

# 2011-06-27 The Book of Eights

Tue, 8/18 11:14AM • 45:48

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

clinging, people, teachings, buddhism, views, sage, buddha, religious, book, peace, text, buddhist, understand, assert, disputes, hear, called, eights, kinds, peaceful

## SPEAKERS

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So as an introduction to this talk, I want to read a short passage of an exchange that a man had with a Buddha. That didn't work out very well. For at least for the man who asked the question. So there's this man named Daṇḍapāṇi who was walking and wandering for exercise. And he came to where the Buddha was. And so he went up to the Buddha and exchanged greetings with him. When this courteous and amiable talk was finished, he stood at one side leaning on a stick, and asked the Blessed One, what does the recluse assert? What does he proclaim? What do you as they would ask me what do you assert? What do you proclaim? And the Buddha replied, Friend, I assert and proclaim in such a way that one does not quarrel with anyone in the world. I assert and proclaim what he has to teach such a way that doesn't enter it doesn't dispute or disagree with anybody at all. And so when Daṇḍapāṇi heard this, he shook his head, wagged his tongue and raised his eyebrows until his forehead was puckered in three lines. Then he departed, leaning on a stick. So, you know, have all the stories of the Buddha saying these wonderful things to people and they get enlightened or something wonderful happens. And I hear that man just was confused. So what he was confused that was The Buddhist saying, I teach in such a way that I'm never in dispute with anyone. Don't quarrel with anyone. So then the question is what kind of teachings? Can one assert what kind of teachings can one hold on to? That doesn't cause controversy with someone else. We live in an amazingly religiously pluralistic society with all kinds of different religious and atheistic beliefs. And it's the same that if you assert that you're Buddhist or you adhere to Buddhist teachings are you proclaim Buddhism, that on the surface, it would seem like that's a different religious teaching from other religious teachings. And so you are asserting one thing to be true. And if that is true, then it certainly must be the other ones are not true. In a time of the Buddha, it was also really Sleep pluralistic. There were a lot of different religious views in his environment. And in fact, there was a lot of debate between the different spiritual teachers of his time. So the idea of disputing and debating and asserting and proclaiming in opposition to other people was quite a common phenomena for the Buddha and his time. And so the Buddha comes forth and says, something I don't do that. I had my teachings My Teachings don't oppose anything. And there's no grounds for quarreling with anyone, any any views any teachings with people because of how would I assert? So that's the introduction. So what what can you teach us what, what is it about Buddhism that maybe is not in opposition to other religious other points of view? If you take a college class introduction to world religions, they'll do a survey of different religions, and Buddhism is offered as a religion just like all the other religions, Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam. Sometimes they have shintoism, Confucianism, and then Buddhism. And especially coming from the west, there is a stress a strong feeling in the Judeo-Christian tradition, especially Christian traditions, that have to really kind of adhere to one creed to one belief, one God, and if you believe something else, then you're kind of going against your faith in some way. And so here Buddhism is college classes that are represented as a religion like others. So certainly it must be of the same class as all the other religions and there must be, then you could have inter religious dialogue, inter religious conflict of all kinds. But the Buddha said

this interesting statement, when I teach what I teach, there's no controversy with others. There's no disputing with others. So what is that? What does it teach?

I've spent some time now translating an ancient book of teachings, called the very unglamorous title called the book of eights. And it's a little bit like the Dhammapada. And it's a series of verses, a 200 verses. But what's unique about this particular collection is that it has the appearance of being the most ancient of teachings of Buddhism. There's a very large body like his big book, I'm reading from the middle of this discourses read from the sutta 18 in here. This is just maybe one I don't know what one seventh of all the discourses of the Buddha is the recorded. But this particular collection of 200 verses appears to be the most ancient of all this Partly because the language is quite archaic. And partly because of the content suggests that it's quite old. And partly because in this larger collection of texts that all these big collection, it's one of the few texts which are referred to by name. So when this was these were compiled, they knew about the other one, and they refer to it by its name several times. So it's considered to be quite ancient, maybe the earliest of the Buddha teachings. Now, what's also unique about this early text translated book of eights is that if you gave it to college, students who took a college survey course of religions and they'd read the tenants and beliefs of Buddhism, and if and actually had a professor who did this and this to their students who was going into the final exam, and asked is this text Buddhist and Most mostly college students say no. Because all the usual college textbook ideas of what Buddhism is do not appear in this text. So there's no four noble truths. There's no eightfold path. There's no emphasis on, not self. The great teachings are not that there's no emphasis on emptiness, the great teachings of emptiness. There's no emphasis on rebirth. rebirth is important. They talk about rebirth in this text. They're saying that a wise person should not concern themselves with this. And there's no teachings about four stages of awakening the four stages of becoming liberated they have in this tradition. There's no discussion about the four jhanas the forbs meditative absorptions or the eight There's no discussion about the four foundations of mindfulness, which is what we practice here. So many things that are strongly associated, this is what Buddhism is about. his absence in this text is I mentioned. So one theory is that this book of eights, was composed maybe by the Buddha. At very early in his teaching career, he taught for about 40 years. And before he started to systematize, his teachings, and someone teaches 40 years, they begin to refine and systematize their, their teachings, organize it, especially back in those days, it had to be organized so that it could be passed on orally, there were no books to pass it on. And if you're going to pass on your teachings orally, you kind of systematize organize it in such a way that it's relatively easy to memorize and hold in your mind. And so perhaps this text, dated from a time before the Buddhist started to do that system. It's a systematizing. That's one process. ability. And other possibility is that some of the teachings now attributed to Buddhism, maybe don't come Don't aren't really from the Buddha after all. They were later additions to the whole tradition. I mean, it's hard to know, there's a lot of theories about this text because it's so unusual. This text called the book of eight to sometimes considered to be very radical. Some people have said it's proto Mahayana, because it has elements in it like later Mahayana philosophers like the Guardian, or the Zen tradition, and in particular, because it emphasizes the importance of not having any views. That to have a view is to miss the boat. So not having a view and not asserting something that is controversial. kind of go together. Because if you have nothing to assert, then you know who you're gonna argue with. So what kind of religious teach Can you champion if you have no views to go with? it?

is an interesting question. So this book of eights has four major themes in it. The first major theme is the importance of not clinging to sensual pleasures sensual desires. And it talks about a little bit about some of the dangers that can happen if you're addicted to sensuality. And I think their choice word is addicted because you probably you know, some people who are addicted to sensuality in a way that's probably not helpful for them at all. So it talks about the unfortunate that's one of the themes of this

book of eights. The other theme is not to cling to views. It's it goes into some detail about how problematic it is to have us remember to debate culture back there.

And so it says here so some of the problems with clinging or holding on to views. If those views bring you peace, it is an unstable piece. Attachment to concepts and use leads to a person needs a person to swing between feelings, feeling high and low, elated and depressed. That's especially like back in the debate. If you feel like now I have the truth and everyone believes it or I'm champion of something and you feel kind of great happy having the superior views. But then somebody else comes in outsmart you and debate and you realize that you didn't really have sound argue. Then you can get depressed. Debating others one can become anxious for praise and bewildered when refuted. Frequently mentioned the text is how clinging to views leads to quarrels with others. And not a few Buddhists have ended up arguing with others, even though the Buddha never claimed they never argued with anyone. A considerable number of the verses are not only critical about such quarrelling, but also the any judgment that one's own religious views are the truest or the best, while others are inferior. So the idea that you have us can go very quick and very quickly follow I have the best views, the best teachings the best, whatever, and others are worse. And that ends it to a lot of controversy. And that doesn't work very well at family parties.

So then it says those who realized the goal of the religious life the Buddha was teaching. They report to refer to them as sages. And the sages are not attached to views. And so they avoid debate squirrels and any conceit, that their own views are better than others. Having let go of attachments, they have no need for any doctrine, and so do not oppose anyone else's doctrines. So that's the key. They're all this rather than views and beliefs. The emphasis in the Buddha's teaching is not to claim. So if you if you're holding too hot coal in your hand, do you need a religious teaching to tell you to open your head and drop the coal? Do you need a philosophy? Do you need a political party to tell you that? You know, do you need to go to the doctor? After, you know, chances are if you're holding that hot coal, you're going to be pretty quick to drop it. It's a pretty natural thing, because it hurts. If you are sensitive to the effect that clinging has to yourself, it'll be comparable to holding hot coal. Because you realize that as you're cleaning, you're going to hurt yourself, you're hurting yourself. Clinging is pain is painful. And so if you can see it well enough, then the movement to release yourself from pain from clinging is a natural movement. It might not be easy, because there can be incredibly strong views, opinions, ideas, concepts, of why it's important to cling. And those ideas can lead sometimes to be terrified about letting go of something we're holding on to and clinging on. But still to cling itself hurts, I suppose and many people cling because they think that not clinging hurts more. If I don't hold on to my whatever, what are the interesting challenging teachings of Buddhism is that perhaps all we ever claimed to our ideas and concepts, you know, unless you're sitting standing at the edge of Half Dome, you know, and there's a railing there. You know, you there's a physical grasping tight. But that's not meant to be the same thing as psychological clinging to pleasure. Clinging to views and opinions are stories, clinging to identity and status and positions and, and clinging to relationships, clinging to our bank account playing to our homes. Oddly enough, even though reclaiming we say we think sometimes it's themselves. In essence, we really clinging to the concept and ideas that are behind those things. Even when we're clinging to relationships with people, they're physical people there. But you know that if you really pay attention, study the mind deeply, you really cling to the concept and ideas you have with that person. And that becomes complicated all these ideas. And so, big task a big part of what Buddhism is, Buddha was teaching was not a religion or religious view, or a teaching about what is true, but rather this very, very simple thing of if you're clinging, and it hurts, let go. Open up your hand, open up your heart. And in fact, the Buddha explicitly said in this book of eights, that to be concerned about ultimate truth is the tracks from that work of someone who wants to become free of clinging shouldn't be concerned about ultimate truth. Ultimate Truth, however, is often a concern of religious people. But once you have the

ultimate truth, it's very, looks very much like a view and opinion that you can have in contrast to other people's opinion. If all you have is non clinging, you can go into any church, synagogue or temple. And you're not saying anything that's contradicting anybody. And if they say, this is the truth, you keep your hand open and walk, you know, cut, walk in and out. You don't have to buy into it or do anything with it. You can say, Oh, is that so? Is that so?

That's interesting. Tell me more. That'd be that's a respectful thing to do. Tell me more. But you don't have to, you know, it's not that what they believe There are concepts and ideas and what they say is ultimate, the ultimate nature of reality in the universe. You know, hopefully if you're a sage, you know better than to cling to it. clinging also means resisting it, just to use that so. So, clink so the second theme of this book or dates is not clinging to us. But from this, you see that actually Buddha's talking about not clinging to anything at all. The third theme of the text is the nature of a sage. And they hear it in other common Buddhist idea that's absent in this text is that there's no mention of an our heart that the goal is to become an our heart. Our heart is a classic Buddhist way of talking about someone who's fully enlightened, but it refers are not literally means a worthy one someone's worthy of receiving alms a monk are worthy of respect. Because of their attainment, in a sense, the word the title for enlightened persons early tradition are hot. The title refers to the relationship they have to other people. In this early text book or they don't use the word Arnott, they use the word sage. That's the most common reference point for it. The second most common reference point kind of title, a word for this ideal person is someone who's skillful, or skill who's proficient in something. So the sage is someone who's wise. And so here is not who they who they claim is not. The title, the refer to is doesn't refer to the relationship to other people, but rather the relationship to themselves and that they're wise or skilled, skillful. They're skillful themselves, their skill, nothing to do about their status and relationship to other people. And so this early text has a kind of radical spiritual individualism. Now they're supposed to live a selfish life. Rather, the, if the issue is clinging, who's going to release your clinging for you? Who's going to do that work for you? No one you know people can support you and, you know, comfort you and do different things that might help you finally to do the work you have to do. Just as much as someone can help you find the toilet when you have to pee. But you know, you can get a lot of help about the direction to go. But you know, we generally don't ask, ask people to come and help actually do it. Or ask well, can you go do it for me? I'm busy. Can you go do it? You know, some things you can only do yourself. So that what the sage is called either sage, someone who's wise, or it's called someone who's skillful is the most common things in the text. There's descriptions of who to say the qualities of someone who's a sage. And, and these are very interesting two qualities. You know, if you become an ideal person, this person is going to attain what the Buddha was talking about. What do you like? If you're not someone who's attained ultimate understanding of the universe, if you don't understand their their ultimate religious truth? Who are you? What kind of person are you? There is no mention in this text of transcendent experiences. So, there's no mention this text of the classic textbook discussion of Buddhism, that Buddhism distinguishes between the conditioned realm and the unconditioned realms between samsara, the realm of samsara and the realm of Nirvana. There's no distinctions like that. The only thing that's being referred to is here and now this world, if people are concerned about future worlds or other worlds they consider that's a that's not really the domain of interest for someone who's to say All this world so what is what are the qualities of a sage? A Sage is someone The most common description of the sage is someone who's peaceful, who's attained peace. And then there's all kinds of synonyms that are close the words connected to that. The sage is someone who is tranquil, still and unmoving, unshakable I equanimous. But even though a sage is peaceful, the sage does not depend on peace,

or intentionally pick peace up, intentionally take on peace. So this idea of not clinging go so far as even as a piece is kind of the most common description of the goal to become peaceful but The sage does

not depend on that piece. They're free. They're independent of even the goal here of this piece. Now one of the advantages of the goal being piece is that it's not again a metaphysical goal. It's not some ultimately religious view but what you're supposed to attain, that's apart from something simple that anybody can experience a no. Anybody can experience peace. You can experience a little bit of peace and you can experience dramatic peace. And it can wash over you. So it feels like every cell in your bone in your body. It feels like it's become luminously clear and still, it feels like it's permeated with a stillness and clarity and coolness that you know, maybe some people have experienced when they go into a great sometimes a great cathedrals in Europe sometimes or maybe this country you go in and skies great peacefulness or some places in nature is so peaceful early last week I was up on the bridge way it's called in Sausalito. It's a the bay up in northern northern San Francisco Bay. And it was a beautiful early morning, seven o'clock in the morning. And it was a huge look out and there was almost no wind or no wind, I think in the light and the stillness of the San Francisco Bay was so peaceful. I just felt so good inside. Like I felt this quivering piece in my chest, looking at this still water of the day. So peace is something we can all experience that's comparable to how we can all experience the pain of clinging. So it's something it's available to all of us. And it doesn't require having great peace, to understand peace, a little bit of peace. I remember going home to my young kid and when he was, you know, two or three years old, and spent a day working and knowing what was coming home to so I would stop the car about 300 yards before the house and turn off the engine five minutes. And, you know, feel some peace before I walked through the front door and was handed the kid here, your turn. So the most common description is that they're peaceful, or they're descriptions. And Sage does not depend on anything or take up anything. They have attained peace by letting go of arrogance by letting go of attachments to possessions by letting go of clinging by letting go of desire for sensual pleasures by letting go of sorrow. Does that make sense that compute can us let go of sorrow? And they let go of entanglements to doctrines They let go of grasping and they let go of conceit. They've abandoned illusion, shaken off every view or unconcerned with sensual pleasures have laid down their burden.

Now, another description of the sage is a sage is is a seer, who somebody sees and knows. So what can you see and know, that wouldn't translate to a view or an opinion or a story about the universe or religious? What does he even know and see? That's important. And this book of eights describes two things that this age can know and see. First, the sage understands the various ways in which people struggle. They know what is non harmonious, they know what is dangerous. They know what it is to be dependent to be They understand the nature of conventional opinions. They understand the nature of pride. They understand how people are selfish. They understand how people get elated and deflated in their disputes. They understand how people speak with arrogance and pride. And they understand how people cling to teachings. I think having insight and understanding and being wise about these difficulties how these things work, they become wise. So, rather than pointing to some ultimate truth, that they're supposed to see and understand, and take a philosophy class and try to understand the intricacies of complex religious philosophy, which people do people get PhDs at Stanford to try to understand these things in Buddhist studies. And, but here, what's it what's important is to actually have insight to understand how people get in trouble. The hindrances, the difficulties, the ways people operate, that cause suffering, it seeing the human problem, how it operates, that this is beautiful and very important because Buddhism itself has a lot of ideals, you know, being compassionate or concentrated or mindful or many things. And one of the most significant ways of relating to an ideal is not to try to live up to the ideal so much, but rather to understand what interferes with the ideal, which gets in the way of you being compassionate, which is a way of you getting concentrated. And so that makes you wise about, you know, how you actually work, how the mind operates, the difficulties you have, and you're not trying to override to a spiritual bypass of how you are, but rather by understanding how you actually your mind actually operates the tricks of your mind all these things, then you see directly. So if you see if you if you experienced directly how painful it is to hold the hot coal, you'll let go



If you experience directly the difficulties of holding on to conceit that's painful, then you're more likely to let go of it. But if you haven't seen the suffering of conceit, they can seem pretty good. It's probably true. Right? So part of being wise is to understand the difficulties, that if you have human behavior and how it lives, so that's the task. The second thing that the wise person sees and knows, is peace itself. They know and see the inner peace realized, through not clinging. It's the seeing of this piece that can help a person know not to get into disputes, being at peace and having overcome craving. sages become independent in the Dharma. And this is a very important term in Buddhism, the idea that we practice Buddhism together become independent in the Dharma, meaning that you no longer depend on anybody else's teachings, or anybody else's help and support. Because you know, the Dharma or you know, the practice, you know what's this is about so intimately for yourself. It does not mean studying a book on Buddhist philosophy and the intricacies of it. But it's really has to do with understanding the psychological forces that come into play, that cause people to suffer. And the alternative to those forces, which is to become peaceful. And if you understand the value of that piece, the importance of it to the tremendous meaning or the meaning but the value of it, how satisfying it is, and how to cling to anything else. That isn't as satisfying. clinging to all kinds of different kinds of hot coal, different temperatures and colors is much less satisfying than letting go and having an open hand. And so if you understand the nature of who they see the piece, then you can you feel that's where I'm, that's where I take my stand. That's where I rest. That's where I say, I'm not going to get involved in the disputes. I don't care what other people argue and say claim is ultimate reality. I don't need to know that ultimately true.

So that's the second theme is three themes, themes, not not clinging first have to detour to have to do with not clinging, not clinging to sensual pleasures, not clinging to views. And then the descriptions of the qualities of the sage is a 13th theme of this book of eights. And the fourth is how to train yourself to become a sage. And how do you train yourself? There's a lot of things they say a lot of things a lot of, but the most central thing they say about training is that The if the means should reflect. They don't say it this way. But the means should reflect the goal. The goal should be reflected in the means, meaning that if the goal is to be peaceful, you attain peace by starting to be peaceful person. If the goal is to become, you practice being calm. If the goal is to be generous, you start practicing generosity. Maybe you can't do it very well at first. But, you know, it's not we're not talking about something unattainable. We're not talking about something far in the distance. That you know, we can maybe hope to, you know, the great religious adepts who can spend years and years in the caves of Himalayas, maybe they can attain something. We're talking about a gradual process of moving towards greater and greater experiences a peace or greater and greater calm. enmity or wisdom or understanding it is to be wise. We become wise by studying ourselves studying how people cling and argue and get in trouble by their clinging. So does this give you some sense of why the Buddha could say when I assert and proclaim they say it here, there's not

a certain proclaim in such a way that one does not quarrel with anyone in the world. That makes sense. No, no, why he might say that so this teaching of not at the heart of this is not clinging, experiencing peace. If this, in fact is the earliest teachings of the Buddha, they don't current contradict a lot of the later teachings. But what they do say is is later teachings of Buddhism, and this way that Buddhism is systematized in the teachings of the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path and all the different things. What it what it implies, is don't pick them up. As if they're just another view that don't pick them up as if there are another religious teachings to hold on to. And to argue with other people. I have the right teachings Finally, that's not their function. They're not their function to you know, to believe to read this. Now, I believe this. It's not meant to be a belief like a creed. If these later teachings are continuing this early tradition, these later teachings are just a little more elaborate. ways of saying the same thing. pointing back to the same possibility, which is a very ordinary human thing. That when you hurt when

you hold on to a co article, you let go, when you let go, you experienced a more peaceful state. What makes Buddhism a religion is when you take this ordinary movement, ordinary everyday kind of thing. When you have a thorn, you pull the thorn out. And it's applied really thoroughly in the mind in the heart, in the depths, the fullness of what goes on in the mind and the heart. And if you understand the complexity and the depth and subtlety with how the mind and heart works, and how much there is grasping in the mind in subtle, subtle ways that are profound, then you have a sense that the experience of non clinging is such a thoroughgoing revolution and change and the peace that comes from that is so thorough and deep Different, that the only thing you can relate to is that this is one of the most powerful religious experiences you can have. If you like such things, or to call it that. So we have five minutes for quarrelling. If anyone dares after that I'd be very welcome of people who want to protest or try to offer a different view or are you as you know, I'm happy with that I might or might not argue back. So here's the to your left. There's a mic.

Thank you. So I want to ask the difference between being attached to certain views and still letting them guide your actions. So there's right livelihood? Right You know, right up All these things that become motivators for choices we make and things that we want to do or not do. How's that different from being attached?

Well, it can be a world of difference being attached versus being guided. You know, many of us don't understand. So well how our minds work. And what's really helpful and supportive for this process is an incredible process, a very profound process of letting go. And so sometimes it's, you know, we have to reinvent the wheel by ourselves. It's kind of hard. So one of the things for example, that so what the Buddha said, is that it's useful in other places. He said, it's useful to get guidance from the wise people, those who are wise and the wise people. According to the advice, Buddhist people, they'll tell you, that it's not a good idea to go kill people or steal Or involved in sexual misconduct or, or lie or drinking intoxicants. So if you want to, if you want to kind of move into this territory of non clinging and peace, you should really avoid those things. So there's a series of so there's guidelines of things that you don't have to reinvent the wheel. And so the Eightfold Path is part of that guideline. And so there has to be some trust and confidence that the wise people know what they're talking about. Is is useful. But you have to keep in mind the whole purpose of this is to attain the peace of not clinging. And so that's your that's your guideline and reference point for how you hold on to the Eightfold Path and how it where it's moving you so you can test it and find out you're doing it the right way. I've known people who have taken on like the five precepts, and they and everyone around them has suffered more because of it.

So so You know, almost any the Eightfold Path any Buddhist doctrines, you know if you get self righteous and all kinds of problems can arise. So but if you have the guideline to always use your, your, your mindfulness notice is helping me moved to a person who's more peaceful, less clinging to things, then hopefully that becomes a corrective or protection from how we pick up Buddhist doctrines. So Buddhism itself, you know, we don't, we won't be very careful, we don't cling to Buddhism. Because Buddhism is a religion, it's a religion. That's supposed to help us be free of suffering. And it's very sad when people suffer because of Buddhism. And people do because it involves a practice. And as soon as you evolve in a practice, you're trying to do something. And if you're trying to do so even if some Buddhists tried not, they're trying to do something good trying to do nothing. So it can't get a workout could really get away from not trying to do something. And then we bring him loose. Many of us have so much baggage connected to doing something. success and failure come into play. identity issues come into play expectations and striving or all kinds of things come into play. And so part of walking the path is to learn about how what we do and we try to do the path and to recognize and if you recognize how you suffer, if you recognize how you're clinging, you'll learn the lessons a lot faster. But if you're not tuned in to the importance of noticing, clinging, grasping, addiction, compulsion, obsession, if you're not

clued into that clued into how to pay attention to your own suffering in a healthy healthful way. Then it takes a lot longer to learn the lessons is this maybe address your question or you want to ask something else or ask differently

while I know we don't have a minute left, but I think it's just you know, If you want to be active in the world, like, you know, there's injustice and you want to take a stand against it, or you know, you're invited or called upon to do something that you don't believe in, you make that choice in part out of your out of your views. Right? I mean,

perhaps

so or do you just say, gee, that person's getting murdered over there, and I don't believe in murder, but I'm just gonna, you know, not be attached to that you'd already. Yeah, that's what I'm, that's what I'm saying as well. Yeah.

So so the question is, to what degree do we act in the world based on views and opinions? and to what degree is it? Or is there some way in which it's a natural response of the heart to respond to some things? You know, I was coming here, maybe some of you came here, just but just a few minutes before I drove down the street. There was an accident on Hopkins, always some sirens we heard was the accident and And it looked like you know, the people were not getting out of the car so quickly. But there were a big crowd of a big crowd. But there are people already they're attending to that. It seemed like if I stopped them out of doctor, it seemed like there was a lot of people doing it, I was needed is probably better to not to keep going. But it felt completely natural for me to drive by slowly and carefully to see if I was needed. And if I was the only one there, I would have gotten out of my car and helped. But that's not because I have a philosophy that teaches me that to do that. You know, your if your baby is crying and hungry, the mother doesn't look up in a manual. Unless you were back in the 1920s. When you know, they had these manuals that back then they cost so much stuff and some of you may be who grew up in that era, suffered from those manuals, but I think the natural thing is to, you know, baby cries because baby's hungry as you feed it. You don't need a philosophy to teach you that. So if someone's being murdered Remember, I remember when I was at San Francisco Zen Center. Back when I was there, it was a dangerous neighborhood. And people were getting mugged and shot and robbed and killed in that neighborhood. And we would do our morning meditation in the bottom floor. And you know, five o'clock in the morning we're meditating there a room full of 50s and students, and occasionally we'd hear cars being broken into, we'd hear prostitutes with their customers in the alley behind the building. We would hear people being mugged and calling for help. And if, if it seemed like it needed, we needed help. It was quite impressive at the first cry of help us have 50,000 students pounds out of their chairs and out the side door running out the street to help no hesitation. So I hope that what I hope is that this practice of learning not to cling learning to pay attention, releases the natural caring and compassion of how we care for each other. And to see someone being killed, you hopefully have the wisdom to know what's the best thing to do at that point. But it isn't because of philosophy. Now, what about people getting killed in countries far away from here? Is it any different then you have issues of national policy and other things come into play? But I do wonder whether, you know, so there so then we have all kinds of political views of what's needed and all that. But is it possible to have political views that start with a very simple Foundation, a foundation of suffering and freedom from suffering? I don't know. So this teaching in this text called the book of eights, the Pali word is a taka bhaga. It's found in a larger collection called the Sutta Nipata. It's one of the canonical texts of the early Buddhism. And it's considered to be very, very people, scholars and people who study this text is considered very radical, radical teaching. And so it can maybe I've presented it kind of simplistically, I don't know but, but perhaps if you hear that it's meant to be radical. You will take it home



with you, and engage with it and take it seriously this kind of approach, and may you have a real approach to the religious life that doesn't lead you to quarrel with anybody. Thank you.