

Responsible for Yourself

March 21, 2014

It's good to give the mind a chance to settle down. It's been running around all day. It needs time to be by itself to gather its strength.

Because it gets wounded by its thoughts; it gets wounded by events. Events outside are not nearly as bad as the events that can come up from within the mind, though.

So you have to train the mind, not only to be still but also to watch out for the bad effects of greed, aversion, and delusion. These things keep coming up in various ways. They scar the mind, wound the mind as they go through.

You have to be quiet so that you can sense these things as they begin to form. Otherwise, you don't know them until they're full-blown. At that point, it's really hard to fight them off and they've already done a lot of their damage.

So when the mind is still, you want to be on the lookout: Where is a little bit of greed or a little bit of anger or a little bit of delusion going to come in? You have to learn how to recognize these things.

Delusion, of course, is the hardest of all to see because when you're deluded you usually don't *know* you're deluded. But when you have a place to stand outside of the mind, standing with the breath, you can see the patterns of the mind a lot more clearly and begin to recognize them.

This way you learn not to let the mind wound itself. At the same time, you're placing less of a burden on other people. They don't have to be wounded, either.

So it's not just for yourself that you're finding this center. It is a gift to yourself, it is an important one, but it's not just for yourself, it's for the benefit of everyone. If we could all train our minds, the world would be a much better place. But you can't wait for everybody else to start and then you join the crowd. You've got to start with yourself first. If each person is responsible for him or herself, then the world would take care of itself.

And there's no way you can do the work for other people or force them to do the work. You can set a good example and inspire them to follow that good example. That's the best you can do for them. But that's a lot right there.

If we didn't have the Buddha setting a good example, where would we be right now? We certainly wouldn't be here.

So think of this as a not running away from your responsibilities and finding a little quiet time. You're actually being extremely responsible by training your mind, because you're responsible for the main thing that you are responsible for

and should be responsible for. You take good care of that, and that's your gift to yourself and to the rest of the world.