

# 2016-02-03 Dharmette Shifting The Perspective

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

gift, problem, meditate, life, lining, coat, shift, zen master, experiment, discussion, perspective, sadness, destitute, tenderness, talk, thought, jewel, careful, hungry, precious jewel

## SPEAKERS

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So when people engage their life, through mindfulness practice through awareness, it can lend itself to seeing our world in a new way, and seeing ourselves in a new way. And in fact, some of the greatest potential of this practice comes from new way of seeing, not from having something new happen. So give you a little example, we could have a discussion here, whether this glass is half full or half empty. And we could maybe even argue, whether it's half full or half empty. And we divide the room into those people who think it's half empty, and those people have full and then we can decide who was right. And who's the right kind of people, and how wrong the other people are. All kinds of things we can do. However, is another possibility. If someone asks you, you know, is the glass half full or half empty? You could say, I'm not thirsty. That's not my issue. That's not my concern. It's not not a problem for me. It is what it is, I'm not thirsty. Or the if you ask the Zen master that question. And the chances are very good, that the Zen masters answer would be drinking the glass, drinking the water.

So I don't know what you think about these kind of details. But this is an example of shifting the perspective, the paradigm, shifting the focus of what is we're looking at, as we know, nowadays, that if you're in a discussion with someone, and they define the terms of the discussion, sometimes it's impossible to get out of it, they're going to win anyway. That they do, you know, and so you have to be very careful about the terms that meanings, the words that you choose. So for example, you know, I mean, sometimes with the abortion, fight, the whole discussion, the anti abortion, people are very careful about the words they choose. And if you go along with those words, you probably are going to lose the conversation. You know, you believe in killing babies. And that's the that's the, that's the what the conversation is about. I mean, what are you going to say, right? So this come out as a shift, the perspective the shift at the whole thing. And so don't don't just take what you see, as given, don't say, don't take your interpretation events has given, maybe there's a whole different way of seeing. So give you a story that used in Buddhism, sometimes, there was a young man who decided to go off and travel around the world back in the old days. Before he set foot, the night before he left, someone took his coat while he was sleeping, and sewed a very precious jewel into the lining without telling him and then he went traveling around the world and things didn't work out quite right for him. So he ended up being destitute and eventually many years later came back to where he started his home village and he was hungry destitute all his clothes and coats are all kind of torn and shabby shabby, and he kind of hobbled back in hungry and so he told the story of what happened to him rabid and everything. And then the person said, Yeah, but you had this phenomenal amount of wealth on the on you all the time you had this jewel in the lining of your coat, but he didn't know it, so it wasn't going to help them. This story is used in Buddhism, as kind of simile or something though. fable for we'll have our jewel here. And we have a gift that we carry with us all the time. But we don't recognize it. We don't know what it is.

So what's the gift? And what I'd like to suggest is that a shift of perspective, from one viewpoint for your life to a different one, and you don't have to agree. But it might be interesting to try it out and see what it's like. Instead of seeing that you have problems, see that you have gifts. As soon as you say that you have something, I have this problem. You've already bought into the rhetoric that got you, the other team. There's, you know, as soon as you as soon as you start talking about the problems I have, you're like, you know, you've lost the argument. Why? Why see things as a problem. It's such a loaded word, I think in English, there are certainly things to be solved. We call it you know, love, you know, math problem, a problem, you know, to solve the solve the math problem. But when in conventional kind of language, we talk about our lives, I have a problem. It I think it for many people carries a big weight, it's like a tangle, we're entangled in something and we have this, you say, I have a problem. But what if there's no problems? There are things to solve, but no problems. What do you add, when you say you have a problem where you orient yourself in that way? What are you adding on top of the situation? There's a situation get heavy? Does it get? Did you get tight and contracted? Do you get worried problems are cause of worry? Do you get afraid there's the resistance? What happens when you use the language of problem or you relate to things as a problem? What comes along with it?

And then if instead of relating to it as a problem, you relate to the circumstance as a gift? What happens then? what's available? What what comes along with that? What do you see that? How do you see the situation? If you think about it, first and foremost, as a gift, and more importantly, what falls away? When you see it as a gift? What falls away? Do some of the things that come along, when you call it a problem? Do they fall away? Worry, fear contraction, it's a gift, maybe it's more optimistic, more, more, you know, kind of more bright, to be more engaged to gift. So if you're sad, rather than seeing it as a problem, what if you see it as a gift? What would they go with? What would the gift of sadness be? Or is that very idea? Completely bizarre? That you would think that sadness is a gift? Because, you know, in modern America, you're supposed to be cherry and have a good time and, and avoid things like that? Because there's the internet. You know, so, you know, you shouldn't you know, it's probably a sign of personal failure that you have this, you're sad. But, but what if sadness is a gift? What can come out of that? Whatever it arises out of it. I asked someone that recently, and she said tenderness, the gift of sadness as tenderness and appreciation of beauty. I thought that was beautiful. And what about what's the gift of anger? What's the gift of not getting what you want? What's the gift of being in conflict with someone having a different opinion? If you say, what's the problem here with that was, you know, we have a problem. You know, if you ever had someone come up to you and say, we have a problem, we have to talk, and we have to talk, we have a problem. You know, this is going to be difficult. But what if they say no, you know, we have we have to talk. I think there's a gift here for us to discover. I'm not sure what it is yet. But I wonder if we can explore it. What's the gift? And, you know, let me tell you, you know, you said that, that I said this kind of tense between us. But I think that there's something for us wonderful to find out in here. What would that be? So when you meditate I think it's a great place a great Place to experiment with not having any problems. You know, I don't know how long you meditate if you meditate every every day. But it's most people don't meditate all day. This is a small little subsection of their day. And so this is an interesting place to not bring all the habits of thinking along, but to experiment with a new way. And one new way is to drop the whole idea if there's any problems, while you meditate. Things happen, you respond to what happens. But maybe there's no problems. Because if you think of you have a problem, what what do you bring along to your meditation? How do you agitate it? How do you, you know, weigh it down? But if What if, then what if instead of saying you have a problem meditating, I can't be with my breath, I have such a problem. My mind wanders off so much. You know, I'm always doing x, I'm always, you know, being critical of myself when I meditate, it's a problem. What if instead of seeing whatever is happening is a problem? What happens if you see it as a gift? What happens if you see it as a gift to be discovered, there's a gift in the lining of your coat, lining of your heart, waiting to be discovered. And there's not a few people who have gone through what

they thought were real crisis, real difficulties in their lives, real limitations. And at the time, it was just terrible for them. In retrospect, they realize it was the best thing that happened to him, it was, it was a gift to them. It opened their life to whole new way of seeing a whole new, they all did drop and let go of something that he clinging to for a lifetime.

So what's the gift? So last thing, I'll say that, in talking about this this morning, I'm suggesting that you experiment with stepping out of your usual way of understanding yourself and your life, even if just for a short while, see if you can step out of it and try a different perspective. And even trying a different perspective, might help you to understand how much you were stuck in an old perspective before. And the new perspective is that things are a gift. See what happens if you go through your life that way? So thank you