

# Traveling to and from work

Bhante Bodhidhamma · Tips of the Day · 1 min read

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How do we spend our time travelling? Do we see it as an opportunity to practise or as a time to get through. If we are in a car, do we turn on the radio, play music? If we travel by public transport, do we do the same or read? If we are on a long journey, do we do the same? And how much do we daydream? Whatever we put our attention on, that becomes a means of conditioning. We are creating or reinforcing a habit. The question then is: what sort of habits do we want to develop? I think we would have little objection to wholesome, skilful, virtuous habits. In which case, daydreaming is out, for when we daydream we are being carried along by some unwholesome attitude. The thought stream may be beautiful. We may be saving the world from ecological disaster, but it won't bear upon reality. It will be dreaming. So whatever thought we wish to have, we need to make it constructive, deliberate, purposeful thinking. A book helps. Or if travelling with a companion some mutually interesting topic. Of course, when travelling with someone the danger of daydream turns into useless speech. We find it hard to be silent in company. So at least make the conversation beneficial. Listening to the radio or listening to mp3's presents us with the same question. What sort of mental state does what I am hearing develop? If we know the input is going to do harm, no matter how little, then we need to find the strength to stop it. It helps if we can replace it with something wholesome. But the important point is that these times are precious moments for practice. Why waste them? Apart from developing wholesome mental states through reading, listening and conversing, especially when we on public transport, we can practise metta, vipassana or just abiding peacefully in the present moment. It's the continuity of practice that will bring results. One of the most favourite words of the Buddha was appamādo – diligence! It doesn't take all that much effort to decide to do something wholesome. Otherwise it's a case of one step forward, two steps back. No wonder we sometimes feel we are getting nowhere.

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