

~ *Recognizing Awareness* ~

Mingyur Rinpoche

Meditation is all about awareness. The first time that I learned meditation, I did not know that. I thought that the object was the most important. I was struggling to really fix my mind on the breath, on the sound, but later, my father said: "The object, whether the physical sensation, sound, breath, whatever, is just a support for the awareness. The essence of meditation is awareness."

I felt relieved. Awareness means to know. Our mind has a special quality, which is the knowingness that knows what you are thinking or feeling. This cognition, the awareness, is with you all the time. It is with you twenty-four-seven, even while you are sleeping. Sometimes, that is what we call unconscious moments, such as sleeping without dreaming, drinking too much alcohol and being drunk, or the moment of dying, or fainting; even there, there is still awareness.

You have awareness, but if you do not recognize your own awareness, then that does not become meditation. In that case, the quality of awareness can not manifest for you; you can not experience it. Although awareness is free, pure, present, genuine, peaceful, and all these good qualities, if we do not recognize awareness, then we are stuck in thoughts, emotions, or perception.

For example, do you know what this is? It is a watch. What is the quality of a watch? It tells the time, right? If you have a watch, but do not recognize your own watch, even if the watch has the quality to tell you the time, if you do not recognize your own watch, then there is no benefit. The watch can not tell you the time.

Even if awareness is really perfect, if you are not connected with awareness, and do not recognize it, in that case, its qualities can not benefit you.