

Dharmette: New Vision (5) Being Freedom

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August 29, 2025

Keywords: samādhi, vipassanā, samatha, non-clinging, Eightfold Path, sammā, insight, attachment, ethical maturation, present-moment awareness

So welcome to this last talk on the series of New Vision. That is the culmination of this whole series of talks I've given since the beginning of January, and now it's almost the beginning of September. And starting with a long series on *samādhi*, the cultivation of a stable, unified mind and body that creates a foundation for insight, for the ability to see clearly. In Chinese Buddhism, these two, the words *samādhi* and *vipassanā*, or *samatha vipassanā*, are translated with two very ordinary characters that can mean, if we translated them most literally in their basic meaning, stop and see. So *samādhi*'s ability is to somehow stop the busyness of the mind, the cut-upness of the mind, all the activity that we're engaged in so that we can see clearly. Or to put it in a different way, if we're trying to see the moon holding a big telescope in our hands, only our hands, we probably can't hold it still enough.

But we put it on our tripod and then we can see. So *samādhi* creates the stability, the tripod, the stopping, the quieting, that actually allows us to see more deeply, more clearly, the present moment experience. So we can see without the filter of a lot of a busy mind, filter of projections of our stories, projections of our commentary and opinions and preferences, projection of the memories and associations that come along, and to simply see the pristine simplicity of everything as it occurs in the present moment. I think of this as deeply respectful, to really be present for things as they actually are, as they're occurring, instead of being present for things as we wish they would be, will be, or things as they are frozen in time, like that this is how it's always going to be, or this I'm going to stay this way. Not allowing the changing nature, the growing nature, the unfolding nature of all of living life, how it goes. So then we start seeing more clearly, and we see clearly what is harmful for us, what hurts us, what limits us, what stresses us.

And we see that holding on to things is, that lends a certain kind of permanence to them, holds them in a certain kind of locked view, is suffering, is painful, is exhausting. To hold a

story, hold ourselves, hold the world in a locked view. It's tiring. We can have views, but we don't get locked in them. To hold the view that there is a fixed suffering, to get caught and locked in suffering, to be oriented in, or to be locked in the idea of things to be happy. There's a way of being locked in the whole world of comfort and discomforts, suffering and happiness, joy and sorrow, that as long as we're caught in it, then we suffer more.

And then we also start seeing clearly that many of the ways that we associate to ourselves, creating stories, identities, views about who we are, how we should be, a good percentage of them, certainly not all of them, can be seen as being constructed, made up. And more importantly, we see that even the ones that are actual real identities that we have, that how we relate to them often comes along with a lot of tension and suffering. So with the insight, we start seeing deeper and deeper the layers and layers and ways in which we cling and get attached. And as things loosen up, and we flow more in the river of change, as things loosen up and we're not caught in the grip of reacting to pleasure and pain, as things get loosened up around this whole complex thing of being self-preoccupied, the insights into happiness, well-being, peace, non-clinging grow. And at some point, this non-clinging becomes really a strong experience. Sometimes experienced as peace, sometimes as happiness, sometimes as relief, and it becomes now a, provides a vision of what's possible.

It is possible to live without being attached. It is possible to live without being preoccupied, caught in the grip of self and self-criticism and self-doubt. It is possible to be present in a wonderful way without being pushed around by pleasure and what's pleasant and unpleasant and wanting things to be just right. And it is possible to kind of have a feeling that we're fluid. We can adjust and fluidly to the world. We can change and morph in appropriate ways that we don't have to put up walls of resistance.

We don't have to show up to shape the world into how we think it should be. That we have an amazing adaptability to what's there. So we see a vision of a life that's free of clinging, that's more than just non-clinging. It allows for all of who we are, the fullness of who we are, that operates when there's no clinging, that operates unimpeded when there's no clinging, to flow and grow within us. And some of that deeper beauty, deeper aspects of who we are are beneficial, they're considered wholesome, in that they're part of the whole of who we are. Attachment, clinging, story-making, making up ideas always limits the whole, always kind of pushes away or carves out something out of the whole so that we really limit ourselves.

When we have a more unlimited sense of being present, in our body, in this deeper world. That it's not a blank slate. People who mature in this practice are characterized as being, have experiencing peace, are characterized as having happiness, are characterized as having

care and kindness, compassion, are characterized as being ethical. In fact, maturing in this tradition is inseparable between... maturing spiritually is inseparable from maturing ethically. There's a greater and greater capacity and interest... in caring for ourselves, caring for others, in such a way that we don't cause harm, in such a way that we don't harm ourselves, harm others, but not that of some duty, but rather because there's a wonderful, profound vision and understanding and knowledge that, that that's what our whole deep system, our heart most wants, what makes the heart sing. And that anything that limits that, anything that does cause harm, shuts down the singing heart, shuts down or limits our possibility of love, of peace, and of happiness.

And so maturing in this practice... allows for an amazingly wonderful inner maturation that provides a vision, a new vision, and understanding, that then becomes the basis of how we live our life, the orientation around our life, that it becomes less something that we're doing, less practicing, less following instructions, but more and more who we are. And one of the teachings of the Buddha, is that as their spiritual maturity, the *Eightfold Path* are not things that we do, but ways that we are. We are, kind of we are, we're kind of like flowing out of us, kind of as a nature, almost as if our nature, almost as if this is how our system operates, we have right view. We have right intention. We have right speech, right action, a right lifestyle, way of living, livelihood. We have a right form of effort and how we apply effort, any effort.

And we have right mindfulness and right concentration. Where the word right, the Pāli word *sammā*, has different connotations than the English word right. It seems like the best word, maybe in English, given all the different choices, but it means something a little bit more as consummate, coming to completion. It becomes more like embodied, embodied view, embodied intention, what? Where all of ourselves, it flows from us. It's who we are, not what we do.

So this is a grand vision, and the Buddha ended this vision, of his, this path, this whole thing, this whole development to full maturation of our inner life with the instructions that now go forth out into the world, for the welfare and happiness of all. So that's quite a thing. And I hope we don't have to wait until we mature fully in this practice to have that kind of, that characterize who we are. That as we do this practice, and to whatever degree we cultivate *samādhi*, our practicing insight and have a new vision, to whatever degree, even as a beginner, may it be... that we learn that the means contains the goal, when we don't cling in the diligence by which we can center our life on this practice. May all beings be free. So, thank you, and I've appreciated the opportunity to give this very long series.

I hope that it was meaningful for all of you. You were able to follow. I'm going to be away for

the next month from here. I'm going to be teaching a month-long retreat the next four weeks at IRC. And I think I come back here on the end of September, maybe, it's September 29th. And in the meantime, we have next week, Diana Clark will lead this YouTube sitting.

And then the week after that, it's a Maria Strattman. Then there'll be one week where we'll do a rerun of one of the seven A, one of these YouTube weeks. And then I will, and then Maria Strachman will do it a second time, and then I'll be back. So thank you, and I appreciate very much this chance to be in this YouTube community, the people who chat, for me a wonderful representation or for the whole community who's participating. And I look forward to continuing in four weeks or so. Thank you.