

## ***The Circus and the Meadow***

*February 18, 2009*

The mind is very active. If you watch it you will see it is much like acrobats in a circus. It is always jumping this way and that, bending and turning, and it has some very amazing moves. But it is a circus. It is not at all representative of reality. In fact, it is a complete distraction from reality. You will never notice reality if you remain focused on the circus act of the mind.

So now our primary interest is to lose interest in the mind. It is very tempting to pay attention to it, just as a great circus act catches the desire of your attention. But deep within you there is a desire that wants to settle within the meadows that surround the circus tent more than you want to be caught up in the circus.

So we are turning our attention from the ups and downs and spins and tumbles of the mind to the everlasting tranquility of the meadows. (And there is much happening in the meadows too! But it is real, which is much different than the circus.)

True stillness cannot be achieved by quieting the mind through meditative practices for part of the day and then being wrapped up in the stories of the mind the rest of the day. This is like running in and out of the circus. Sure, you may experience and know the tranquility of the meadow, but you are still addicted to the hype of the circus. The circus remains real for you. You will never be free through partial abidance. Only total abidance can be totally freeing.

The mind is going to want to think. You are going to be drawn back into the circus. But an inner response to this desire as soon as you notice it is most helpful to awakening. The inner response is one that turns your attention from the noise of the circus to the quiet love for the meadow.

This is the purpose of the mantra I have given you. It consistently and repeatedly throughout the day turns your attention from the circus and back toward the meadow, which is your truest of desires.

Wear the mantra like a layer of clothing. Practice it throughout the day, whatever you are doing. The mantra cannot be practiced too much as we are teaching the mind through desire to remain still.

Surrender is a means of living within the world while releasing your attachment to the circus.

The body remains, as do the senses of sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch. In this way, interaction with the world is non-avoidable as long as the image of the world remains in the mind. Attachment to the world continues to build the image of the world and all of the false concepts it represents. Non-attachment through surrender releases the world within the mind, which allows a slowing of its images and a fading of illusion from sight.

Attachment keeps the world going. The circus is in full swing. Non-attachment lets it fade until only the meadows remain.

Sitting with me for hours each day is also helpful, because my presence and my certainty strengthen your resolve. In this way, I ask you to be my student.

When the mind is not occupied in the silence of the mantra, let it be used for the purpose of surrender. This way the mind is always used purposefully, and one's toes will wiggle and curl delightfully as they feel the coolness of the meadow's ground beneath them.

Surrender of the common practices of the day, such as what to eat and what to wear, when to sleep, what to say and when to speak; surrender of such practices is letting go of ego, because ego indulges its self, its sense of self, through ordinary practices such as these.

Even after following a practice of surrender, mind will want to think about that practice. It will want to be proud for listening and following, or it will want to analyze the meaning of the act you were guided to follow, or it will want to imagine the results, the impact or the next step. All of this is returning to the circus, so when you see the mind acting in this way, practice the mantra to return the mind to the meadow.

***Question for the Inner Teacher:*** *What do I do with this strong resistance to the practices you are asking me to keep?*

**Answer:** Understand that all resistance comes from your willingness to listen to resistance before. It is an echo from the past that is being picked up and heard now. To listen to it again is like shouting into a cave again. The echo will only return.

One may stand at the mouth of the cave and shout at his own echo forever and the echo will not die. It will only return more frequently, and if his shouts get louder, the echo will grow louder too. The way to end the feeling of resistance is to stop shouting into the cave.

Be gentle with yourself. When you are feeling resistance, quietly and gently practice the mantra anyway. This practice will not hurt you. And because you are passing on the temptation to shout into the cave, the echoes are beginning to die, and practice will come more easily in the future.