

2014-04-23 What Is Liberation

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responsible, responsibility, gentle breeze, choice, relate, liberation, mind, thoughts, warm spring day, arise, anatomy lab, life, desires, part, differently, respond, choose, practice, hold, psychic abilities

SPEAKERS

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Somewhat Someone once asked a Buddhist teacher what is liberation like? And the teacher answered like a refreshing like a gentle breeze in a warm spring day so you can do with adequate you wish. What is liberation like a gentle breeze on a warm spring day. So with that as a background, what I'm going to say I want to talk a little bit about what your responsibility is on this path of liberation and freedom. But to suggest that increases the word responsibility is such a loaded word, you know, it's like oppressive already and The maybe there's a better word, but I like to separate out the word responsibility into response, ability, the ability to respond, to understand what our where our ability, our ability to choose how we respond. To be choice is a better word than responsibility. But what that are that are our responsibility. We have a responsibility, but how to do it like a gentle breeze on a warm spring day. No, not a heavy thing, not a, you know, a burden, not this big thing that we measure ourselves by or, you know, just almost as almost as light and light and transparent or easeful as that gentle breeze. So there's the part of our lives which we're not responsible for There's a part of our lives we are. And there's all kinds of things happen to our being, that it just happened. So we're not responsible, that we have the urge to pee. That just happens and it's time and place. causes and conditions. I guess if you spend a lot of time drinking, maybe you're responsible but but you know, it's sooner or later you go through your life and you have the urge to pee. And, and, but where up is your responsibility. You know, your choice, this, this is the time to do it, or this is the time maybe I should wait a little bit that so you have. So there are natural phenomena that occurs that you want to poop that just happens that but then you have responsibility about you know what you do with that. So there's biological urges that happened. They just happen. And so then you get hungry. Get on And so that just happens. You're not responsible for getting hungry, necessarily unless you're fasting. It just kind of what happens, these things arise. And then but then how do you respond to that, or your choices with the hunger, whatever that goes on. And you have choice there, you have a choice with hunger, you have a choice when to eat, what to eat, how much to eat, how to how to eat, there's a lot of you know, you have your areas of choice. But getting hungry is your responsibility for the ordinary living of life. So in the same way, you're all you're all getting older. And so you get these symptoms of age. And if you don't know it yet, that you have them, you will. And so the symptoms come along of being, you're not responsible for that. Aging is just what happens is to be expected. And so but what do you do? How do you relate to that? What are your choices you make? Where's your Where's your responsibility about that? I've spent two times now with giving out taking people to see an anatomy lab at a local college, where you see cadavers, and a group of Buddhists. It's kind of Buddhist death contemplation. And so this wonderful woman who's the anatomy teacher there gives us this tour and talks about the bodies and she says one of the, one of the big lessons she's learned from seeing mostly what they get anatomy lab is they get old people bodies. And she's learned from looking at these old bodies. What a big difference it makes whether you people move their bodies and their lives. she's learned you have to keep moving. If you don't move, you're in trouble. She can see that then, of course

So, but you'll age for sure. But then what is your responsibility to that? How do you respond to that? What are the choices you make? You have thoughts, thoughts arise, you're not necessarily responsible for the thoughts that bubble up and arise, they just arise and who knows why you have certain thoughts? Who knows what you know, what's, you know, in the air, what's traveling around what you've picked up here and there. The mind is kind of pretty fickle, and pretty impressionable and, and all kinds of things come up right. I mean, I could, I could very easily and plant a thought in your mind. I have no psychic abilities whatsoever. But even without psychic abilities, I could plant the thought I can have you I can pretty much guarantee that I can have your mind say something against your will Unless you kind of like close your ears or don't hear, right. So if I say for example, the hills are alive with the sound of

I think most of you probably finished that. Right? And were you responsible, that you had a thought, right that music was a thought it popped up in your mind and were you responsible, I'm responsible. I'm not responsible. What's in your mind? You have to take responsibility for that, right? Who's responsible? Where does that you know, the mind does? Mine produces thoughts. That's what it does. It's a thought thing machine. So you don't have it. You're not responsible for what comes up. But a lot of people take responsibility for it, and can feel bad about it and happy about it and the thoughts arise. But there is responsibility there is choice. There is such choices to be made when thoughts arise. Feeling Arise, you're not necessarily responsible for what feelings arise, but there is some responsibility, how you relate to that, what you do with it, when emotions occur, desires arise, aversions arise, and you know, different you know, for me, I'm kind of like a desire type person. So for me, desires are a dime a dozen. I mean, I could sit here and, you know, one minute I could have dozens of desires, they're easy for me. But, but I don't take them that seriously. Mostly, you know, I just let them come and go and, and so I'm not responsible for having a desire, but I'm certainly responsible, whether I act on it with our choose when I choose to do with it. Same thing, some people are more aversive types, they can happen, you know, they're a dime a dozen, you know, and give them a couple of minutes and they can kind of go through a whole string of things that they're don't like or something. But you know, that's just the way the mind different minds work differently. And so the things things Double Up. So you're not necessarily responsible, what shows up. But you are responsible for what you do with what shows up? And how and what is that responsibility? And how can we hold that responsibility in an effective way in a way that effective means in a way that helps us support us in the world we live in. And how can we do it so that it's as likely held or easy as a as a gentle breeze in the warm spring day. Because some people when they hear the word responsibility, take it really heavy. It's like a sledgehammer, not a gentle breeze. But I think that part of the delight and joy of this practice is seeing that choice and responsibility is something that we have and then we can get involved in it and kind of choose and be involved. But the art of it is not it understand just where where the responsibility is what you can do and what you can't do. Because if you feel like you're responsible for the things that you can't actually choose to do differently, it's going to weigh you down. It's going to trouble you. But if you choose the things where you do have it can make a difference, then it can boy you up it can really support your life and, and some things that we can't be choice over today. You will tomorrow or next week or next year at some point as you practice, practice, part of the function of practice is to slowly develop the mindfulness and develop with the flexibility of mind, the insight of the mind. So we begin seeing more and more areas of choice that we have. If you don't see where you have choice, there is no choice. And so don't beat yourself up if there's no choice because you're not necessarily responsible for what comes up. But you are responsible What you do with it and how you respond to it, or how you clean up your mess. And so, you know, sometimes people do terrible things to each other. Because they're not really present. They're not really aware and mindful. But you are responsible to quit sooner or later to clean up for yourself your mess and make amends and apologize, perhaps, or do something. So this this two areas of life and it's part of their art of practice, is to kind of negotiate those two to leave what you're not

responsible. Leave it alone and they say in Buddhism, sometimes don't take it personally. See, it is just something it's not even yourself. Just stuff that happening. And then if you need to take something as being personal, it's that's which is yourself. It's that part that you have choice over. And if you have choice, you have choice. If you think you have choice, but you don't, then you don't and just hold it lightly. But do do value And focus on where you have choice. Do focus on how you can make a difference and, and how you relate to what's going on how you can speak differently to your friends if that's what's useful.

How you can hold things lighter how you can drop things which are not necessary not to be involved and things which are not necessary. How you can be kind of yourself and not look on yourself and you know, as in a negative way because you take everything so seriously and so important. You take so much every you still risk everything so risk, but you're responsible for everything. And you're weighed down by that. How can you find the place of choice of how the most I think I think one of the most fundamental areas of for liberation of choice has to do with how we relate to what our experiences, whatever is going on whatever arises, how do we relate to it? Do we relate to it with so Kind of resistance we relate to for some kind of jumping on it or attacking it? Or do we jump on it with judgments? Do we relate to it with criticism or with approval? We have choice about how we relate. And so can we begin relating oil differently? And we relate to it in a way that's wise can relate to in a way that brings us more ease and peace. Can we? oddly enough, can we relate to our experience by not relating to it at all? Just let it be. Maybe we don't have to make a story or do anything more maybe more often than we realize. We don't have to do anything. We have a choice just let it be this therapy, and sometimes we need to choose and then if we see there is a choice, then we have the challenge of understanding what is the wise choice? What's the what we know what's the wise choice, given what's here? As you live this life of choice, mindful life of choice, you might keep in mind the back of your mind keep it Keep in mind this idea what is liberation like? Like a gentle breeze and a warm spring day. Thank you