

2004-01-05 The Four Noble Truths

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SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

So I want to wish you all a happy new year. We are the new part of the year. And it's kind of becoming a tradition that at the beginning of the year, first, the first chance I have the year is to give a talk on the Four Noble Truths. It's kind of like going back to basics of Buddhism and kind of starting all over again, we're at the heart of it, the core of it, the root of it.

And I'd like to do that today.

And for those of you who might not know the Four Noble Truths are, come from a people consider the core what the Buddha had to teach, and that everything else the Buddha taught and all of Buddhism and sensitive is an expansion on these four noble truths. And in the Mahayana tradition, the Buddhism Tibet and China and Japan, Korea. There are some places where they're very strongly emphasize these four noble truths. The cosmology of the Mahayana is quite elaborate, they have this kind of, you know, they have these concepts of kind of vast galactic space was, you know, all these galaxies and universes out there that have all their own Buddhas, you know, we know, we're not the only world that was lucky to have a Buddha, there are, you know, millions and millions of, you know, Buddha lens and field Buddha fields out there and, and, and it is the immensity of space and time in some of these Mahayana cosmology is is really immense. And so there's a lot of different Buddhas out there. And each each Buddha, in all those different Buddha lands, always teaches the Four Noble Truths. It's just that's what the Buddhists teach, though each one of them might have teach it in a little bit different ways, different words for them. And so it still is the Four Noble Truths. The word truths sometimes as a put off for some people, because it implies a creed, something you have to believe and use as a tenant of going to be a Buddhist, you have to kind of believe the Four Noble Truths. It might be more useful to think of the Four Noble Truths as four frameworks for understanding the kind of certainly the Buddha's teaching, but also for frameworks of understanding spiritual life, that's gonna probably be applied to almost any spiritual tradition at all. If you've been familiar with other ones, you can maybe see how this framework might work. So the first aspect is a discussion about the human predicament. It's, as it's often called, The human situation. And I think most religions spirit traditions have some idea of you human condition that is being addressed. That's kind of the human problem. Right? Most most spiritual people, like,

there's not a problem then why,

you know, there's kind of a problem, right? And so, and so we start with a problem.

And then

and then there's this great discussion about what the cause of that problem is, with this cause of this predicament is what brought it about. And then there's a discussion about the prognosis, they the view of how it's possible to have a cure of this problem to solve the problem, the solution to it, some way to be free of it or something. And then And then the fourth aspect, the fourth framework for kind of understanding his teachings, then are the path leading to that cure, or that solution, or that liberation, whatever it might be. So there's, you know, he's a medical model, there's the illness, there's a cause There's a prognosis. And then there's the cure, you have to take you have to do certain things to be cured. So this is what the Four Noble Truths are in Buddhism. So it's very simple. And it's nothing I don't think is anything you have to believe in are just a framework that seems to be useful for kind of understanding this different mix of order of a diplomat at all. And then every Buddha in every Buddha system with a world has his or her own understanding of what these foreigners are way of explaining it and that kind of words for vocabulary for it. And in our particular world system that we happen to be born into. Our Buddha chose the word suffering for the first noble truth. And the word suffering is understood to be a very general word that covers a lot of different things. It's not not one thing, so much so that one modern Buddhist thinkers likes to translate the word dukkha, which is usually translated as suffering by the word stress. Partly because things that we usually don't think of as being suffering, having suffering as part of it can be quite stressful.

You know,

some people have said that marriage can be happy time getting married, but that is quite stressful. But you wouldn't say you in because you would go tell people I'm sorry for the suffering you have in your wedding day. Usually, you don't say that. But you say, you know, I understand that was quite stressful. Maybe you take it easy now. So there are things which, you know, there's stress built into it that even when there's a lot of wonderful aspects of it also. And then for Buddha, the cause of the suffering is craving or thirst or givenness clinging And, and it's a little bit of a tautology, it is kind of statements and you have to understand it that way that the suffering that's being discussed in the first noble truth is that suffering that is caused by the second noble

truth.

And if you don't, if you don't understand it that way, you end up into a kind of philosophical quagmire of trying to understand the Buddhist teachings and what suffering actually is. But so you really don't really understand what the first stuff with the first Noble Truth is, unless you understand the second one. And it's that suffering that pain. Some people have one teacher in Thailand called call it the squeezing of the heart that results from clinging grasping. And the third noble truth is the truth of the ending, or the liberation of that clinging without grasping and squeezing of the heart. So sometimes it's called the sure heart release, the release of the heart, the freedom of the heart. And since it's not so easy always to have this release of the heart in order to unscrews the heart that is eight steps 8884 eightfold path that, that then Buddhists are encouraged to practice as a way of doing this. In my mind, the Four Noble Truths are phenomenally simple framework for the spiritual life.

And

I want to use that they have simplicity is a little bit of a springboard for the other aspect what I'm going to talk about today and come back to the Four Noble Truths

or as a way of talking about the Four Noble Truths.

The I just came back from teaching retreat. 910 day retreat that spirit rock ended yesterday. New Year's retreat and As these things often are, I was quite wonderful to be there and do the retreat. It was a little bit. Anyway, it was quite wonderful, but 92 people retreats were there and for teachers.

And

one of the strong impressions I had on the opening of the retreat, the opening night, the first day was the complexity more, it's much more than most retreats that I've gone to. I had a feeling and at the complexity of human life at arise at the retreat.

You know, somehow the time of the year and I don't know that

orange alert and

I don't know what it all the things were but had a sense that you know, so much was there there was a fellow there whose mother had lost his her house in the earthquake and possibly there was people there who were dying, or could be dying with chemotherapy and we're supposed to one woman who was there last year. Since she was six months to live,

she came back this year.

So, so we didn't see one saying she was dying anymore. And

and there were,

there was so much in there. There were people who are pregnant. There are people who are getting married. There are people who have just been married. There were people who were getting divorced people who had been divorced, the people who had lost someone significant in their life recently, one person there just had lost her husband a month before and was going through that. Going through that at the retreat. There was someone who left during the retreat, and totaled her car on the way back to the retreat. And she's fine but you know, a little bit

you know, in advance adventure

and, and so there's You know, I had a sense of the complexity, you know, and, and also people's minds the first day, you know, people have talked about it, there seems to be a lot of momentum, a lot of kind of, it was it was not I didn't feel at the first day, this was a subtle group. And not just people, right, ordinary people, people are maybe had to do with being a monk prior to Christmas. Some

people say this time of year is kind of crazy for people. But I've done this new year's retreat for now, eleven years or so. And they said this more this character is quality.

And then,

at the end of the retreat, the contrast was quite something at the end of the retreat, in contrast to the first day or two, there was a simplicity in the air and the simplicity with the people there and my contact with the people there. It seemed like so much had been dropped much of the burden and concerns people had And so much of the complexity of human life somehow had become simpler or more clarified or purified in some way. I mean, a lot of things hadn't changed so much for people that do some of the conditions of their life, their husbands is still died or people still, you know, whatever. But somehow the way that people relating to it the way people were there had a much greater simplicity of being, as part of it, and often for many people kind of joy in that. And even people who weren't particularly joyful, I love looking at them, because there was kind of this purity and this radiance, there in their simplicity, that sometimes people couldn't even see for themselves if they're kind of still in their thinking too much. And some people were talking about that they said, you know, you know, I feel so different. Now, at the end of the retreat, things I was consumed by preoccupied by the beginning are so much easier now. And the woman who lost her husband was, she had much greater clarity, and kind of a search was settled in different way and the woman who was dying synchronous was kind of she was kind of radiant and present

All these different kind of things going on there because the simplicity

of being at the end. And

so the question

is, you know, why? What brought about that simplicity of being in those 910 days there at the retreat, and certainly they're kind of maybe some obvious things we could point to that were true be true for anybody who did something like this for 10 days, that just being away from a normal life, like kinda like a vacation perhaps a lot of things kind of settle away a little bit and relax, we get a little distance from many aspects of our life and that distance sometimes can give us a different perspective into not caught by things in the same way when we're kind of pressed up against our days kind of really closely. Many of us live our lives claustrophobic Lee and, and some of the burden of our lives and the heaviness of our life difficult. The real stress of our life comes from a kind of claustrophobic and we're doing so much in some activities and you know, you know, have caught up in the details of life as they are.

I remember when I was at the monastery of Sahara,

we wouldn't get the newspaper when it was fresh. Because we were deep down at Montana National wilderness. You know, they didn't deliver the paper there. So we only got the newspaper if someone happened to come over the hill, especially in the wintertime, people came over the hill maybe once a week or something. And so it was usually the newspapers, they were at least a day old, if not a week old, by the time we read them. And I was struck by how different it is to read a day old newspaper versus a same day newspaper. And you might experiment with not reading your paper for a couple of

days and then reading it a couple of days later. There's a kind of you probably won't be as claustrophobic you know, you probably won't be so intense in the news won't be so intense and so pressing are so important are so you know, you have to can be grabbed onto it quite as quickly. Oh, you know, this happened a few days ago. Like, what is it to read the foot, you know, the, you know, to read the sports page, you know, weekly or monthly, you know, you probably don't lean into the papers quite the same way, or whatever it might be for the stock market. You read your stocks you stock page, you know, one month One week later.

What happened in a week.

So video is live our lives can't cluster publicly. So just getting some distance from our life is very helpful, or the retreats can do that, that also. But what I would like to suggest is that the biggest change over the retreat was that people began to loosen up on the things they're clinging to, they're grasping onto, and when people came to the retreat, people are grasping onto law, different things, a lot of clinging going on. And clinging is understood in Buddhism to us than any kind of resistance kind of pushing things away. I don't want to deal with that. So there were people who were clinging to their anger, there were people who are clinging to their self criticism. sense they're clinging to a sense of lack of self worth. They're people who are clinging to

their education, that people are clinging to.

Trying to get an education you're trying to get into school. There are people who are clinging to the relationships and do the big thing talking about the beginning of the retreat was the relationships that were caught in. Very important for them. If people are clinging to their homes or to their jobs, or not having a job or not wanting a job or wanting a job, or you know, wondering what to do about a job. There were people clinging to their spiritual life. And this retreat is so important for me I get to go on retreats very much, and I'm gonna get enlightened. Or I'm gonna you know, and I know I shouldn't be have expectation. I mean, I mean, no, that's really well, but this is an important retweeted, I'm going to do You know, touch into that joy that I had in my last retreat. And, you know, you know, when people say something like that, you know,

it's a setup.

And so then they suffer. And they come back, you know, a few days later and say, you know, my retreats not like how it's supposed to be, I'm not on schedule. And so then they get upset or not or they or they let go, and they go, Okay, I just have to let go of that ideal or that expectation. Some people are clinging to the things they were afraid of, and the sense of trying to hold them at a distance and not wanting to look at it. Or simply holding to fear thinks you know, fearful things and afraid of the future rate of the fear. All kinds of things people are clinging to and holding on to. And

what happens on retreats

is that we possibly retreats is people are left alone for the most part. There's no social talking going on. There's almost no talking at all to silence you And there's no television. You can't go out to the movies. And you can't call you're supposed to call people and just chat with people and you're not supposed to read your books. you're encouraged not to even write can keep a journal. So there's no distractions.

You know, there's no nothing's really take you away from yourself. And so we just left with yourself really clearly. And one of the things that becomes very clear, if you're left alone, that kind of setting in the early days of the retreat is how much momentum our life carries with it. And if we're caught up in many things, for example, or just one thing kind of caught up and frenzied or harried or a lot of clinging, a lot of fear, a lot of anxiety going on, that whatever kind of we do, a lot of the mind kind of carries and momentum is kind of wound up in a certain way. And you can't just kind of drop it just like that. What happens when you come on retreat, oftentimes a person's life catches up to And as probably some of you had that experience in your life somehow of none until you stop doing something, did you realize you were exhausted doing something your last situation. So in the same way retreats do that, both kind of macro level, but also at micro levels, the more still the mind can get in meditation, the more the micro level, do you see the momentum that's carrying along and it's considered very healthy, to let your life catch up to you. And you have your life and you separate places, is not such a good thing. But to have them together is very healthy, because your body catches up to what's going on or your mind or your psyche and, and, and sometimes when it catches up, it's a little bit uncomfortable for a while because that's what the nature of the momentum is.

And one of the things we start seeing,

as we sit there and day after day without any distractions, we got to start seeing the grass thing that we have things we're clinging to often much more better ways and people see it normally. Sometimes Sometimes people are blinded by their great anticipation of their ultimate wonderful enlightenment that they don't notice, you know, really what's going on in the present moment. But if you really start paying attention to what's going on, one of the things you'll become aware of is the ways in which we cling, or we grasp the way, the way we kind of driven kind of drivenness and everybody has it. Everybody, you know it all normal human beings are addicts, in some way or other. We might not be addicts in terms of alcohol or things like that. But we might be addicted to our ego. We might be addicted to our thoughts. And so, as the mind quiets down, we start seeing so many places at the mind, the heart is driven, that is grasps and holds on to what's going on. And as we pay attention to this and not distract ourselves from it, one of the things that we become aware of

is that it hurts to grasp it

it's it's squeezes the heart, it, it that's it. This is in Thailand, perhaps in America, we just gives us a headache because we've kind of holed up there so much. But in various ways we feel the suffering of it. Sometimes it's very direct in the physical we feel how the body holds are clinging, inner tension, you know, shoulders or stomach in different places. But sometimes it's in our mind. Some people in the retreat talked about how painful it was to be in their thinking minds. We were the thoughts, the thoughts were painful. They were driven, they were angry, they were chasing after things, they were critical.

They can watch, you know, this, this

kind of wound darkness of the thinking, mind, is it going, going, going going and they were just so tired of it, and they wanted to be distracted.

So we start seeing you Know that this clinging hurts.

Now, after hearing all this

experience, very tweets, probably most of your thinking, Well, I'm never going to retreat. This doesn't sound like fun at all. Because part of the medicine of the Dharma is that you have to really understand the illness before you take the medicine. If you don't understand the illness, you might take the wrong medicine. And I think a lot of people will go shopping around for different religious traditions, spiritual traditions, different things to do. And they read great books and it seems like a great, really wonderful, profound, fantastic spiritual practice and you're kind of enamored in the spiritual practice without but it might be the wrong medicine for you. So unless you know what your illnesses How can you know which medicine is appropriate, or all spiritual medicines, or some spiritual medicine, which is appropriate for all people at all times, or the specific ones with different kinds of illness

and so that and

also the process of Waking up and noticing our life discovering what's really going on in our life in a very honest, direct way, at least in Buddhism is the direct way to freedom and to happiness. And so what is some sort of specialized at not turning away, not avoiding what's going on, but being honest about this is what's happening. And the opportunity of retreat retreat is to see that very clearly. I know I know people on retreats, find a very sometimes occasionally, I don't know how often because I haven't done statistics, but are very happy, or somewhat happy or at least satisfied or feel a rightness in feeling, how they're suffering, feeling their particular version of the human predicament human situation, how the human forces of addiction of clinging or fear manifests for themselves in their individual ways. Great, they can see so clearly, and then we can begin working on it. So we see the grasping, see the clinging, and then we'd be begin to see that it hurts to do that. It hurts to clean, it hurts the grass. And that's a very important insight, because then it'd be a lot easier to want to stop cleaning. Because if you don't see that it hurts. Why would you want to let go? If you see that really hurt hurts you, then you start letting go.

So to go on retreat,

Silent Retreat. It's so great the silent retreats. So there's a story.

A person comes to the monastery.

And the monk asks, Why do you come? And the person says, I've come to experience the great silence. Please come in. And the visitor says, Have you experienced the great silence process I've come to meditate so I can experience the great silence. I want to go in within and meditate and explore my inner life and find that deep silence there. Have you experienced the great silence? In amongst us? Oh yes, I have. I spent years going in and exploring my inner life and delving in there and different rooms and corners of my mind and experiencing great variety of spiritual states and experiences. And then one day, the abbot of the monastery came over to me whispering in my ear,

come out of there.

And I came out

and I realized that the great silence all around me, the noise was inside.

So part of you know is to look at that noise and look at what goes on inside, but not to just not to ignore it, but to begin working with it and finding anything, and quieting enough inside. So maybe we can see feel the silence it's all around. So then the third noble truth is that of the liberation, of cleaning the end of clinging. And this is considered the good news of Buddhism. And in a kind of colloquial way we can say this is the truth of happiness, and the way to happiness in the Buddhist path, this is certainly the kind of happiness that is kind of unconditioned or kind of happiness that comes from liberation comes when the mind is no longer addicted or driven or caught up in its preoccupations for the My heart is no longer squeezed or something by its concerns. The end of the retreats, people a lot of the people there still had a lot of the same concerns. They had a beginning of the retreats and things were so complex, but they weren't clusters. To phobic with it, they weren't caught by it, there was a simplicity about themselves within the simplicity of heart in relationship to these issues of their life. So the liberation because of the simplicity of hearts and in our relationship to our life that we live.

So you've got to go from clinging

to not clinging from grasping and not grasping to resisting and not resisting is a huge step.

Some things are easy to do. And some

things are quite difficult to do. It might be easy for you to let go of

I don't know what you know.

But it might be very difficult to let go of your ego, your sense of self and really want to know the complexity of the retreat. There was one person on the retreat I've known for many years. Kind of very, very senior person in the in the in the past in the world. And a lot of teachers have tried to work with him and There's still this narcissism there, you know, kind of caught up in his self identity and self a sense of self importance. And somehow the knock knock you know, come out or not, somehow just doesn't think he can't hear anything. Because quite hard sometimes.

Another story

is in monasteries they often had on them in the meditation hall. They have not the Buddha, but they have Manjushri luxury is the bodhisatta of wisdom, like this archetypical personification of wisdom. And Manjushri often carries a sword in one hand, and sometimes a book and the other hand Book of Wisdom, and the sword is a sword that cuts through our clinging cuts through duality cuts through and there's one monastery They had this statue in the zendo. It was very special people we don't talk about a lot is that somehow if you can't approach it just the right way, with enough humility and enough reverence or enough presence of mind and stillness,

that's that you.

Let's say somebody will talk to you.

So there was one monk who practicing for years and years and years. And

he felt he hadn't made much progress for many years.

It was hard for him.

He had, you know,

I think I'll go up. I don't know about this Manjushri but I'll go there. And he went one day when no one else was around him in the staff. You didn't quite believe it. You know. He was letting people think that he's going to try to hear Stacie talk. But he you know, he got down and he did three full balls to the floor in front of staff who stood up there with his hands carefully in front of In

fact, you spoke

on the statue said

Manjushri said

why not?

That's all he said.

Why not? He said it a few times. Why not?

And this sent the monkey in. kind of start panicking.

He started Oh, but because

because so many responsibilities Oh no, because I have to take care of my siblings. All because I have my my book, my great book on Buddhism. Oh no, because

I don't know And

why not? Is that you said, and all these excuses came up out of the monk. And then my judiciary leaned down from is up there in the altar.

And he handed the monkey his sword.

And he said, Here, take this sword, this sword, you can use it and it'll cut through all your

barriers.

And so the monk took that sword doctors room. He hung it in the wall.

He spent a long time looking at it,

looking at it, thinking about using it.

Thinking about all his excuses. Why not?

And then one day, he took a sword out in the wall.

And he brought you snuck back into the zendo and return this Manjushri

couldn't do it.

Such a sad story.

So

why not? So in terms of your clinging and letting go of your clinging? Why not? What's your excuse?

Or your or what's your excuses?

If you're lucky enough to have

just one, you know, only one good? Or, you know, why not let go? What are you holding on to? What do you what do you think is really, you know, yes, I can let go of all that. But there were a few people under a couple people in the retreat, who I don't do this too often. But I really challenged like one woman in particular really challenged her because she'd been on retreat many years. I think she'd been eight years with me on this new year's retreat and so many retreats before that and around that She had certain issues in her life a little bit difficult. And, you know, I'd listened to her over these years and worked with her. And, you know, we had a very friendly, good relationship. And I said to her, finally, you know, you've been doing this for a long time. It has been very important part of your life is Buddhist practice, you come into retreats, it's not an easy thing to do. We've talked for a long time. And I feel that after all this time, I need to, at least as a teacher, at least remind you or tell you that this practice the way the Buddha designed this practice, he meant it as a radical challenge to us to get down to the very root of our clinging in our life and uprooted at the very core. So our concerns about you know, you know, growing old and, you know, just our concerns about having enough money or concerns about whether gonna be homeless or not are concerned,

you know, are secondary

to the challenge of getting down to the Core and uprooting are clinging at the very base. I said to her. So that's that's what the offering of the that's what this practice was designed to do. And this is so important for you. I think I should remind you about this at least once. Think about it. I said there, maybe you ready to take that big step.

This means you're sure.

And then there's one

scholar who writes about the Four Noble Truths, who translates the Pali English as the Four Noble Truths. And I like that a lot because the four truths are meant to be a function in our lives. And so now we're just gonna A static thing and the function is to changes transform us to innopolis.

And then we come to the

the last of the Four Noble Truths which is called the Eightfold Path. And this is the path be followed the path that could lead us, help us towards liberation, enlightenment. And the first one is right to view or right understanding right perspective. And kind of a core to this first one is pointing to the need for each of us to take responsibility for our own lives. Or take responsibility for our own cleaning, at least, that no one else is going to do it for us. And so there's a there's a very strong emphasis in Buddhism on this kind of personal responsibility for doing our own practice when engaging in taking it seriously. And in particular, the right view, the first step is to begin understanding our life in the framework. For the Four Noble Truths, and it's considered to be a very efficient way of engaging the spiritual life, if you look at your life, and are interested in where the stresses, what the suffering is, you're interested in what causes that stress or suffering. You're interested in where the happiness is with liberation is when you're interested in following the path that makes that possible. So it's very simple. If you're not, you know, looking for the truth sell for the ultimate sell for the ultimate truth or cosmic consciousness. There's a lot of things that people look for that maybe are worthwhile, but they're not considered not as efficient as having this metaphysically free view, which is suffering, the cause of suffering, the ending of suffering and the path leading into suffering. And then the second step of the Eightfold Path is, involves beginning to beginning to have a change of heart, working on ourselves and a sense of a change. Heart about the way we carry ourselves in the world. And one is to have the kind of, to begin moving towards that kind of peaceful

freedom,

a peaceful freedom from sensual addiction, or drive and addiction to comfort or to sensuality or sexuality, to have the kind of peace, the peaceful freedom from being driven by that sensuality. And then a heart that is also moving away from so moving towards that kind of freedom, and moving away from ill will, in tendencies towards cruelty. So corollaries of that are develop loving kindness and compassion. So once we have the right understanding, which is kind of a cognitive thing for understanding your life, then it's we have to also involve our hearts in the practice. And so there's a change of heart orientation of the heart that goes along with orientation or the view

And then there's

the third step,

which is

right speech right action, right speech, right? We got the order now by speech, right speech, and that is to practice not lying to plaque practice avoiding harsh speech, backbiting and avoiding mtq gossip or harmful gossip or gossip

and,

and that's considered to be very helpful if what

you want to do is to begin freeing yourself from your cleaning. So it's for the purpose of helping you free yourself from that clinging. Then we begin practicing this, this kind of right speech. Then the fourth one is right action, which is basically living an ethical life. If you want to be free of the core cleaning in your life, it really helps if you live an ethical life. Follow the precepts for example. And then the six. The fifth one is right livelihood. Since we spend a lot of our day, engaged in livelihood, it's great for our livelihood to be in harmony with this direction of moving towards happiness and compassion and freedom, which is part of

the goal of Buddhism.

So Buddhists then spend some time reflecting on that is their is their livelihood in harmony with a spiritual path they're on. And then the sixth, seventh and eighth are usually considered to be the meditation steps, engaging in meditation. And, and beginning to cultivate the mind quiet the mind concentrate the mind and develop the mind so you can see very deeply into what's really going on in your heart in your mind. Because really, in order to do this work in a deep way, you have to really see what's really happening. And I know plenty of people who have proved themselves in their spiritual life, thinking that they're much more spiritually mature than they actually are. Because they kind of focus on one particular aspect of their in their life. And they kind of have blinders about all these others, like this fella who is narcissistic, that he has blinders to that part of himself, but he actually thought he was pretty hot,

spiritual.

And, and some people have, you know, great spiritual experiences. And really, sometimes they even tap into some ultimate sense of reality. But you know, they don't see it all because it's kind of so part of important part of Buddhist spirituality is to develop this kind of mindfulness to kind of, ideally be kind of 360 degrees kind of include all of ourselves and everything. We see what's going on and develop that means there's the movement Towards the interest in doing and not settling for what our current understanding is but always always interested more in waking up more and finding out what's going on.

I had one more story but I can't remember.

And

it's also nine o'clock so

so as simplicity of being and simplicity of being that comes when you begin to let down, give up, relax some

of our clinging. Some things we hold on to,

I want to say this about this is

that one of the things we can cling to, is our spiritual practice.

But if you're using or to Buddhism,

but if you're using the Four Noble Truths as a framework to begin understanding your life, then you tune into how you're clinging to your practice,

how you're suffering

because of how you're relating to your practice.

So built into Buddhist practice is kind of self correcting mechanism. Where you might be a little bit off in how you're practicing, you might be really attached to your practice, but the practice will show you that you're attached.

So as a result,

the tendency for Buddhists is to

take the practice, kind of like Take themselves kind of likely as practitioners, they don't take themselves too seriously. For the practice too seriously, might be the most serious thing they have to do going in their life still has no reason to take it that seriously. No, you haven't called the kind of likely you might go off and become a monk or nun and devote your whole life to it. But still you take kind of lightly

lightness of

hearts. So May, the for this coming year, may the Four Noble Truths help you to lighten your heart and to shine a light on to the past if you will walk. As you become happier freer and simpler. They all become free. Thank you.