

The Forecast Calls for Practice

November 23, 2015

The weather forecast says that today is our last warm day for a while. It's going to turn cold. So while the weather's good, it's warm outside, take advantage of the weather. Walking meditation, sitting under the trees: In a couple of days it'll be too cold and rainy to do that.

This is the way it is with life. We have little spaces where things are easy. And we tend to get complacent, though. Then when things get difficult, we complain.

As the Buddha said, you have to prepare all the time. There are dangers lurking all around you. Danger is normal. If you forget that, then you waste the opportunities you have when there is relative safety, relative ease. With the weather, the forecasts may not be 100% accurate, at least they give us some idea of when things will happen. But there are so many areas in life we have no idea when changes will come. So you always have to be prepared.

This is what the Buddha said lies at the basis of all skillful qualities: heedfulness, a realization that there are dangers all around us, dangers in our body. This body is prone to die. There are so many things out there that would trigger that capacity to die at any time.

So we've got the opportunity, we have the time, and the circumstances are favorable. Make the most of what you've got. A nice warm day, no wind, trees under which to sit, a dry place to sit: These are all you really need. Try to make the most out of them.