inside right here, right now.

So make up your mind that whatever’s going to happen in the course of the day, you’re going to try to stay right here. When you’re walking, stay with the walking; stay with the breath while you’re walking. When you’re eating, stay with the breath while you’re eating. Whatever jobs you’re doing around the monastery or you lie down to rest, stay with the breath. When you fall asleep and then wake up again, go right to the breath.

Try to be as consistent and as committed as you can be right here, because the element of commitment is what makes all the difference.

Otherwise you’re just like a bee that wanders from flower to flower to flower, picks up a little pollen here, a little pollen there. The bee doesn’t really benefit that much, it just takes the pollen back, which is turned into honey and food for other bees.

Try to stay committed: committed to the idea that whatever comes up, you’re going to figure out some way to deal with it.

All too often, people come up with difficulties in their practice and they run away. There's something in the practice they don't like, they run away to find a new practice that's more pleasing. Then they run into difficulties with that one and they run away again. This way, they never get anywhere.

But if you're committed to making this work, you find that there is a way to make this work. It's not like a relationship where it's two different people, each with his or her own agendas, and you don't really know what's going on. It's just you and you in here. When you decide, all the different yous in here decide: We really do want happiness, so we can get together and really dig down and find it.

That's all there is to it. Everything you need is right here.