

2017-06-03 Refinding the 8 Fold Path

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SPEAKERS

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This and the images I used were that have a path, I use the idea of walking a pilgrimage path or walking with an umbrella or walking with a boat moving through the water going somewhere moving along. And then the classic metaphor, the path in Buddhism is, is presented in the idea of the Eightfold Path. And sometimes it's seen as a progressive steps of a path, you walk into these steps. And progressively they develop, or they're like the eight strands of a rope, they all come together to make the rope the eight lanes of a road maybe, or something, that they're all working together, and they're mutual partners in this path that goes along. And when you have an idea of a path like this, then you can also you can leave the path, you could end up off the path. And then the idea is to get back on the path, find yourself doing it again. And one of the in talking about a thought that the Buddha used to send analogy, another analogy of, of person who worked in the woods, woods person, who one day came across the faint traces of an ancient path, ancient road and followed the traces and it took the person in too deep in the woods, there was an abandoned overgrown capital palace city. And it needs to be a little louder. Yeah, can you turn it up a little bit lighter. And so that and so then the person went out and found the monarch of their country and said, there's this faint path that leads up to an ancient capital. And so the monarch brought together all these workers and they clear the road. In fact, there was a road there and, and they repopulated the ancient capital. So the Buddha said, in the same way, there's this ancient path. And he didn't make the Eightfold Path, he discovered it, he found the traces of it. And he's like the woods person who came back to tell us the monarchs of the realm of our personal realms, that there's a place you can go where you're living, it's not really the capital, not really your home. But there is this path, you can clear the way. And so the idea is, you can clear the path and find great an opening and open space, empty space in which to find our way. So I'd like to suggest a kind of a variation of this metaphor of the path, the path in the woods. Certainly, you can be on a path. And you can step off the path, you can end up going in all kinds of directions in your life, you can end up going, you know, get lost on the web. And there's all kinds of ways people come and talk to me about how they get lost in the web, and how painful it is Friday of things that they end up with us and pornography and shopping, you know many things to people and get lost in that world. And it's quite debilitating for some people. Some people can get off the path by pursuing things which are not really core to what they really want to have, they want to live their lives, they pursue things which they maybe they don't, don't, you know, their loss of integrity and doing it, and they ain't gonna go go off and sometimes for a long period of time, maybe they end up being addicted or taking drugs or doing criminal activity or doing something that takes them off. Some people saw all kinds of ways you can step off and not be on the path. And then the question is finding the path again, how do you get yourself back on the path. And this is where it gets interesting. Because you don't find the path by searching for it. You find it and the next step you take, if you wake up, if you see it, recognize where you're at, oh, I took a wrong turn. And now I'm here. I'm here doing this which may be is not healthy to do. I'm doing this now, which is not the path is not found here, watching lots of television. But as soon as you wake up to that soon as you see

that the possibility is right then in there you find the path or the path is fine you you don't have to go searching for it.

But right there, you can kind of recognize what's happening and meet that with, with the elements of the path, you can meet that with an understanding that he right here is where you could find your practice right here is where you can find your way with this. So if you're watching a lot of TV, what does it mean? To record first nicely recognize this is what's happening. And now with this, how do you wake up? How do you find your way with this? Where do you follow your heart's aspiration? Where do you find, you know, a life to live have integrity and of waking up of compassion, of clarity of really being present for your life. So you could just sit up straighter when you're watching TV, you know, like, I'm here, this is what I'm doing. But I think probably if you really kind of really recognize where you were, and I really clear, like, here's the path that what's the path now? You probably recognize it's time to turn it off. And then what is the intention you have? Is their intention just for sensual pleasure or comfort of watching TV? Or is your intention to be compassionate and kind in this world, and there may be people who need you, you need you for yourself. And it's and that care and compassion is not can be found by watching TV like this debilitating? And then goes on from there. How do you want to practice now? How do you want to live your life? How do you want to quit? How do you step forward? What's the next step for you now? What's the step? What's the step now? And what will probably happen to most people most of us is we veer off the path all the time. In some way or other, we step off, we lose touch. And then what I'm suggesting here today is that it doesn't take that much to find it again. It's not like a distant path. It's not like a something far away. But you can find it, you're back on, you can get back on the path. And the next step you make this next step you take. Because the path, the eightfold path, the path of the Dharma is not an external path. It's not in the world out there. I can confidently say you're not going to find the Eightfold Path here at IMC. We don't have it here. This is where the path is found isn't the step that you take. You make the path as you walk it. And you can make it at a moment's notice. So yes, we veer off the path all the time. And rediscovering it is half the practice. We don't have to feel bad about veering off. As long as when you notice you've done it, you take the next step that's on the path. Because you know what it is, you know what it is for you, you have a sense for yourself. What a life for integrity is you have a sense for yourself. What a movement towards freedom is you have a sense for yourself, what connecting to compassion, and it might be have a sense of yourself for yourself what the eight steps of a footpath might be for you. And so you have enough personal sense of personal connection, you're that hopefully, the new veer off and then the half the practice is coming back on, coming back on the path going back on the path. And the other half has to walk the path be connected to it. But this idea that no matter where you are, it's up to you how you take the next step. take the next step. Can you take that next step, that is a step of peace. That's a step of compassion. That's a step of ease step of letting go of what you're holding on to a step that has integrity to it. It's a step where you feel you're in touch with some of your deeper, what's deep in you? What's most important in you? Or would it deeper that be? And you it's difficult to do that if when you recognize you've gone off the path, and you condemn yourself or you have shame, then it's hard to find it. But even with those happen, it's possible to find it in those. How do you have compassion with that part of you? How do you meet that part with integrity? How do you meet that with the kind of care and attention that it needs.

And so this idea of we take this step to make the path that we have to in a sense, do something to make the path. It's not a passive thing, this person Buddhist practice, we have to do something, we have to do something to change the karmic stream, something that changes the stream of habit and being an automatic pilot to the old conditionings that come pouring in. But it's not a dramatic thing. It's not like rocket science. Sometimes just the fact that you're, you're making the effort to live a different life to walk a different path is phenomenally significant. And maybe you don't have to be so successful for it

to be successful. You don't have to kind of doesn't have to look like you're actually going along the path really well. Just the fact that you're trying is, I would suggest is monumental is huge. Because in trying, you're no longer feeding the automatic pilot, you're not feeding the old way, and the habits which they don't serve you. And that's a big step to take. Just wonderful. begins creating, interchange. So, in the discussion this morning about a path, it might seem kind of discouraging, because I talked about a two, you know, I went on this long two week Trek. And you know, like, it seems like the Dharma path is like, so monumentally difficult and long and difficult, even though he said, just take the next step. Still, it's like took this this analogy of this long path is so this was the corrective this afternoon. That if it was needed, that you know that you can find it at any point. And just stepping back on is that's, you know, just that's enough. So thank you, thank you for this. This day so far. And I'm coming here to practice. It's, I don't take it as a light, simple thing that people come in to vote today or part of a day to practicing like this. It's I think I've had tremendous appreciation for this and put a lot of value in what we're doing here together. So thank you very much. So now