

The Distraction of Samsara

August 15, 2018

Gather your mind together and bring it right here into the present moment. What have you got here? You've got the body breathing; you've got the mind thinking and aware. And for the time being, anything outside of that is off-limits.

You want the mind to have some time to be by itself to understand itself. We spend so much time paying attention to the world outside, and the world seems to be getting more and more intrusive. All the little screens that can take you all around the world are right there in your hand. They get into your brain and they get into your mind, and you have hardly any time for yourself to figure out what's really important for you, because they're telling you what *they* think is important. But you've got to have some time to think: What's important for you? Don't limit yourself just to the choices they give you.

The Buddha gives you a different choice. He said that there is a deathless happiness that can come from developing qualities in your mind. And you're going to let yourself get distracted by other things? It's something you have to ask yourself every day as you find yourself getting distracted: How much longer do you want to keep doing this? Because that's what samsara is: It's just one major distraction. We keep wandering around looking for some happiness, and we get little bits and pieces here and there, but the Buddha says if we turn and look inside there's a really big hunk of happiness that we're missing.

So try not to let yourself get distracted by other ideas or other values. This is something you can do for yourself, and it's not harming anybody. There's nothing selfish about this practice. When you're looking for happiness inside, it means you don't have to lean on other people outside quite so much. After all, happiness outside depends on taking things, laying claim to things, and fighting other people's claims, whereas here you've got this area inside your awareness that nobody else can lay claim to. It's yours one hundred percent. The problems lie in here but the solutions also lie in here.

So try to gather your mind right here to see where it's slipping out. If you keep slipping out all the time, you begin to think, well, that's the natural state of the mind. But as you get more used to being gathered in here, you realize that *this* is the mind at normalcy. The mind that slips out is the mind that's gotten out of balance.

So try to bring things into balance inside and see what potentials for true well-being lie right here.