

Eight Fold Path

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So, yesterday I finished teaching a 9-10 day retreat in Boulder Creek, and it was a lovely retreat. Those of you who have been there before would share in the delight to know that for the first time in the 11-12 years we've done it, the weather was perfect. Usually it's blazingly hot, and occasionally it's been cold when the fog comes in, but this year it was just perfect weather the whole time. Couldn't ask for better weather. At the end of the retreat yesterday morning, the three teachers leading the retreat, myself, John Travis, and Mary Orr, we gave a talk together, breaking it up, on the Eightfold Path. And I'm still a little bit inspired, quite inspired from having just left the retreat and having given part of this talk on the Eightfold Path that I want to continue on the topic today.

The Eightfold Path is the earliest formulation from Buddhism, from teachings of the Buddha, on the path of practice, what people do when they engage in Buddhist practice. Someone I do? What should I be concerned about? And the simplest formulation of this would be the Eightfold Path. And I love this notion of a path, the idea of a path. I have the image of a path in the woods.

And without a path, if the woods were kind of well-grown, overgrown, you'd have a very hard time finding your way through the woods. But a path is a clearing in the woods that makes it easy to find your way because it's, you know, there's an opening there, there's an emptiness there, a space there. And many different spiritual traditions of India share on the idea that a spiritual life involves being on a path, a *mārga* in Sanskrit, *magga* in Pāli. And, but one of the, there's a number of connotations, or ideas around a path. One is that it uses a path to get from A to B. And so you want to get to some place in the woods, the other side of the woods, and you go follow this path through the woods.

It makes it easy for you to follow the way. And in that sense, the person who can, you know, our concern would be how to get maybe how quickly through the woods, you know, just get from A to B as quickly as we can because the point is the destination. Another kind of path is a path which is more like a panoramic, one that has a mystic view. So you go along, and the point is not to get quickly to the other side, but the point of the path is to walk it and to enjoy the view, enjoy the beautiful forest, enjoy, maybe it goes by some wonderful cliffs, and you can have a great view of the valley below. And the point there is to enjoy the walk, to enjoy what you see as you walk along. In a sense, you might say every step along the way is the fulfillment of the path.

That it's not a matter of getting somewhere, because it's kind of a vista kind of walk. You know, if the point was to get to the end, you know, you'd go really fast and you wouldn't see anything. So the idea is, so every step along the way, in a sense, is the fulfillment of the walk. And in the spiritual life, both approaches are found in different kind of teachers. Some teachers emphasize that the Buddhist path is for getting to the end, and the faster we can do it, the better. And other teachers emphasize the path is something that we fulfill in every step, in every moment of mindfulness, every breath, in a sense, every moment that we wake up is a fulfillment of the path.

And the point isn't to get to some end, but rather is to just be fully present as we live our life moment by moment. There's a third idea that's about the path, and that is that the same path can fulfill both functions. Some path might be about getting someplace from A to B, but at the same time, the path is a wonderful path to walk, and each step along the way is complete in itself. And so the two notions don't exclude each other, but can contain each other beautifully. And it's my kind of notion that this is kind of really what the Buddha had to offer when he was offering the spiritual life. There's a way in which it's completed in each moment of practice, and at the same time, it puts us on a path that leads us someplace through the woods.

In the teachings of the Buddha, the primary place that the Buddha was emphasizing where it leads to is to, in shorthand, is said to be a life which is free of suffering. And each step along the way, it can be seen as a gradual letting go of suffering, letting go of the causes and conditions of suffering, until eventually we get to the other side of the woods where there's no suffering left at all. And the absence of suffering is called liberation in Buddhism. And it's quite a remarkable experience to have even a kind of glimmer of what it might be like to have, first it's quite a remarkable experience to see the extent to which our minds are hard to suffer. And one of the aspects of Buddhist practice which is not well advertised because people would then not be interested is that as people engage in Buddhist spirituality

one important aspect of it is that we become increasingly sensitive to the degree to which suffering is going on in our life and the world around us.

It said, I've heard a Christian quote, something like, for a saint, the smallest personal transgression or something is like putting sand in his or her eyes. There's a kind of increase in sensitivity that goes on in maybe any kind of spiritual discipline about what's really going on here in the life that we live. And so part of that then is the discovery of the extent to which suffering is a big part of this world and ourselves. And you'll see it to a small degree, or a big degree, if you become very sensitive to the quality of your thinking, the nature of your thinking. And it really requires a very, very steady and very concentrated and mindful mind to really see that much of the thinking that we do, it has qualities of suffering or oppression or burdensome nature in the thinking itself. If you're just kind of driving around on the freeway having a good time and thinking wonderful thoughts, and they bring you a lot of pleasure, the suffering is in a sense camouflaged.

So, for example, you might be having wonderful thoughts about winning the California lottery. It's a nice thing to win for some people, and there's wonderful thoughts about it and fantasies about what you might do if you win it. And mostly it seems like a pleasant kind of fantasy. But the attachment that's connected to that kind of thinking, the compulsion, the drivenness, the way in which we kind of have this velcro attached to these kinds of thoughts, we can't let go of them perhaps, all those aspects of that kind of thinking has suffering as part of it, but that suffering is camouflaged by the wonderful kind of engagement we might have with what it means to win the lottery. So as practice deepens we become more sensitive to how in much of our thinking, there's suffering as part of it. It's not an inherent part of it, but it's much there.

And then if you extrapolate from that in seeing it in yourself, to the fact that there's 6 billion people in the world, many of them whose minds function the same way, you realize the tremendous magnitude in which suffering exists in the world. There's many other ways of realizing the magnitude of suffering. There's just many ways. I'm sure many of you read the newspaper and can get a sense of it from that. And so what the Buddha had to offer was a path that freed people from suffering. Another way of saying it is free people from the causes and conditions where we cause harm.

So in order to live a life which is harmless, the Buddha offered this path of practice. We no longer cause harm for ourselves, and we no longer cause harm or intend harm to others around us. So there's a path to accomplish this. And so what are the elements of that path?

The first, so the Buddha said there's eight elements, there's eight steps to this path that you can follow and the first of these steps is the, it's called right understanding or right view.

It might be easier to translate the word into English as right orientation because the idea of view suggests kind of like an opinion or a religious tenet, the right kind of truth to understand. But rather it's the appropriate orientation to have if you want to find the path. So if you're interested in a path that leads to the liberation of suffering, that leads to the compassion, that leads to the peace, that comes with that liberation, then you need a certain orientation to find that path. You need a compass that directs you in the right direction. You need a signpost to say that's the way you have to go. So the first of the steps is having the right orientation to find the path.

And the Buddha's teaching was that the right orientation to have is that of understanding our life or having a framework for understanding our experience that is the Four Noble Truths. And so the Four Noble Truths are the... The word truth appears in the word. And that suggests in the West the kind of philosophical truths. You know, like, oh, you have to believe this if you're going to be a good Buddhist. But they're more like pragmatic truths. These are truths that are useful if you have a certain purpose in mind. And if the purpose in mind is to become free of suffering, this is a useful way of looking at your experience, looking at yourself.

There's a lot of different questions people can hold about their lives. A lot of things that people can be passionately seeking in life, including a spiritual life. They can search for questions like, who is the true self? They find one's self, the true self. Or they try to find some kind of communion with some ultimate spiritual reality. There's many kind of approaches a person can take. I believe what the Buddha was suggesting is that if what you want to do is find liberation from suffering, then the easiest way to do that, the cleanest, the simplest way of doing that is to focus on those questions or focus on that orientation that helps you understand your life from the point of view of the Four Noble Truths.

So it kind of clears away a lot of different questions that a person might have about spiritual life and focuses on something that's very simple. And the Four Noble Truths are simple in this way. They involve the first noble truth is that of suffering, that there is suffering, suffering occurs in human life. The second is that there's a cause of that suffering, and that cause is found in clinging. The third is that there's a possibility to end that suffering, and that becomes the peace, the happiness, the compassionate abode of those who are enlightened. And then there's the fourth noble truth is the path leading to this liberation which is the Eightfold Path.

It's a little bit circular, right? We have this Eightfold Path and the first step is understanding that the Eightfold Path is useful. That's what it's all about. So, then people complain. These Buddhists are pessimistic. They're telling us to pay attention to suffering, to notice suffering.

The analogy I've given is that of going to your doctor. You go to a good doctor at Kaiser, right? You get ten minutes. And you have something that really ails you. It's really serious. You're worried about it, at least. You don't know yet. And you show up, and your doctor asks you about what your hobby is. Oh, well that's nice how long have you been doing this hobby and are you interested in sports what's your favorite sport oh cricket oh and you follow the games in England and you know and what's your favorite team and you know you're looking at your watch right and you know eight minutes nine minutes have passed and the doctor still hasn't asked you about what ails you you know they're asking all kinds of wonderful things you feel this wonderful you know sense of camaraderie with the doctor because they share some of the same interests it's great right makes you happy and excited to meet someone who has the same interests and all that.

Nine and a half minutes. The doctor still hasn't asked you about what ails you. The most cleanest and efficient way of going to the doctor and getting cured is to have the doctor ask you what's going on. You don't want to deal with hobbies and sports and all that in that kind of setting. So the Buddha, in the same way, was saying if the cleanest way to become free of suffering is become sensitive to it, tune into it when it's there.

Human beings have a tremendous capacity to ignore their suffering, not paying attention to it, to deny its existence, to ignore it, to avoid it, to overlook it. Or sometimes people do pay attention to their suffering, but they do it in ways which are not so useful. That happens also. People get attached to their suffering, for example. But the first thing is to look at the suffering. The second is to understand that there's a cause to the suffering.

So this also involves some activity of you, some effort on your part, which is to look at, okay, where am I suffering? And what's the cause of that suffering? What's the causes and conditions it brings into place? The Buddha made it a little bit easier in that he was suggesting to look in a particular direction for the cause of your own suffering. And to surprise to many people he did not say to look at it in the conditions around you in the world around you what the world does to you, the conditions you find yourself in but he said the most cleanest and quickest and the most effective way of ending your suffering is not to assign blame outside even if people and situations have created conditions for you to suffer but don't look outside

and blame the world around you but rather turn the attention in to see that particular cause within you, which is the rising of your suffering.

This is not to deny the conditions around you contribute tremendously, but if you want to do this efficiently and cleanly, you turn the attention in and look, where is the attachment? What am I clinging to here? Or what am I resisting? It's kind of another way of saying it. Where is the compulsion operating right now? It's not easy to find sometimes but it's possible that's what the orientation is to look at this.

The third is the happy news that once you can release your attachment then you'll taste the experience of peace of liberation, of happiness that can come. Some people talk about the innate happiness of the liberated heart or the heart is innately happy or at peace except it's covered by these attachments. And if you can learn to let go of the attachments, you'll naturally be happy. Because that's the nature of the heart itself. But it's very easy, it's all too easy, to say there's suffering, there's a cause of suffering, and there's an end of suffering. But it's much more difficult to do the work that it takes to liberate oneself from suffering.

It's a big endeavor. So then the Buddha said you need a path. And this is the Eightfold Path. And the first step is understanding your experience from the point of view of the Four Noble Truths. Again, people might complain that this is simplistic, that this is depressive, you know, to look at my life only through the filter of am I suffering here or not? Is there clinging here or is there not? Am I happy here or not? That's just, you know.

But the answer to that is that sometimes having one very simple thing, the right thing, will draw everything to it that really needs being addressed in your life. And the analogy that's given is if you go to the great plains of Africa and you want to be a nature photographer, you can run around like crazy during the day, all over, looking for the animals, trying to find the right ones, some rare zebra or something, and take a picture. And you could be exhausted. But if you just stayed by the watering hole and waited, sooner or later all the animals come to the watering hole. So the suggestion here is that the Four Noble Truths are the watering hole of a spiritual life.

That suffering, the causes of suffering, and the ending of suffering, if you pay attention to just those simple things, every other thing that you need to deal with, every other spiritual question that's important, will come to you as you just pay attention to those. And if it doesn't come to you, maybe it's not so important. Maybe it's not needed to be addressed. So that's the orientation. So the Four Noble Truths is what helps you find the path. That's why they're true.

And in a sense, you create the path for yourself in your own life by using this compass of the Four Noble Truths. And I find it's very inspiring that it's so simple. And kind of the image I have, I love, you know, this is kind of maybe my own, you know, mind, but I love the image of a forest monastic. A man or woman who goes becomes a monastic. It doesn't have to be a... Not everyone who's monastic does this, and lay people can do this too, but you go into the forest, some beautiful jungle in Thailand that's very beautiful and cool and peaceful and sometimes cool.

And you have this little, very simple little hut that's sometimes built, usually built on little stilts. And the hut is about one room, and it's about the size of maybe it's about 8 feet by 12 feet and usually they have a little porch in front of it and you go inside and there's usually a wooden bed and maybe a straw mat on top and maybe a table if you're lucky and a chair, but maybe not and maybe a shelf to put all your worldly belongings which is your, you know, a couple of extra clothes and your plate and cup and a place for your water jug or something a very simple life and you live there in this great simplicity and clarity of this simple setting with so much renunciation, so much freedom, so much let go of. It's all extraneous to our life. The monastic life in Buddhism was not meant to be an ascetic life. Potentially not meant to be ascetic. However, it was meant to be as simple as it could be without becoming ascetic.

Isn't that great? So I'm inspired by this. So I don't know if I've conveyed this beauty of simplicity, kind of like Thoreau, right? And so I think of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path as embodying this in a kind of spiritual sense, in a path sense, this simplicity. And I hope that you appreciate the profundity of this kind of simplicity.

So once you kind of have found where the path is, then the next step in the Eightfold Path is right intention. And as we go through these Eightfold Steps, you'll find that some of the steps, or some aspects of the steps, have to do about acquiring something or building skills, building some understanding. And others have to do about letting go. So the first step is really about acquiring a certain kind of framework, understanding and building up the strength of understanding of the Four Noble Truths. Having the ability to look carefully at our life and looking and being sensitive to suffering, the causes of suffering, and the freedom from suffering.

The second step, the right intention, also, in a sense, is something we do. That is to find the intention by which to plunge into the path. Once you see the path, there has to be some motivation to step onto the path. Without that motivation, you won't do it. And there's lots of people whose relationship to spirituality is through books. And they're very much like

people who go to the restaurant and only read the menu.

You know, they're inspired. The menu is great. You know, you go to some restaurants and really, you know, your mouth, you know, gets all wet looking at it, you know, just all excited. But you never order the food. So there has to be some motivation that gets you on the path, gets you engaged. And it has to be a very personal motivation, I hope, I would suggest.

So it means finding that capacity you have to have motivation, to have an intention, to have an aspiration. This takes some time of reflection, going off quietly by yourself or journaling or whatever it takes, to see what is the deepest intention you have. Once you've seen the path, what intention do you want to have in relationship to that path? What motivation do you want to have? And that motivation that you find has a lot to do with how thoroughly, how completely you're willing to step onto the path. Some people find some motivation and they step on a little bit and they find great benefit from the practice.

And some people will find very powerful aspiration to engage in the path. And they get involved in a much more thorough, complete way. It's not that one is better than the other, particularly, but the degree to which we are fulfilled by the path, or the degree to which we follow through on the potential the path offers to us, has a lot to do with the strength of the motivation that we step onto the path with. So spending some time with yourself, and reflecting for yourself or with friends about your intention is very important. Intention is very significant in other ways. It's also significant, Buddha said there are particular intentions or motivations that are very helpful to have if you want to walk on this path.

If you want to walk a path in the forest and go backpacking or something, there's some motivations that are more useful than others. One motivation that's very helpful is to travel lightly. Have you noticed that about backpacking? When I went to Asia to practice there for the second time I went to practice there my girlfriend came to join me after some months in Kathmandu and she had never really traveled like a likely and she showed up with all these suitcases. She has a duffel bag that I would have put inside of, and all this stuff. We hardly had any money, and she had all this stuff.

And this wasn't going to work at all, taking these buses through India and whatever. And so I talked to her about it, and we took it down to a little second-hand shop in Kathmandu. We sold it all, most of it. So we just had a little backpack to carry. It helps to travel lightly. So it also helps when you go into the forest to have certain intentions about how you orient yourselves to the world you see there.

Are there people you encounter in the path? Are there animals you encounter? And one of them that tends to be helpful, especially for other people, but I would think also for animals, is to be kind or to be harmless. People feel that you're going to be harmless. The people on the path are going to be more kind and supportive of you. So the Buddha said there are certain intentions and motivations which are very helpful if you want to engage in the path.

And he gave three. One is intention to be harmless. Intention to cause no harm. The second is the intention to be friendly or to have loving kindness. And the third is the intention to renounce, renunciation. And that sounds very popular, some of us believe more in the carry all our suitcases with us kind of approach to life, but renunciation of being on the path.

Partly because it helps us travel lightly, but also because there are many worthwhile things to do in human life. And there's many not-so-worthwhile things to do that people do. But let's just stick on the worthwhile things. There's many worthwhile things to do. And many people would like to do some of them, a number of them. But if you really want to do one really well, it's hard to do all of them.

And some degree of choosing and being focused thing is really helpful. And I heard someone mention recently that people who choose professional vocations either understand this or they suffer. Is that you have to kind of choose, you know, for this period of time, your training or some time, to really focus on this one thing in order to do it really well. And you have to let go of a lot of other things because you can't do it all. So, spiritual life can be that way also. It requires some letting go of even worthwhile things if we want to follow the path thoroughly or completely or really engage in it fully.

And so, depending on how strong the intention is, the more useful it is to lighten the load so we don't do too many different things. This is not a rejection of all these things of the world, but rather just a pragmatic element. Depending on how strong your intention is, letting go of things is a very important part. I was very inspired. I don't want to say that. So once you have the orientation and find the path, and you have the intention, then you have to step on.

Then you have to start walking on the path. Having the intention is not enough. You have to actually apply those intentions. Has to be an application, an engagement with the intention in action. And so the next part of the Eightfold Path involves putting it into practice. And the next three all have to do about relatively coarse levels of our behavior.

Or it has to do with our behavior, how we actually act in the world, behavior in the world. So the next three are right speech, right action, and right livelihood. And I know some people

want to get to the meditation quickly, meditation part, the inner life, we focus in the inner life and purify the inner life, we deal with the inner life, have great inner experiences or whatever, and in a sense the Buddha said wait, do these things first. The first, once you find the path and have the intention to be on it, the first steps you take is to look at your speech and try to cultivate wise speech. Try to cultivate speech that doesn't harm. Cultivate speech which is truthful. Cultivate speech which is kind. Avoid speech which is not.

Why? There's a number of reasons why. One is to avoid harm. Many people have found, I mean, this is a little cliché, right? It might take many years to create a friend, to develop a friendship, and it can take one sentence to end it. So if we're not mindful with our speech and careful with it, a lot can get destroyed. But, right speech, even though it's difficult to bring mindfulness to it, is a grosser activity, human activity, than having a thought or having a feeling.

So it's actually easier, in a sense, to monitor our speech than it is to monitor our thoughts or our feelings. And the next step is the right action. So live an ethical life. Don't kill or steal or lie or harm through your sexuality. Or harm yourself through intoxicants. So live a life of integrity. But those kinds of activities are relatively gross activities.

In order to kill, you have to do something with your hands or something like that. You lie or steal, you do something with your body. And so the idea is it's easier to monitor your bodily activities. And the next one is right livelihood, to have a livelihood that seems in harmony with the intentions of the spiritual path, the intentions of being harmless is the primary one. Is the livelihood that you, is the job that you have that gives you livelihood and supports your life, is it one which does not cause harm or causes minimum amount of harm?

The Buddha suggests that for someone on the path, it's not appropriate to be involved in the manufacture and sale of weapons. It's not appropriate to be involved in activities involved somehow or other in the purchasing and selling of human beings. It is not appropriate to be involved in the purchasing and selling of poison. I think back then it was different. I think it was meant as a different kind of weapon to kill people. And it's not appropriate to be involved in professions that are involved in... Oh, involve killing animals. Sort of like being a butcher.

And the little bit unfortunate thing then is that in Buddhist countries, they often eat meat. But it's not the Buddhists in the country who kill the animals. They get the other people, the other religions to do it. And so my suggestion here is these are kind of gross activities. And if you take these seriously, it's easier to monitor yourself at this level. And as you do that you're

developing mindfulness for yourself which is one of the key aspects of Buddhism and you're also creating a life which is more in harmony with being on that path that supports you on the path.

Once you've done that to some degree, it's a lot easier to engage in the last of the three steps of the Eightfold Path, all of which now focus the attention inward, no longer focusing on your activity externally and your relationship to the world outside, but now you're focusing it on your relationship with yourself, the inner life. And the last three are right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. And right effort is that effort to monitor your inner life, your inner intentions, and to begin adjusting them or begin choosing those aspects of the inner life which are helpful for following spiritual life and choosing not to engage in those inner aspects of our life which go against the grain of the spiritual life.

So you find yourself driving down along the freeway and you find yourself thinking about winning the California lottery and you really think what a wonderful idea would be and you start scheming about how you can do that and how you can buy one ticket from every store in the peninsula, it increases your chances of maybe winning something, your motivation is one of greed and after a while you notice you're thinking this way, this is not a useful way of thinking so you let go of it. Or you notice that you have a lot of anger towards someone, this is not a very useful thing to do, can I choose not to engage in this anger, can I choose not to indulge in it? You notice you feel some happiness when someone else has some success in their life, oh, can you then choose to allow that happiness to linger for a while, to share the happiness with someone else.

So right effort in the Buddhist teachings involves monitoring yourself to the degree which is easy or possible to choose the inner ecology, inner landscape, among the inner kind of landscape, that which is useful and helpful. Start making choices about your inner life, not just letting be as it is. It's not so, some aspects it's quite easy to do this. In other aspects you can't do it. It's not possible to pick and choose. Things arise and they're just there. You can't choose one or the other.

The next step is right mindfulness. And this also is an inner... Mindfulness is an inner capacity to be mindful. We use mindfulness in all directions to be more present. But in particular it's useful to become mindful of the inner life. Mindfulness has a lot of wonderful qualities. One of them can feel quite liberating is the ability to meet our experience without reaction, without judging, without being for or against it.

To become more sensitive to our life. To develop greater and greater sensitivity to what's go-

ing on in the depth of our life. And to do it in a way that is not for or against, doesn't judge. It's such a refreshing to have that kind of experience. Part of the value of deepening mindfulness is as the mindfulness goes deeper and deeper, as we see more and more subtlety of what makes us work. Subtlety doesn't mean that it becomes more trivial, what you see. Actually, the subtlety is often at the very root of much of our behavior.

As we become more and more subtle, we see more and more subtle or crucial or deeper places where we have choice to let go or to participate in what's going on. And that aspect of choosing to let go of that which is not useful, or choosing to let be, which is often more what some people emphasize, letting it be as opposed to picking it up, or picking up that which is useful, is part of the function of mindfulness. When mindfulness gets quite strong, then it's really important that mindfulness no longer picks up anything at all, even that which is helpful. Because at some point in practice, even the helpful things aren't helpful anymore.

And the last of the Eightfold Steps is right concentration. And concentration involves yoking or joining together the mindfulness with a mind that is stable. A mind that is able to be focused. A mind that doesn't waver, doesn't move when it sees something. A very still mind. And the cultivation of concentration, there's many ways of doing it, but it's a very important aspect of Buddhism because the deepest depths of our psyche that we want to address, to really uproot clinging at the deepest point, there has to be a strong concentration to go there.

How do you develop concentration? I'll give you one little analogy that I kind of like. If you want to get concentrated on your breath, you have to be able to hold your attention in the breath just right and sustain that attention over time. An analogy is like flying a kite. In flying a kite, you can't let the string be too loose. If the string is loose, the kite will fall. But you can't have the string be too tight either. You can't be pulling it tight because if you pull too hard, I don't know, the string will break or somehow it just doesn't give enough movement up there for the wind to kind of glide with the wind.

So you have to keep the string taut, but not tight and not loose. I imagine that if a really strong wind comes up, then you have to let go a little bit with the string and let the kite go further out. And if the wind suddenly dies, you have to pull in to keep the tautness there in order to keep it going just right. I'm not an expert kite flyer, so don't push the analogy. And so the same thing we do with the breath, we want to connect with the breath with the attention, in a sense the attention is touching the breath, and then you keep just the right pressure between the attention and the breath so that it doesn't become slack but also doesn't become tight, but the contact is kept continuously.

And as you do that the mind will, with time, become more concentrated, become stiller, and more relaxed. Relaxed and concentration, in Buddhist terminology, is synonymous. So a relaxed, soft mind that then remains very mindful and alert to what's going on in the present moment is the mind that will cut through the deepest levels of attachment, leading to the fulfillment of the path. You get through the woods, the other side. I like to think that each step along the way is also a kind of completion of the path.

The Buddha said that the Dharma is good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end. And I hope that each of you, to the degree to which you engage in the path, will find fulfillment and happiness and joy and all that with every breath you take, with every step you take, with every... You know. And so forth. And that's probably where I should stop. So, that's the Eightfold Path. Thank you.