

The Gift of Being Grounded

January 25, 2013

Watch your breath coming in; watch your breath going out.

It's a good place to gather your awareness. It's about as close to your own mind as you can get in the physical world. It's the breath energy in your own body, so try not to overlook it. It's something very close right here that you can be with all the time. You can use it as your anchor because when you're with the breath, you know you're in the present moment. When you're in the present moment, you can watch the movements of the mind.

This is when you begin to understand how the mind creates stress and suffering for itself, how it weighs itself down with different thoughts, different ideas. Now, it's natural that things will pop up in the mind, but then there's the question of whether you want to grab onto those things or not. You can watch the mind as it does that and you begin to see, "This really does weigh the mind down." There are lots of thoughts you can just let go, let go. The mind will be a lot lighter and you won't be the worse off for not following those thoughts.

Sometimes we feel that we've got to sort out every thought that comes through the head, but that's not the case. There are a lot of crazy thoughts coming through. We take on many more tasks than we need to, so you just let them go. This way you can focus on the things that really do matter, that really do make a difference. That lightens the mind's burden quite a lot right there.

So try to stay right here. Be in touch with the sense of the breath energy flowing through the body as much as you can throughout the day, because that's what gives you your anchor.

When the mind is anchored, then it doesn't get carried away. Otherwise, you're like a person standing at the side of the road and someone drives up and says, "Hop in!" and you hop in. You don't even know who they are or where they're going. With every thought that goes by we just hop right in, hop right in. Sometimes we're not even invited, we just hop in. If we lived our lives that way with rides outside, we'd be dead by now.

And the mind does suffer that way. Our trains of thoughts can carry us far, far away from anything that's really useful, and create a lot of trouble and suffering in the meantime.

So try to stay anchored right here. When a thought comes up, check it out: Is this something really worth going with? If it's not, you can just let it go, let it go, let it go. You can stay solid and stable right here. This is what gives the mind a

grounding. When the mind has its grounding, then it's a lot more secure. There's a lot more ease as you go through life. You're not weighing yourself down with unnecessary suffering. At the same time, you're not weighing other people down, either.

This skill right here, even though it's just a beginning step in the practice, is a big gift both to yourself and to the people around you.