
completely placed the mind internally, place it single-pointedly on the coming and going of the breath. We can meditate in that manner for a few minutes. (*Pause for meditation*)

If you were to meditate in that manner regularly on a daily basis, a little bit every day, I think that would be very good for you.

The practice of the Dharma is very effective in bringing happiness into one's life. It is very effective in creating true inner happiness in the mind.

Of course, there is also some transitory, fleeting happiness to be gained from different worldly objects. Sometimes, when the mind preoccupies itself with different worldly objects and then directs the body in those directions, it can generate fleeting, superficial types of happiness, but they are essentially quite pointless. Rather, one should try to make one's actions, and one's time, count.

I think that a big part of the problem is not a lack of good external conditions, but that the mind desires so many different types of objects. Many different types of objects start to appear to the mind, a variety of objects that seem to promise happiness. We start to think: "If only I were to have this object, or that object". It is usually not just one or two objects, but a great variety of objects appearing in our mind that we start to associate with happiness.

Then, we start going after these objects, one after the other, and each time we end up disappointed, not finding the happiness that we hoped to find within the object. In this way, we go through a great variety of objects, always disappointed, never finding what we want. In this process, the mind becomes progressively more unhappy and more disturbed.

The essential thing here is not a lack of external objects that could make us happy but that, despite having enough external objects to make us happy, more and more objects appear to our mind and we think we would be happier if we were to have just one more object. In this way, we could never be really happy. I personally feel that is a very big part of the problem. I don't know what you think, but that's my view.

It is really our desire that is creating our unhappiness and dissatisfaction. For example, if one lives in a small but nice house, a house where one has everything that one needs, despite having everything that one needs to be completely satisfied with one's situation, one will want to have a bigger house. The desire for a bigger house arises because we imagine that we would be even happier if we had a bigger house. This is a very common notion that everybody experiences.

Here, the trick is that it is really one's desire creating the dissatisfaction with what one has. Desire makes one want to have more. The problem is that desire can never be satisfied, so it will always want more than one presently has. It is the same with money. No matter how much money one has, desire makes us think there is always room for more. Desire never lets us be happy with what we have. Because of our dissatisfied nature, we can never

really experience even the slight happiness that our external good conditions could provide.

This applies not only to one object, but to many objects. If we were to learn to have a more relaxed and more peaceful mind, we could be happy with what we have. We could appreciate and experience the happiness provided by our good external conditions. I'm not saying that external conditions cannot provide any happiness at all – there is a certain happiness that good external conditions can provide – but one will only be able to appreciate and enjoy even this happiness with a proper state of mind.

As an example, when I first came to Tara House when I was in St Kilda, I thought: "You know, this house is really too small. Tara Institute needs a bigger house". Now, when I look back, the house that we had at that time was really quite big, but I wanted to have an even bigger house for Tara Institute.

After we got the bigger house for Tara Institute, I didn't really get that much happier! I was quite happy in the St Kilda Tara House; my mind was quite happy there, as happy as it is now, even though we are in a bigger house.

This advice is linked to what we mentioned last time, about not being able to experience happiness as long as one's mind is not pacified. This is what we talked about today – where one is in a situation where the mind is unhappy even though there are good external conditions; at such a time, we need to analyse our mind. This advice is for that type of situation.

Do you have some good questions? Please don't ask questions to which there are no answers. There are questions based on a type of doubt that simply cannot be alleviated. Those types of questions – maybe don't ask them.

Question: You talk about the mind being out of control and that we need to control the mind. But what is it that's controlling the mind, if it isn't the mind itself?

Answer: The one who subdues the mind, that is yourself. As we said before, one has a mind and a body. We say, "I have a mind", but the problem is that one has lost control over one's mind. So, what we need to do is to regain control over one's mind.

Question: But don't you do that through the mind?

Answer: What actually subdues the mind is mindfulness and introspection. To use an analogy, sometimes even though one is lying in bed, one cannot get any sleep because the mind is constantly wandering to different objects. What one needs to do is to bring the mind back home from these different objects, from this crazy wandering state, to a more peaceful state where it is abiding internally. This is what we mean when we say we need to subdue the mind.

We have to reverse the mind from being so distracted to external objects to an internal state. We have to reverse the direction of the mind from external to internal.

What do you think of that [answer]? For example, if the mind became unhappy when it wandered off to the east,

one would just recall the mind from the east and that unhappiness would cease.

There are different objects that make the mind unhappy when it goes towards them. So, when one recalls the mind from those objects, that unhappiness is stopped.

Question: Sometimes the same object can cause happiness and other times cause unhappiness. Is the affliction the object, or the unhappiness?

Answer: That's what I am always talking about. It depends on one's mental state with regard to the object.

For example, one's partner can be both the object of happiness and the object of suffering. This is what I am always saying, that one needs to have a positive mental state with regard to an object. For example, if one's looks at one's partner with aversion, one experiences suffering and feels distance from the other person. If one looks at one's partner with attachment, then because one has generated a mental image of the other person as attractive and beautiful, this generates a certain type of happiness in the mind and one wants to be more close to the other person.

When one is angry with one's partner, the mental image of the other person is the opposite, something undesirable, threatening and harmful. One will not want to be close to the object and one will not experience happiness.

When one looks at one's partner with attachment, one wants to be closer to that person, and wants to have a perfect, complete union with that person. This is what one desires, this perfect type of relationship, but it is very difficult to get, because first we have to generate 100% trust in the other person.

The point here is that one constantly goes back and forth between happiness and suffering – depending on one's anger, aversion and attachment towards the other person – without there really being any great change in the other person. What really changes is one's perception of the other person.

If one does not have patience with the other person, the relationship will definitely not work out. Also, one could be in a situation where one's happiness is very dependent on what the other person does. If they laugh and are friendly towards us, we feel happy, but if they don't laugh or are unfriendly, immediately we start to suffer.

This is why I always advise students that when they sees their partner coming home from work stressed out, upset or angry – which you can often recognise by their facial expression – it is a wise course of action to put the other person at ease, letting them settle down, making them very comfortable, cooking something for them, or offering them tea or coffee. When they have a chance settle down, their anger and so forth goes away.

If one does not do it is possible that before the other person has set down their handbag, suitcase, or whatever on the ground, one is already engaged into a fight! This can happen if one is not skilful. Students who have followed that advice say they found it very beneficial. It's good to greet the other person with a smile instead of a

frown and put them at ease.

TAYATHA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNAYE SOHA

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