

2019-07-03 Dharmette Responses Vs Reactions

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SPEAKERS

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So sometimes it's useful to consider that the only thing we ever really possess is our response to situations. Nothing else is really our possession. And if we look at responses, one of the interesting distinctions is a distinction between responses and reactions. reactions. I think where people often use it is that it's we're kind of operating on an automatic pilot, something happens and there's a reaction that's, maybe we haven't, we don't even think about it. There's no self reflection. We can't help ourselves. It just comes out of something. A response and contrast is something that's done with presence understanding, self awareness. And with a degree of choice, that this is the wise thing to do, or this is what I'm choosing this clear, clear senses is what I'm choosing to do. And, and reaction is not something you possess, it's something that moves through you. He's not really you or the reaction. It's just something that goes on. If anything is you, it's your choice you have about how you respond. And what we're trying to do in practice is to have a greater ability to respond to a greater capacity to be present. And at the moment of choice. If you if you can see there's choice, then there's a gap, there's a space, there's more opportunities, to be wise, to be reflective, to have other sources of information coming along, to be considered, considered what we're going to do and thoughtful what we're going to do. heartfelt and what we're going to do and practice, hopefully, us into this place of greater choice. Some people I think that don't they react to the idea, that of response that we're responsible for how we response we have the ability to choose and be part of that responsibility. And part of that reactivity around this teaching of response is that some people have too much burden of self of conceit involved in what they do. In wonder it takes many forms. One form is that it feels like a lot of work, to be responsible. It's a lot of work of me myself in mind to choose and I have to be successful in a type. I have my parents breathing down my neck or my society beating my neck or my god is breathing down my neck, about I have to do it. Right, I'd be successful and it's all up to me and probably fail. And there's all this complicated stuff that comes into play. When we're told that, you know, it's up to us to make a choice. Some people then prefer ever religious teaching, Buddhist teaching that seems to free us from responsibility. And somehow we're supposed to just kind of naturally just let the natural movement just flow and just kind of work we can kind of get out of the way and and, and sometimes that kind of attitude is compensated Tory, to an effect that it's so painful the whole idea of self doing and succeeding and making things work. But this is part of what's interesting is that we always have the ability at any moment to respond to make a choice of how we respond to the situation. And one of the choices we have be interested to be curious, what are the choices we have is to see what's going on here. Let's take a deeper look at this, let's look more carefully at what's happening. And that's not having to do something externally in the world or change anything. Or it doesn't have to involve a certain kind of kind of ordinary kind of choice of what to say or to do. But it is a choice to learn more about what's happening, and understand more and be present more for what's happening. And a big

part of mindfulness practice is making the choice to be present for what is it is a choice. It is a response to be mindful. And, you know, we exercise that choice all the time. But as we choose to

study and learn what's going on, we can learn all the extra things we bring along with our responses. And what we'll find out is that it's never All reaction or all risk or all kind of self selected response. This knows to overlap quite a bit. There can be some of us, some of us who will quickly do is nice response a choice, but comes along and baggage is some of our reactivity, some of our old habits and patterns and ideas of self and, you know, beliefs that we have that belong more to the world of reactivity. Sometimes we have more reactivity, but it's not 100% reactivity, there is some, maybe clarity, some wisdom, some, some responsivity that's going on in there as well. It's not all or nothing. And I emphasize this because part of this to really start taking, you know, engaging with our ability to respond to see it as the only thing we really possess or really our only thing we own that we can be responsible for. As how we respond is to begin a process of clarifying, excuse me, to begin a process of clarifying our or purifying our response, to begin understanding and studying how we respond, to see what's extra, to see what comes maybe out of greed, or out of ill will, or what comes along with conceit and what comes along with all kinds of inherited ideas of being a Dewar and being a success, successful person and, and, and, you know, trying to prove ourselves or trying to apologize for ourselves or trying to you know, that all this stuff comes along, and, and to study to learn about it, in the actions in doing and doing and responding over time. It begins to purifier clarify or simplify. The extra falls away. And as the extra falls away, one of the things that falls away is a lot of strong sense that I'm the doer that I am the one who's making a choice to respond. There can be responses. Very clear choices are made. But there seems to be less and less of the conceit of the Dewar as part of it. And rather than this kind of falling back into some the natural flow of phenomena, there's a sense of clarity and decisiveness and dignity of I hear, there is choice here there is wisdom operating. And it can be very empowering. But without empowering yourself, I'm the one who's empowered to live in a world of choice. To live in a moment by moment to respond to the best wisdom that we have the most heartfelt way we have what's most useful at the moment. And if that process of clarification and purification continues and develops, then we become freer and freer in that process is more and more freedom in that process, and more ease, more care and perhaps more love and more compassionate as possible. So to take the route of ownership of your response, being responsible for how you respond, choice full of how you respond, is a path that is really great for moving towards what Buddhism is aiming towards, to freedom to compassion, to a wise life, a caring life. So, the challenge I'm offering you today is not the challenge to only become mindful. The challenge is to become mindful. So you can really live in that place where you feel like you're being responsive choice for way and all the things that you're doing as they go through your life. And they can be phenomenally small. The details of this you have a choice when you leave this room about how you put on your shoes.

Do you even do you? Are you involved in that choice? Could you put on your shoes out of habit, you have a certain way of doing it, you have important things to do after all, they go on to the next thing and somebody's going to clean the center and you know you got to get started and shoes are like the last thing on your mind. And you know how to do it. You can do it in your sleep, almost they say. And so you just kind of put on your shoes and go you know that moment. You're not exercising your choice. You're not being responsive to the particular circumstance of putting on your shoes. And maybe it seems phenomenally petty to talk about being present but how you put on your shoes? I don't know if it is, it's it's developing your capacity for attention for mindfulness for choice. And who knows, maybe someone's watching you put on your shoes that they are so impressed. Wow, that person is so present just for that. Or maybe when you put off your shoes, you put your shoes in the shelf in such a way that it looks like you're actually caring for everyone in the who comes to IMC because you put your shoes over to the side to make it easier for someone else to put their shoes there. As opposed to just kind of

throw them up on the shelf and not think about it. It becomes a rich world and the world becomes richer and richer, more and more kind Magical even the more we live in this place where we really connect to the place of choice, and we live that, that point of choice. And the final thing I'll say, which I've said now, maybe Monday and Sunday here that I think that one of the ways to understand the Buddhist teachings, the Buddhist teachings on karma, is that the emphasis is on front loading our life, not end loading it. And what that means is that front loading, it means that we pay more attention to our response to how we react and give care and attention to how we do that. Because if we don't, if we are operating under many of us, at least, operating from reactivity and that we might have without care, that then sometimes then what we're doing then is we're end loading our life meaning we have to clean up at Afterwards, and cleaning up afterwards sometimes is much more difficult than taking care of things on the front end. And, and not a few people have discovered and I discovered this, it would have saved me I could two seconds would have a care on the front front loading, saved months of struggle afterwards, you know, trying to repair relationships and things like that. So this emphasis on being mindful so we can be in the place of choice and be us that ability we have to respond is meant to be a way of caring for our karma, and make our life easier in the future. So, I hope that brings you much peace and joy and it benefits the world around you. You to act this careful way. So, thank you