

2014-12-17 The Dharma of Ordinary Things

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SPEAKERS

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There is a saying that goes something like, pick up any corner. And the whole universe is there. And what this means is that if you really look at any little place you'll find everything you need. That's kind of the implications of this. And what I like about this saying is it points to the idea that do two things. One is the importance, the possibility of really learning and discovering and waking up anywhere at all. And then the second thing is that it helps us to understand how easily we dismiss This all kinds of corners of the universe, this one doesn't count. This is not where it's really happening. There's I remember seeing some years ago a photograph of this two story building and there were steps outside. It was two days as a set of steps going outside and there was an escalator going, going up the steps. I was also going to take you either walk that walk up and take the escalator up. And on the second floor, there was a gym and on the escalator was a person with a gym bag and you know, maybe he had trouble with steps or something I don't know but you know, it's going to go you know, take the escalator to go up and get exercise you know, you know what about the steps so, it kind of little just dismissing of, you know, right there you know, this going up steps was the possibility of something right so what do you dismiss? What do you not think? is important enough to really orange giving your attention to? I think is a very interesting question. What do you what what kind of what kind of thing is you do because you don't think they're important and you rush through them to get to the important things. You know, so, I mean I've ever been many years ago and when we used to be in Palo Alto, I noticed once that I was driving to our sitting group, Monday night sitting group, and I was rushing so I can get there to tell people to become, you know, so like, you know, somehow the driving there and the focus on being relaxed and present, somehow didn't carry enough weight. Because I had to get someplace important than get there on time or whatever. Doing your dishes or doing your laundry or what do you do with your clothes. When you take off your clothes to go to bed, what do you do with your clothes? You know, do you treat them as if this is really important, like here, here Here is where the opportunity for awakening the whole universe right there and how you treat those clothes, if you put them or use kind of dropping them on the floor, you know in like the morning cutter like I'll deal with them in the morning. Or, you know, so I can go on and on right? So what what are the corners of the universe that you live in, that you don't see as being important that you're going to rush over do quickly. Do it in such a way to get them over with so you can get into the real stuff. You know, you might some of you are Dharma practitioners. And so you have really important Dharma work to do. You have meditation to do you have Dharma books to read and all this great wisdom you can acquire by reading a lot of books and so you come home and you can't wait to get your new book maybe and you can't wait to begin to really discover the truth. The depth of reality and get to that book. And so you know you're kind of like grab some you know you're hungry you grab some granola you're scarfing down you throw your dirty plate into the into the sink with another pile of dirty dishes and you know and you're all kinds of you know kinda like do all these things mindless things so you can have time to get sit down Finally, now I can be in communion with the truth you know really, and then you can be really wise because the book is why so you kind of share you

recognize it, you share it, you feel so good, right? This is so good. This Dharma so good. But you know, how about the topic if you lift up the corner of opening your front door and going and getting your food and preparing your food and putting the plate down and really being there with a plate Isn't there Dharma there? What's the Dharma that the whole universe is right there?

So what is what's available in that moment? So one of the things that's available when you lift up any corner at all, is you because you're there. And in certain kind of way, that's half the picture. There's you and the world, right? And from your point of view, not not from the rest of us. But from your own point of view, you know, your half the picture, and what's going on. And so because how you meet the world, how you relate to it, what you learn from the world, what you learn about yourself, so anything, anything that you do, is an opportunity to understand yourself, to rectify yourself to bring forth something inside of you, which is aligned with your highest values as aligned with waking up that's aligned with you know, something that's more meaningful. So rather than waiting to get to the good Dharma book to be aligned with the truth, what is it like? To be aligned with the truth, as you sit down to have your meal, and to sit there and you know, and just be with the food, and really give yourself over that corner as opposed to sit down with the granola and get your mail and check your email and do all you know and eat mindlessly. There's no Dharma in eating mindlessly. So you overlook the possibility of the Dharma right there, but to stop and what's every corner anyway, so one of the things we learned is we learn about ourselves. And so we stopped long enough to really learn this half of the universe, about your attitude, your beliefs, your impatience, your your attachments, your fears, your resentments, your relationship to the world around you, all this stuff is here, and any corners you pick up any small thing as you do, even opening the door to your house to go in. Thomas Merton was a great Catholic monastics, but yours is A monk was a monk till he died. And he was asked once all the years of monastic life, what did you learn? So that's, you know, that's going to get your attention. He's going to hear what you learn. And know this is going to be profound and useful. And some of you want to listen to this because maybe, you know, and he said, I learned to open and close doors. I think that's great. Because of how much people don't know how to open and close doors, I mean, you all know how to do it right? But to really be there for the experience and really see that if you lift this corner up of the door, the whole universe is right there. To stop and really be there and perform. As I said it, the equation is yourself. Are you really there in a peaceful way? Are you really there in a grounded way? Are you really there as if You know, you're allowing the world to show itself to you in that moment? Or you have an agenda or you know, some fast track, are you impatient Are you kind of looking ahead into the future to the important things you have to do to that Dharma book, the Dharma of opening and closing to to really be there for that can be transformative. And then, you know, the other half of the equation is the world. And so maybe you there's a lot to discover, and something as simple as opening closing a door. Maybe there's discovering something about the world of impermanence, or something about the world of unsatisfactoriness or something about the world of satisfactoryness something about your connection to the world, and how you know how the world is connected to you and, and so there is an infinite number of corners that you come across as you go through your day. And who, if you just took 10% or 1% of those quarters, you've come into your run into, and really stopped and really there for that, and really willing to see the dharmas. They're not in the database. It's possible those great Dhamma books you read, there's actually no Dharma No, it's actually Dhamma books never have Dharma talks that never haven't karma books in them. And Dharma talks as well. They have no Dharma whatsoever, you know, and you're almost wasting your time listening. Or to say it differently. The Dharma of the Dharma talk is not found in the talk, but is found in your relationship to the talk and your listening your presence or what how you bring yourself forward. The Dharma is always found in you. It's not found outside of you.

And so, so, if you're, if you're looking for the Dharma book, to be it Rather than if you don't know what's here, then you're going to also miss a lot of things. But if you know it's here, then you know even picking up the glass of water. The Dharma is here. So how do you pick up the glass of water? How do you? How are you present for that?

So this is the Dharma of ordinary things, the Dharma of ordinary activities. And if you could take all these little corners your university run into throughout the day, and take a small percentage of them and really, you know, continuously regularly throughout the day, let's do really let yourself connect to that in a way that really felt dharmic you really discover the Dharma right there. You could Very quickly and easily, live a life that is as easily as rich and valuable as living on retreat or being a monastic who's supposedly supposedly living in the Dharma all the time. It doesn't take that much to begin having the momentum of the Dharma practice, begin to take hold and move you and, and change you who the better. And so I would, you know, lift the corners when you lift the universe, the corner of the universe, carefully lifted attentively, whatever you do, and see what's there for you if you really stop or give it Give yourself fully to that one thing. Okay, thank you.