

2014-01-15 Dharmette Why Not Be Happy

Sat, 9/12 12:13PM • 11:38

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

happy, horizon, surgery, happening, thoughts, moment, peruvian, question, important, gratitude, live, bag, many different dimensions, difficulties, reasons, repeat, appreciation, reality, soup, thinking

SPEAKERS

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So it's useful to have questions or sometimes statements, Dharma statements that you keep close by. And you repeat to yourself the question or you repeat yourself the statement as a kind of a reference point to help you investigate helps you look in particular ways. So you have maybe one question or one statement that you might use repeatedly for a week. And it kind of comes in and out and, and you use a different times in different places and, and sometimes it's like, not now and you don't look at it and sometimes so that's interesting. What, how is this relevant now? And it helps you investigate, understand what's more there. So I'd like to offer you a question for this week or for today. And the question for you to carry with you is Why not be happy? Right now? Why not be happy? And then if you ask that question, what happens to you to get nauseous? Like, Oh, she, you know, this pollyannish book American Buddhism, you know, he's supposed to be happy all the time and get angry and they don't understand life is full of difficulties and but that wasn't there was no instructions to be happy, but wouldn't tell him to be happy. There was a question why not be happy? And what comes up for you with that question. Maybe what comes up is you have a long list of really good reasons why not to be happy. And but maybe you've never been conscious of that list. You just kind of went along merrily as if that's the way the universe is. But then you maybe come up with your list and if you can see clearly Have your list of you know why it's a really good idea not to be happy right now you know why it's important why you didn't? And you think that is it? Do I really need to be limited that way? Do I really need to buy into that? Is that really relevant at this very moment? So, you know, you might know it's mean people do have all kinds of tragedies and difficulties and don't want to be little any of them. But sometimes they're not completely present. You know, I've had illnesses, surgeries and different kinds. And the day before the surgery, the surgery is not happening. And look around and you know, the moment is good and why not be happy? Because I have surgery and I better get serious. I better get anxious. I better, you know, fly And out my funeral or whatever, you know, so I could do that maybe it's important to consider all the dire consequences that could happen and really ruminate about them and repeat that rumination over and over again, maybe those are really important things and but to take responsibility for you really see what you're doing and what your arguments are and what and chances are, that you'll find that some of the reasons why you are unhappy, maybe aren't necessary at this particular moment. Or say differently. It isn't necessary to focus your attention and your thinking on those stories, ideas that bring you unhappiness right now. And so this morning, I talked about, you know, we live within a horizon horizon if you're going to see those horizons kind of a circle all around you. And that horizon can be if you're swimming in the ocean, you're hurt. is pretty small, relatively small. If you get up on a deck of a boat, it's horizons much wider and to get up in the mass, it's even higher if you get up in a plane the rise in over the ocean is pretty vast. So we live in a we have an horizon and so we limit ourselves by what we fixate on what we think about what we're involved in. And it can be sometimes very, very near or horizon because we're so caught up in our thoughts, but to kind of step out of our thinking and our concerns into the world of awareness or feeling or just looking around and place we're at it's very

powerful to realize that here and now what we're thinking about doesn't exist. So the surgery right at the head and you know, some reason I'm thinking about it today the you know, the you know, in the days before I had it didn't exist.

It was a you know, belongs to the virtual real, the original virtual reality before computers, you know, it's just their imagination. And I remember my wife was going to have surgery. We had all this planning for it. She showed up and doctor said, No, not today. In fact, you don't need it. And he's that yeah, it was kind of like a nice news. And but you know, all those thoughts ahead of time, you know, as if taking it as a real thing, the surgery was going to happen. But it didn't happen. So those thoughts were all kind of virtual reality there was no graduation, right? So we live in this often in this imaginary world, of possibilities of the past and the future of other times in other places. We live in our thoughts and so it gives us a kind of sometimes it kind of can give us a very small horizon to live in. So the question why not be happy what happens You know, do you stay in your little fixation and concern? It's important for me to stay caught up and repeat those thoughts. Or is it okay maybe I don't have to be happy but maybe it's okay to kind of get up in the mass and look around or stand up and tall on the deck and look around, get a wider horizon and see what's happening here and now because more often than people realize, here and now is a safe place to be here and now is a comfortable place to be here and now is there's has many different dimensions to it. And without pretending there are dimensions are ways of understanding here and now where it's possible to have a lot of gratitude for their circumstances and what's happening. It's possible to have a lot of appreciation for what's happening now. It's possible to have A lot of delight in what's happening now. And it's possible from another perspective to have a lot of bitterness. You know, look at how things are inadequate. And you know, for me, I'm looking across the room there and I have I bring my lunch in this kind of Peruvian wool shoulder bag. You know, it's, uh, you know, I'm one pizza dragged to have that bag, you know, because I bring things that sometimes leak soups and stuff and so I have to get a plastic bag and you know, and it's just like, oh, he would always have plastic bags at home and I'm stuck with this, you know, poor Peruvian bag that can you know, if it gets a soup, they'll spill a soup on it. I can't really wash it. And you know, it's pretty unfortunate. You know, I could, that's one choice, right? Or I can look at that Peruvian bag and say, you know, a friend of mine gave out to me. Thought about me came back from Peru gave me this nice back. It's nice to have, it was given to me freely. It serves me well. It's really great because at the end of the day, it's soft, I can just roll up, you know, roll it all up and put it in my backpack. Because when I finished my lunch and stuff, and it just fits so nicely in there, and I carry two things home and Isn't it great? You know, it's kind of arbitrary. We make me like, which is the truer reality I don't know, which is a truer reality, which is the more useful way of thinking. I don't know but which is the happier way of thinking. Why not be happy? Why not be happy? So, you know, if you carry that question with you, why not be happy? Be willing to wrestle with yourself. You know, he really see if you have really good reasons for being not happy. And really debate them. consider them. Look at them. Question them, offer a counter arguments. Just really don't, don't take it for granted. And if you don't have good reasons for being unhappy, what would it take to be happy right now? Or have appreciation right now or have gratitude right now? How close away? How close are close in how far away? How close? how accessible? Is it to feel gratitude, appreciation and happiness? Is it you have to you have to climb a huge spiritual mountain to feel a little bit of gratitude? Or is it really close by if you just turn towards it? Think about something just thinking about what's happening now. And is it helpful to do that? Is it helpful to make a habit of gratitude a habit of appreciation, a habit of delight and happiness is warriors.

Again, not To pretend things are terrible, not terrible, and they are difficult. But there's so many different dimensions, so many different choices about how we look upon any given moment. And it's okay to take some care choice responsibility in how you view this moment here. You don't have to just go along with whatever your mind throws at you. Whatever your mind chooses to do in the moment. Sometimes

it's fine to switch it around. Sometimes it's fine to open up and look more broadly and see things more open away. If I have a lot of thoughts about this, you know, lousy Peruvian bag. It's okay to kind of consider other options of how to appreciate that bag and actually appreciate it a lot. So don't don't rush out and get me a new one. I'm very happy with it, you know? And so, the question I like to offer you to play with, to experiment with to be irritated by for a week is the question. Why not be happy right now? And just sprinkle that in like salt through your day, why not be happy and see what happens. Okay, thank you.