

## *Focus on the Road*

*May 12, 2014*

When you meditate, you have to be patient because the results don't always come right away. So you have to find some way to occupy yourself in the meantime before they come. This is when you have to give yourself encouraging talks.

Remind yourself to stay with this one breath and that one breath and that one breath. That's going to do the work.

All too often we plan the whole period. Instead of thinking about one breath at a time, we think about all the breaths we're going to take in the course of the hour, wondering, "Can I do it? Can I do it?" If you just do one at a time, it's not beyond your capabilities. It's a step by step by step conviction in what you're doing: That's what actually gives the results.

Otherwise, you rush to the end and then rush back, and then rush to the end and rush back and you've spent the whole hour running back and forth. No wonder you're tired and no wonder the mind doesn't get any peace.

So you know that this is the road, and you know that if you focus on the road and follow it, it'll take you where you want to go. So just focus right on the road in front of you. That way you don't run into anybody and you actually make progress.

If you're spending all your time looking at the map and comparing where you are on the map to where you are in reality and where you want to be on the map, again there's a lot of running around there. There's no real peace.

So try to take each breath as it comes. Remember that teaching the Buddha gave to the monks: Basically he said to remind yourself of death every time you breathe in, "Okay, I've got one more breath here, I want to use it well," And then you discover, "Oh, I didn't die then. Okay, I've got another breath. Let's use this one well." In other words, use each breath as an opportunity to practice, to be more mindful, more alert, more discerning.

Everything you need is right there in each breath. So focus right there. The breath is your path, and it's right there in the path that the goal will be found.