

# 2009-10-19 Life of The Buddha Part 2

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

buddha, people, teaching, life, floor, monk, story, person, gunk, linoleum floor, records, dharma, myth, meant, meditating, blessing, died, point, called, ascetic

## SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

So, today I'd like to continue with what's meant to be a three part series called the life of the Buddha. Trying to talk a little bit describe a little bit something about the Buddha, since he's so important for the Buddhist tradition. And, as I pointed out last time, it's hard to go back to the early records and tease apart who the Buddha actually was and what is actually events of his life actually were, apart from the myths that grew up around the Buddha. And down through the centuries, more and more myths arose about the Buddha and he became more of a, in some some Buddhist tradition. It's very hard to see the difference between the Buddha and a god. It seems to be kind of some some in some myth, myth, a lot mythological, made it a myth and but the thing about Calling someone's religious beliefs a myth is very suspect. And it's a little bit demeaning or it's like saying, Well, what do you believe in? It's not really true. It's just a just a myth. And to say that misses something very important. All the things, most of the things, maybe all the elements of the Buddha's life, which are mythical, we would maybe modern, some modern people would call called mythical are, represent usually major parts of major transitions, major periods of his life, major events in his life. And the reason why they've been preserved or even compose those stories, is that they teach something. They're teaching stories. And so the point is not so much to find out who the Buddha really was. The point is the way that the point is where it points to Pointing to some teaching. And because it's meant for us to be beneficial to us who have an impact on us to kind of affect us or maybe have influence influence us in some way. Sometimes it seems pretty clear, the way that these stories are meant to influence the audience is pretty beneficial for us. Sometimes maybe it's a bit of propaganda for self serving purposes. But there's teaching stories and as I said last week, to the degree to which we do have the record record of what the Buddha the Buddha talked about himself, it seems like he almost always used his own life story to make teaching points. So it might have been really what happened. But the only reason why he talked about it is because it makes some point this beyond just the event itself. here and in the modern world, with Objective journalism, we would like some of us would like to have an objective journalistic, real description of who the Buddha really was. And it's probably impossible to tease much of a lot of that out to get a really substantial sense of who he was. It's pretty well accepted now that the Buddha really did exist for a long time in the West, when the western or Western scholars discovered them Buddha back in 18, late early 1800s, late 1700s there was much speculation that the Buddha was not a real person. It was just kind of a godlike myth or something like that. But now, it's pretty much accepted that the Buddha really existed. But Who was he? And do we care who he was, apart from how the stories about him, help us in our practice, help us in our lives point to some possibility and I know that for me, I'm quite inspired by the Buddha. The Buddha is a very meaningful person in my life. I have, I try to study his words the best I can I tried to understand where he was coming from. Sometimes I argue with him, and then always agree with him. But it's, you know, it's the person I most is most like disagreeing with because it's kind of interesting to go back and forth and question and, and be questioned to return. But who that would actually was, if for me is different than what the Buddha represents for me. And what he represents for

me, it doesn't really matter if he even if he really existed, the Buddha so I'd like to give you an analogy for how I most like to see the Buddha represented and I apologize for those Have you heard this story before?

It I made this analogy up when we were meeting in Portola Valley Community Center many years ago. And there was a large auditorium with linoleum square floors of linoleum squares, one foot squares. And sometimes we come Sunday morning to do our event. They're sitting in teaching, and they'd have a party in the community center the night before, and there'd be beer spilled on the floor. It'd be all sticky. We take our shoes off by the door right then we'd have to have these socks and they'll sticky from the beers in the floor. And there'd be no popcorn and I don't know what and so imagine that. That's linoleum floor wasn't was not never cleaned for 500 years. Dust blew in mud was brought in bear, you know all this kind of stuff and gunk and the gunk built up and up and up. And so after a while there was like maybe three feet of gunk and because people have danced on it and walked on it and sat down and did everything on it. It got really packed in there really tight. So it was really hard like marble or something really solidified Portola Valley heat and so after some hundreds of years people even forget forgot that there was no linear floor beautiful in aluminum floor they're shiny. And so but then after 500 years some person comes a car some some ancient record when they built the building and it says an OEM floor and says like burst it comes out of the records room and says there's a little volume floor there. And everyone says you've got to be kidding. You know, we have a perfectly good floor you just have to be sit three feet above the ground. But because look how shiny it is, you know if memory walked on it and oil and just you know it's all polished, beautiful as gunk. And you know, who would want you know, no, no, there's no linoleum down there. And we're happy with our floor the way it is except when it gets humid and the beer smells and Fuchs milk come out but otherwise we're happy with our floor. And you know your must be crazy anyway, it's so hard, no way that there's any linoleum floor down there. But the person is persistent. So the person gets a jackhammer and, and drills and drills and drills and it's a lot of work and heavy work. months, years of difficult work. People doubt the person has doubt people. kind of laugh at the person you're so foolish looking for something that's not there. Just be happy with the floor you have. But he insists he digs and digs and digs digs. And finally, after a lot of effort, he finds it gets down to the linoleum floor, and he's able to clear one square foot of that linoleum floor. It's really there. It's beautiful. It's shiny. There's a specialist in it. And anyway the final floor and so it's been proven the person now is found out for himself or herself really look it really isn't only him records were right it's really true. It's you know it's there then magic a lot of work to clear out that chapter once we're in a one foot series where shaft then the person knows that if there's if the person had enough time and effort work the person could clear out the rest of the gunk and eventually clear out the whole auditorium floor and have one big linoleum floor back again. So you know you don't you can't be 100% sure, but you have a pretty good guess you can see the walls you found the floor. You can kind of now you see what's gunk and see how if I use clear it out, you know I think I can do it. So, to the degree to which I have, might have touched a square inch or something of that linoleum floor in my mind, the base, the base of purification, of purity of freedom of vibration or something in my own mind. I can see the walls. I get it, I have a sense of how big the room is. And I can say, you know, if I have enough time, I could actually clear it all out also, it's possible now that I've seen the floor, I could clear it all out. I don't know if I can do it in this lifetime. But it's really worthwhile to do as much as I can. And the Buddha represents someone who has cleared the whole floor where the Buddha actually did that, I don't know. Doesn't matter so much whether you actually did or not Got 99% of the way there,

which is sacrilegious to say because the Buddha is considered to be, you know, spiritually perfect. But, but he, whether he is or not whether it exists or not, he represents for me in kind of a morphic form, the possibility of doing that work of that degree of purification, freedom, that seems clearly possible. To me, it's given enough practice to do that work. So in that regard, again, the story of who actually Buddha

was is not that important. And that the Theravada tradition that we're in the overall emphasis is that the Buddha was a human being, an extraordinary human being, but still a human being. So he went through some of the major events of life that a human being goes through. He was born, obviously, in a childhood which there's little mentions of He was married, he had a child. He is he encountered the issues of life, and the way that all of us sooner or later encounter issues of sickness, age, old age and death, and he was deeply moved by that encounter, to try to come to some kind of discover some new possibility of living in relationship to them. And then, when he was 36 or so, he discovered what he was looking for discovery is awakening, his body is liberation. And then he spent about 45 years teaching, going around teaching to others, until he was about 80 years old. He had a premonition, apparently that he was going to die. And certainly he was old. He talked about how old he was and apparently quite a bit of pain, difficult to kind of keep it all together. And, and then he made his last walk. He was walking back towards the seemingly from the records we have back to his home country. He didn't make it. But out and in outdoors underneath two trees he lay down, and then he died. He died very peacefully. Now whether he really died in this peaceful way that he died in old men. This is how the tradition would like us to remember him. And it's kind of like a teaching the way that religious founders die. teach us something about the values of religions. Jesus died on the cross, and that's been held up be very important for the Christian tradition. And Buddha died peacefully. In this world. His relationship to death was one where he basically chose the tradition says he chose when it was time for him to die. And he went through the process of dying and allowing himself to die when he felt the time was ready. whether that's true or not, I don't know but it's held up as the way that You know, teaching, we have this image of a person's idea of a person who has a relationship to death, which is dignified, relaxed, calm, and, and fearless about the possibility of dying. So who was the Buddha? And what do we know actually about him. And then as I mentioned at the end of the talk last time, a lot of the stories that are told about the Buddha postdates his life by as much as four or 500 years. So, for example, we do not know, we have the earliest records that his name was siddhartha come through four or 500 years after his death. So, a long time. So what was he called during the 400 years before that, we don't know, maybe he was called Siddhartha. He's never thought of writing it down. But it also could have been added later. Siddhartha means the one who has attained the goal. So, did the father note this parents know that he was gonna attain his goal? You know, or that later kind of addition to it. This famous story is told over and over and over again, is this this debate, I think I told last week that the Buddha left you know, he was protected in the palaces. He didn't have any protected from seeing sickness, old age and death, and then went out, snuck out of the palaces one day with his charioteer and saw a sick person, old person dead person.

That story also postdates the Buddha by about 500 years. So again, maybe it's a true story, but 500 years is a long time for these stories and myths telephone games to build up over time. And the earliest records have no indication that this actually was an occurrence in the Buddhist himself. And next a great story. You know, so it teaches something very profound, I think. But so it's useful that way. But is it really who the Buddha was? You know, that really happened to him. We have no record of that. So there's a lot me and most of the stories about the Buddha's life, we have to put a big question around them, we don't really know. He did discover something phenomenal. Without that what he discovered, there would be no Buddhism. So at some point in his life, he discovered what we call awakening freedom, he discovered the Four Noble Truths. And just just for that reason, he was a very important person. There's a scholar, two years ago, Buddhist scholar, who wrote a whole book about how the Buddha could not have come up with the Four Noble Truths. That will if you look at the grammar of the grammar of the classic teachings in the Four Noble language of it, it must have post dated the Buddha and it couldn't have been actually his way of speaking or something like that. And I mentioned this argument to tennis Arabic ooh monka comes here some sometimes scarlet, a very well studied monk. And, and I thought he'd be upset or you know. And, and he just shrugged his shoulders

and said, well, it doesn't really matter. Whoever it was who discovered the Four Noble Truths, that's my Buddha.

So in my life, who the Buddha was is less important than what he represents. But in that regard there are little depictions of the Buddha in these ancient most ancient records that are not don't seem to be meant for teaching purposes happened to be in the narrative that around describing we just got to teach something. Sometimes they will narrative that sets it up. Okay went for a walk, and then he was out for a walk and he encountered someone that walk and encountering someone is really incidental or not too important compared to the conversation they have and their point they make. And so you find little hints there that, for me, have some meaning. It's Oh, this actually points to something. I can imagine this being really what happened. So one of them are depictions of his daily routine come across, so also ordinary daily life of the Buddha, after he was enlightened, it seems from these records that he would get up early. The morning, make up early, when it's still dark, and he had meditate for many hours. And then he would gather his robes put on his robes properly, and he would walk into where people live into town. And he would carry as bowl as alms bowl. And people understood back then that there is mendicants mendicant monks and nuns, that they only ate that people put food in their bowls. So he would not have any food so he wouldn't cook for himself. He wouldn't store up food. Part of the monastic rules is you not, you know, save your food from one day to the next. So every day he, whether he ate or not, he was really dependent on the people around him, offering him something to eat. He could also not ask for food. He just had to walk through town with his bowl with a lid off, and if people saw it, they would kind of drop food into it. And so every morning at some point, you'd go to town and walk around And maybe get fed maybe not. And then you come back to his where he was staying, usually a wooded area and he would eat his food. Then he cleaned up his bowl. And then he would retire for the days of biting. And this is the translation in English is called the days of biting. And what this means is that for he would retire into the woods to meditate through much of the day to practice and then he would come out of meditation out of his kind of abiding his retreat in the evening. And that's when he would sometimes take a bath and he would then meet with his monks and nuns, and he would have some conversation with them or maybe do some teaching with them. When that finished, he would go back and meditate somewhere. Back in the woods, it seems that sometimes maybe he lived in the woods, in the open space. But for many, many years he lived in outside of our NRC. And, and the monastery that was given him a plant place, it was given to him. And it seems like he had a small house is the right word, but maybe a small, hotter, small one room dwelling, it seems seemingly. And so he would do a lot of meditation there, he'd retire there. There are stories in this narrative, where he did Buddha will, amongst will ask for some teachings. And he gives a very brief teaching, kind of a synopsis of some teaching. And then he retires to his cabin and amongst seemingly scratch their head, what was that about? And then they go find one of the senior disciples Buddha said, The Buddha said this. And can you explain this? And then he would, as you know, disciple them would elaborate the whole teachings about what they do, the Buddha would retire and do something very brief. What I imagined it's only imagination is that these stories when the Buddha gave very short teaching occurred when he was quite old. And so he maybe didn't have much energy or ability to kind of give a long talk. So he just did it briefly and let his senior monks and nuns kind of disciples kind of do the rest of the teaching. There are stories of him having a bad back one evening he was through the evening he was teaching like he does to his monastics. And his back was bothering enough that he went to lay down and asked one of his senior students to continue giving a teaching.

If you want to build up the glory and grander of your spiritual founder, usually don't admit that they have a bad back. So probably story like that was actually To the case that at least the you know, he was trouble with his back. But so this is very simple lifestyle. And for me, I'm quite inspired by this. It's meaningful for me. meditating, going out for arms, not having a lot of having a lot of possessions, not

having a lot of activities and duties and busyness not being involved in Kings and Queens and politics that could have been involved in the times. And then going into town for arms, coming back, and perhaps living in the woods, meditating and these beautiful groves of trees they had back then teaching at some point in the evening, offering what he has to offer to help people and then meditating some more before sleeping for a short time. There's something very, but I know this is an ideal life for us. But it points to a life that's that has The beauty of simplicity, the Buddha wasn't trying to accumulate a lot of wealth. He wasn't trying to accumulate a lot of students, he wasn't trying to accumulate a lot of power. He wasn't trying to accumulate a lot of entertainment. He wasn't trying to go after all, all all possible forms of pleasure. And he wasn't kind of caught up in his aversions and hates ranting and raving, raving about this and that, but he had found a way where to be at peace in some profound way, and living a very simple life and that process is that who the Buddha actually was, or again, this is a modern or not some modern representation of some way of being. Again, I don't I don't know. It's not that important for me. For me, personally, I'm inspired by living a very simple life. A simple life where we as individuals don't put a lot of demands on our planets and other people, but at the same time are available to help Other people. And they would have spent these 45 years helping thousands and thousands of thousands of people. People came to him. Sometimes when he's often in his alms round their stories that people would come to him and ask for teachings. Sometimes he was sometimes he went and walked around, and he would go meet, to search out people and engage them in conversation. And so, I wanted to read to you one of these accounts for we have a little bit to sense of this simple life, and then how we talked a little bit about maybe the decorum, the etiquette of how you relate to a Buddha back in ancient India. Then, when it was morning, the blessing one dressed and taking his bowl and outer robe, went into 74 arms. Then a number of monks went to the venerable Under who's always attended and said to him, friend and under. It is long since we heard a talk on the Dharma from the blessing of one's lips. It would be good. If we could get to hear such a talk from the Ananda sananda said, then let the venerable ones let you let all of you go to the to Rama cause hermitage. Perhaps you will hear a talk on the Dhamma from the blessed ones on lips. And so they said, Yes, friend. Then when the blessing one had wondered for arms in sobriety, sort of rusty and had returned from his alms round after his meal, he addressed the Venerable Ananda and under, let us go to the eastern Park, for the days abiding. Yes, venerable sir. To Venerable Ananda replied. Then the blessing one went with adventure. And under to the eastern Park, for the days abiding to be on retreat. Then when it was evening the blessed when rose from meditation and address the Venerable Ananda and nundah. Let us go to the eastern bathing place to Beit Yes, venerable sir. Venerable Ananda replied. Then the Blessed One went with the Venerable Ananda to the eastern bathing place debate. When he was finished, he came up out of the water and stood in one robe, drying his limbs. Then the Venerable Ananda said to the blessing one venerable sir Rama cuz hermitage is nearby. That hermitage is agreeable and delightful, venerable sir, we'd be good if the blessing one went there out of compassion and blessing one consented in silence.

Then the Blessed One went to the Rama cause hermitage. Now in that occasion, a number of monks were sitting together in the Hermitage discussing the Dharma Remember, they were sent there by an agenda. So they were sitting they spent the whole day there go there. So they spent the whole day there is waiting but what they're doing waiting they're talking to dharma. The best when stood outside the door, waiting for the discussion to end. and nice. So rather than bursting, I'm the Buddha, you know, I'm in charge, you know, you're my students. You know, you know, you know just burst right in and are you think about a knock politely? No, he just, he stood outside the door waiting for the discussion to end. When he knew that it was over. He coughed and knocked, coughed, you know, as a way to negate I'm here I can. And the because opened the door for him. The Blessing one entered, sat down on a seat made ready and address the big goose this big goose, for what discussion? Are you sitting together here now? And what was your discussion and what Was your discussion that was interrupted by Hon



sir, our discussion on the Dharma that was interrupted was about the blessing one himself and the blessing one arrived, talking about you. Good because it is fitting for you Klansmen who have gone forth out of faith from the home life into homelessness, to sit together discuss the Dharma, when you gather together because you should do either of two things, hold discussion on the Dharma, or maintain noble silence. That's a nice little story. I don't know if it's true. But it comes with some things that come through have to do with the etiquette of the time someone has to do with his daily routine. You know, meditating a lot going to bat bathing and teaching the evening but here the unknown is not direct. He doesn't say to the Buddha, these monks are waiting. And it would be really good if you gave them a talk. He's, he's more indirect, he says, Be good. And it's a beautiful place over there Rama cause hermitage. It'd be good if you went there out of compassion. Now, I think what this means is that he's saying, don't you go out there? It's not the compassion for the Hermitage. Out of compassion means there's someone there who needs you, someone there who you could help. And if you agree with compassion, please go. And then he consents in silence. Often the Buddha didn't say yes, he just doesn't say no. And then it's understood, it's accepted. And then this beautiful story, I think of him waiting until they finished talking, just waiting outside and then it kind of coughing and knocking and then asking them first, you know, what are you guys doing here? checking in with them rather than you know, bursting in and teaching and then so I think it's, you know, it's it again points to a certain kind of simplicity and dignity of life and a way of being calm life settle life. There's some beautiful depictions, I think a beautiful in these ancient records of the monks gathering together, outdoors, but they often gathered outdoors in these forested or wooded areas during the full moon, beautiful, beautiful white, yellow, full moon, in the Indian plains. And they would sit there and talk the Dharma. So when the Buddha was around, that's often the time in the monks would gather to talk about the Dharma was the evening. How extraordinary was the Buddha, physically, the myth say that he was extraordinary. There's this very strange thing called Mark 32 marks of the Buddha and that the Buddha has to have all these you know to be really be a Buddha you have to have these 32 physical characteristics and like you have to have webbed fingers and your your your arms have to be long enough to reach down to your knees and what else there's one yay square toes you know they know this perfect rectangle as opposed to you know, just kind of Kurt you know, rounded somehow he has a really big tongue you know so he can reach up and touch his forehead cover his face. The bottom of his feet are have these no tattoos the right word but have you know life have kind of

like in this dark, huge thousands spoke Dharma wheel. So when you switch footprints have these Dharma wheel. You know footprints as he walks. He has flat feet That's one of the 32 marks. He has. He has long ear lobes. Here's this one, here's long ear lobes. And he has. So, you know, all kinds of interesting things. And so it seems Kanaka you know, odd character, these physically, but there are also stories that seemed much more historical, that there were a couple few times a couple of times, when there were a few number of times where people did not recognize him as the Buddha. So it wasn't obvious to people that when they saw ran into this guy, he was a Buddha. There was one story of a monk, Buddhist monk, but who had been ordained not by the Buddha by by another disciple of the Buddha. And so he decided after being monk for some time that he went to go meet the Buddha. So he was walking towards where the Buddha was. And before he got to where the Buddha was supposed to be He came to think through a potter park to a potter who had a shed. And he asked the potter Oh, would it be okay if I slept there? And so the story goes something like oh yes okay, but you have to share it with another monk. And so that's okay. So he goes into shares over the other monk and, and doesn't realize the other monk is the Buddha. And, and so the Buddha asks this monk, you know, what have you heard? What kind of teachings What do you know? And then he says a few things and then this young monk says to the older monk, you know what have you heard? That you heard the teachings you know, and so, then the Buddha gives him a teaching and by the time the Buddha's finished sense you get from reading it as the monks eyes are wide open, he says, oh, mandible, sir, I misunderstood i

didn't i didn't i didn't think you I didn't realize I was sitting here with the Buddha. The Buddha taught like this, that I like this story because again, The Buddha would didn't stand out, as you know, as being so remarkable. So radiant and shiny and charismatic, there was obvious there was the Buddha that people didn't understand it was the Buddha. There's one very famous story of the very first person who encountered the Buddha after the Buddha's awakening. I think his name was Dhaka. And the Buddha was heading towards savatthi service to teach teachers, previous companions. On the road he met this Brahman. And the Brahman stopped the Buddha because the Buddha was quite radiant at that time. And it's not so unusual, that wouldn't be radiant. If you have ever encountered someone who comes out of fresh out of a meditation retreat. They're often quite radiant, and it's shiny, and it's quite something to see. And so the man who stopped him and Now, who are you? And the Buddha said, Oh, something I'm, I'll read it to you because it's I don't know if this is true, but this is what the tradition preserves.

I am one who has transcended all a knower of all, unsullied among all things, renouncing all, by cravings, seizing freed, having known this all for myself, to whom should I point as a teacher, I have no teacher, and one like me exists nowhere in all the world with all its gods, because I have no person for my counterpart. I am the accomplished one in the world. I am the teacher supreme I alone and the fully enlightened one whose fires are quenched and extinguished. I go now to the city of Casa To set in motion the wheel of Dhamma. In a world that has been blinded, become blind, I go to beat the drum of the deathless. That's quite a first statement. You know, I kind of I myself have a certain kind of prejudice that there's a kind of prejudice or bias, that you know that someone who's spiritually mature would actually also be a little bit humble and empty of self and not kind of, you know, touting their horn. You know, I'm, I'm so great. But this is a great, so what happened? So and so this is what he said, and that's great. I love this answer. So.

So this man

who pokka his name, says, by your claims, you ought to be the universal Victor. And then the Buddha replied, Yes. And the victors are those like me, who have won the destruction of tanks I have banked All evil states, therefore, I am a victor. When this was said paka said, may be so friend shaking his head, he took a bike path and departed. So the first person that Buddha encountered was not very impressed. I think it's a great story. When I first heard this story, I kind of thought that maybe you pako was kind of like a Zen master. You know, some guy comes, you know, that's what Zen masters do. So you come with your great enlightenment story and, and, and the Zen masters will yawn or say, Oh, you know, that's nice. You know, or you know, you know, a little bit more effort please. Nothing, you know, nothing. Very important not to be too impressed. So,

So one more thing I'd like to say this evening about who the Buddha was, that's me personally meaningful for me. And that maybe has nothing to do very little to do with the uniqueness of the Buddha, but rather has to do with a time that he lived and how much I value a simplicity of being. In the time of the Buddha, there were no cell phones, no computers, no television, no books, no movies, and newspapers. A lot of it loses a lot of things that many of us have come to depend on. Expect a lot of things that come with our modern society and technology that some people depend on so much, that their happiness is dependent on having Those things and having enough of them, and plenty of them. And there are people who actually get deeply depressed and deeply personally challenged in some deep existential ways, when they don't have many things that no one had 2500 years ago the way that the Buddha designed monastic life for his monks and nuns, it was from our point of view, which seemed to be an ascetic life. They eat no food after 12 o'clock, noon, so from 12 on, there's no more food to be eaten. Sometimes he just one meal a day. They're not allowed to have any money. They have very few possessions. The possessions they have is they have one or two sets of robes to where they have an

alms bowl. They're allowed to have a certain amount of medicine and they're allowed to have a simple roof over their heads, simple dwelling. To live in. That's basically what they're allowed to have. It can seem like ascetic to us, in the context of its time, the idea what the Buddhist idea was to let his monastics had just enough possessions. So they can be comfortable from the wind, the cold, the insects, from hunger, so they would not go hunger that they would not go cold, they be protected from the insects, they'd have medicine take care of themselves, that they were sick, and just enough to have a comfortable life, but not more. And this is in contrast to there was a very, very strong aesthetic tradition in ancient India, that the Buddha supposedly even practiced himself, where the idea was to have a lot of pain and starve yourself to death almost. And, and the Buddha rejected asceticism, but he also rejected opulence and luxury. But he didn't. It was isn't meant to be a life of deprivation, because it's really clearly meant to be a life that where people were comfortable. And again, if you go back these ancient records, again, we don't know if they're true. But there's a number of places in the in these sutras where people come to like kings and various people come to see the Buddha and his monastics, and they're really surprised and struck, how much joy there is in the monastic community. And there maybe they weren't so used to it because many of the renunciations to the time we're ascetics, and ascetics usually are known for their joy. And so the Buddha was meant to provide this very simple life. So life back then already was quite simple. But in that simplicity, he had even a simpler one. And it's probably true. I think we probably probably be pretty confident That his life was a lot simpler than ours. And he thrived. In that lifetime, that kind of lifestyle. He discovered how to be discovered the greatest degree of happiness and freedom. That's possible probably for any human being. Whether it's the greatest or not, I don't know. But certainly, he is a person who was able to face his death peacefully, live his life peacefully. He was someone who was able to help many, many people to overcome their suffering and struggles in their lives. Okay, I can't imagine a better life than a life that's learned how to be at peace with this life, and then be of service to other people for so long. And to do it with requiring so little. So, you know, this is meaningful for me, and sometimes it's challenged to me. Maybe it's meaningful for you, and maybe it's a challenge for you as well. How much do you actually need to be peaceful and happy So

when you've touched your linoleum floor, perhaps you'll have confidence in the delight and happiness of just being alive. Thank you