

MN 143: Advice to Anāthapiṇḍika - Anāthapiṇḍikovāda Sutta  
And Excerpts of  
MN 62: The Greater Discourse of Advice to Rāhula - Mahārāhulovāda  
Sutta  
Dhamma Talk presented by Bhante Vimalaramsi  
14-July-08

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Dhamma Sukha Meditation Center.  
Majjhima Nikāya.  
Advice to Anāthapiṇḍika.  
Anāthapiṇḍikovāda Sutta, One Forty Three.  
Bhante Vimalaramsi.

BV: This is interesting because Anāthapiṇḍika was the...he was the chief male supporter for the sangha, and he built the meditation center at Sāvattihī for the Buddha and the Buddha stayed there for twenty rains retreats.

ST: That's ~~

BV: That's it. And he fed all of the monks. They would go out on alms round but if they didn't have enough food they could come back and they could get food. He took care of all of them with medicines. There was a kind of an interesting situation because there was a healer by the name of Jivaka and he studied with this man that was really brilliant. And for his final exam his teacher gave him a shovel and said, "Find a plant that doesn't have healing qualities, and when you find it dig it up and bring it back to me." And he went out for a week looking for a plant that didn't have healing qualities and he couldn't find one, so he passed.

He did open-brain surgery on someone that had...they had worms in their brain. And the only way to get it out was by cutting open the skull and digging around and finding it and pulling it out. And he was very successful at that. Jivaka was an amazing healer. Anybody that was a member of the sangha, if they developed leprosy or had

cataracts or anything like that, he would heal them.

And it's because of him that there are certain rules for the monks before you become a monk that you have to answer certain questions. And one of them is, "Are you a real human being?" Another one is, "Do you have any diseases?" Because if you have diseases like diabetes or leprosy or whatever, you can't be ordained. You have to heal yourself before you get ordained and that's because of Jivaka. Because anytime a monk would come in he would examine them and he would spend time healing them and he got a reputation for healing all the monks and then people would ordain, get healed, and then disrobe. [laughs] So, there are certain rules that pertain because of him. But, he would look in on the Buddha two or three times a day. He would go around and anytime there was need for any kind of medicines, Anāthapiṇḍika would take care of that. It didn't matter how far he had to go to get it, he would obtain the medicines that was needed.

He and Jeta both built a lot of kutis, they built a lot of meeting halls, things like that. Now, there's a thing that we have in Buddhism which I haven't been able to do here because it takes a few monks to be able to do it. And it's called making a Sima Hall. A Sima Hall is where all official acts of the sangha take place. A Sima Hall is...it has to be marked off and there has to be certain ceremonies that happen and it's kind of an elaborate thing.

{5:18}

Anyway, I think it was Jeta that made the big Sima...the Hall, but the entire city of Sāvattthī was a Sima. So everybody that lived in Sāvattthī, even though they weren't monks, they could live in the Sima, but this just meant that this particular area was ordained for monks to do their official acts. There are some acts that happen that it takes twenty monks and there's a lot of questioning that goes on and then they have to decide whether that rule has been broken or not. And it's a kind of a long drawn out process.

Yeah.

ST: How long does it take to make a Sima?

BV: Oh, I imagine it took about an hour.

ST: So, in other words, like if there was a rains retreat and other monks could come from another place to go to Sima to ~~ a place to go back. Because they can leave there four days ~~, right?

BV: Well, you can leave longer than that, six mornings.

ST: Six what?

BV: Mornings.

ST: Six mornings.

BV: You have to be back by noon on the sixth morning. But the only reason for leaving during a rains retreat has to be official business. It can't be just because I feel like going here or going there.

Anyway, so Anāthapiṇḍika, he was always scurrying around. He was a banker, he was a very wealthy person. He was good at making deals and he was a...kind of like an agent for other people that wanted things and he would help them organize it. He was real good at that sort of thing. But because of that he would sit down to listen to a Dhamma talk and something would happen and he would have to leave very often. So he didn't really get a chance to hear all that much Dhamma.

Now, when Anāthapiṇḍika first heard that there was a Buddha that was in India, just hearing that word got him super excited. And he found out that the Buddha was going to be coming to his brother-in-law's for a meal the next morning but Anāthapiṇḍika became so excited that he wanted to go meet the Buddha before the Buddha came to him. And he happened to go through a graveyard and he was very much afraid and he had heard all kinds of noises and he kept on thinking, "Well, you know, every step towards the Buddha is

a victory..." and that sort of thing. So, he overcame his fear and he went to see the Buddha. And the Buddha gave him a short talk, it wasn't very long, and he became a Sotapanna; first stage of enlightenment.

You can become a Sotapanna when your mind is full of confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha and you're very attentive to what's being said. So, that's what happened to him. And he was, for...well, I don't remember. He might've been the attendant for the monks for forty years but I don't remember exactly when he built his...built the temple at Jeta and all of that sort of thing.

{10:00}

So, the Buddha would go out on his preaching tours and there was still a lot of monks that were staying in Sāvattthī and Anāthapiṇḍika would take care of them. Sometimes the Buddha would leave Ānanda behind, sometimes he would leave Sāriputta behind, sometimes he would leave Moggallāna behind, sometimes he took them with him and left somebody else behind. But there was always Dhamma activity in Sāvattthī whether the Buddha was there or not.

Anyway, that was a long introduction to this sutta! [laughs]

MN 143:

1. Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Sāvattthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park.

2. Now on that occasion the householder Anāthapiṇḍika was afflicted, suffering, and gravely ill. He addressed a certain man thus: "Come, good man, go to the Blessed One, pay homage to him in my name with your head at his feet, and say: 'Venerable sir, the householder Anāthapiṇḍika is afflicted, suffering, and gravely ill; he pays homage with his head at the feet of the Blessed One.' Then go to venerable Sāriputta, pay homage to him in my name with your head at his feet, and say: 'Venerable sir, the householder Anāthapiṇḍika is afflicted with suffering, and gravely ill; he pays homage with his head at the venerable Sāriputta's feet.' Then say: 'It would be good, venerable

sir, if the venerable Sāriputta would come to the residence of the householder Anāthapiṇḍika, out of compassion.”

“Yes, sir,” the man replied, and he went to the Blessed One, after paying homage he sat down at one side and delivered his message. Then he went to the venerable Sāriputta, and after paying homage to the venerable Sāriputta, he delivered his message, saying: “It would be good, venerable sir, if the venerable Sāriputta would come to the residence of the householder Anāthapiṇḍika, out of compassion.’ The venerable Sāriputta consented in silence.

3. Then the venerable Sāriputta dressed, taking his bowl and outer robe, went to the residence of the householder Anāthapiṇḍika

{12:48}

BV: Now, this is an interesting thing in itself. They didn’t have any locks on the doors in their kutis, so they always carried their requisites with them...a little difficult to do these days...[laughs]...because of books and computers and things like that. But it can still happen.

[repeats] [...Sāriputta dressed, taking his bowl and outer robe, went to the residence of the householder Anāthapiṇḍika]

MN:  
with the venerable Ānanda as his attendant.

BV: Ānanda was junior to Sāriputta, so Ānanda got to carry Sāriputta’s bowl and outer robe so that he wouldn’t be troubled by having these things. That’s the...junior monks do that for senior monks.

MN:  
Having gone there, he sat down in a seat made ready and said to the householder Anāthapiṇḍika: “I hope you are getting well, householder, I hope you are comfortable. I hope your painful feelings

are subsiding, not increasing, and that their subsiding, not their increase, is apparent.”

4. “Venerable Sāriputta, I am not getting well, I am not comfortable. My painful feeling is increasing, not subsiding; their increase, not their subsiding is apparent. Just as if a strong man were splitting my head open with a sharp sword, so too, violent winds cut through my head. I am not getting well...Just as if a strong man were tightening a tough leather strap around my head as a headband, so too, there are violent pains in my head and I am not getting well...Just as if a skilled butcher or his apprentice were to carve up an ox’s belly with a sharp butcher’s knife, so too, violent winds are carving up my belly. I am not getting well...Just as if two men were to seize a weaker man by both arms and roast him over a pit of hot coals, so too, there are violent burning in my body. I am not getting well, I am not comfortable. My painful feelings are increasing, not subsiding; their increase and not their subsiding is apparent.”

{15:51}

BV: By that, because Jivaka was there, he would’ve been taking care of Anāthapiṇḍika, but Anāthapiṇḍika’s coming to the end of his life. He makes him as comfortable as he can, but there’s still these certain distractions that are happening and pains that are happening in the body. So he has to learn how to develop his equanimity, he has to learn to develop his balance so that he’s not indulging in the pain so much. It’s just there.

MN:

5. “Then, householder, you should train thus: ‘I will not cling to the eye, and my consciousness will not depend on the eye.’ Then you should train. You should train thus: ‘I will not cling to the ear...I will not cling to the nose...I will not cling to the tongue...I will not cling to the body...I will not cling to the mind

BV: What is he saying?

ST: 6R ~~

BV: Don't get caught up in the concepts of your eye, your ear, your nose, and the rest.

[repeats] [I will not cling to mind],

MN:

and my consciousness will not depend on mind.' Thus you should train.

6. "Householder, you should train thus: "I will not cling to forms...I will not cling to sounds... I will not cling to odors...I will not cling to flavors...I will not cling to tangibles...I will not cling to mind-objects, and my consciousness will not be dependent on mind objects.' Thus you should train.

BV: So he's talking about the six internal sense and the six external.

ST: It sounds like a restatement of the Six Sets of Six.

BV: It does, doesn't it? Isn't that amazing!

MN:

7. "Householder, you should train thus: 'I will not cling to eye-consciousness...I will not cling to ear-consciousness...I will not cling to nose-consciousness...I will not cling to tongue-consciousness...I will not cling to body-consciousness...I will not cling to mind-consciousness, and my consciousness will not be dependent on mind-consciousness.' Thus you should train.

{18:50}

BV: Every time somebody begins to cling to something it's the start of the restlessness of thinking about and planning in the future how it's going to be or remembering in the past how it was, or complaining about the pain that happens because it is right now. The clinging is the big attachment. Now, it bothers me a little bit that they're saying clinging here instead of craving, because that's the cause of it. When you let go of the craving, clinging won't arise. But,

because Anāthapiṇḍika was not a practitioner of meditation he wouldn't be able to recognize it so much, so he had to see the bigger form of it.

ST: ~~~ aggregates ~~ aggregates. I was just trying to think about suttas that ~~

BV: There's lots of them. But, what they're basically saying is a more generalized form. When you get into your Dependent Origination you see these things more specifically.

ST: Yeah. Well, I was just going to say it occurs to me that clinging is easier to recognize the story ~ It's easier to describe that to a person rather than taking them directly to the ~ Because that goes first then craving ~~

BV: The translation of one person that does translations, he changes it from it "affected by clinging" to the "sense door clinging" and the "eye clinging". And that makes it a definite...it is going to cling. There is...it's not "may be affected by clinging". That translator is saying it IS affected by clinging every time, and that's not true. And that's why I say quite often when we get to those statements that say, "may be affected by clinging" I add "may or may not be affected by clinging depending on your mindfulness at the time".

ST: Is it depending on the ~~

BV: It depends on the clarity of your observation, where it goes...where your understanding goes with it. Okay?

{22:19}

MN:

8. "Householder, you should train thus: 'I will not cling to eye-contact...I will not cling to ear-contact...I will not cling to nose-contact...I will not cling to tongue-contact...I will not cling to body-contact...I will not cling to mind-contact, and my consciousness will not be dependent on mind-contact.' Thus you should train.



BV: It's getting more and more like Six Sets of Six all the time, isn't it?

ST: So, clinging here means, "think about" ~~ think about ~~

BV: Well, get into your concepts of it, your opinions of it, your ideas about it, your thoughts. But the biggest part of the clinging is the identification with it, with the concept "ear", "eye", "nose", or whatever it happens to be.

ST: So, he's essentially giving him a training in annata.

BV: Yes.

ST: ...in this whole practice.

BV: Yes.

MN:

9. "Householder, you should train thus: 'I will not cling to feeling born of eye-contact...I will not cling to feeling born of ear-contact...I will not cling to feeling born of nose-contact...I will not cling to feeling born of tongue-contact...I will not cling to feeling born of body-contact...I will not cling to feeling born of mind-contact, and my consciousness will not be dependent on feeling born of mind-contact.' Thus you should train.

10. "Householder, you should train thus: 'I will not cling to the earth element...I will not cling to the water element...I will not cling to the fire element...I will not cling to the air element...I will not cling to the space element...I will not cling to the consciousness element, and my consciousness will not be dependent on the consciousness element.' Thus you should train.

BV: Now, what are we talking about here? We have to go to sutta number 62, I think it is. This is page 528 in the Majjhima Nikāya and it's talking about the six great elements.

{25:05}

MN 62 [Mahārāhulovāda Sutta – The Greater Discourse of Advice to Rāhula]

8. "Rāhula, whatever internally, belonging to oneself, is solid, solidified, and clung-to, that is, head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinew, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, contents of the stomach, feces, or whatever else internally, belonging to oneself, is solid, solidified, and clung-to: this is called the internal earth element.

BV: So, what he's talking here about with all of the elements is don't cling to your body. Realize that the earth element is these things.

MN 62

9. "And what, Rāhula, is the water element? The water element may either be internal or external. What is the internal water element? Whatever internally, belonging to oneself, is water, watery, and clung-to, that is, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, fat, tears, grease, spittle, snot, oil-of-the-joints, urine, or whatever else internally, belonging to oneself, is water, watery, and clung to: this is called the internal water element.

BV: So, this is what your body is made of. When you have lust arise in your mind start thinking about what your body is made of. I mean, it's really disgusting! Bile, phlegm, pus, blood, snot. Yuck! Sweat, fat, grease, tears, spittle, oil of the joints, and urine. Really makes the old lust come up, doesn't it? [laughs]

ST: Stop turning me on!

BV: No! Well, just think of some of the smell of some of that stuff.

MN 62

10. "And what, Rāhula, is the fire element? The fire element may

either be internal or external. What is the fire element? Whatever internally, belonging to oneself, is fire, fiery, and clung-to, that is, that by which one is warmed, ages, and is consumed, that by which what is eaten, drunk and consumed, and tasted gets completely digested, or whatever else internally, belonging to oneself,

BV: That's heartburn...stuff like that.

MN 62:

11. "And what is the air element? [It can be the] internal or external. What is the internal? Whatever internally, belonging to oneself, is air, airy, and clung-to, that is, up-going winds,

BV: Belch.

MN 62:

down-going winds,

BV: Grumble, grumble in the stomach.

MN 62:

winds in the belly, winds in the bowel, winds that course through the limbs, in- and out-breath, or whatever else internally, belonging to oneself, is air, airy, and clung-to: this is the internal element.

12. "What, Rāhula, is the space element? The space element may be either internal or external.

What is the internal space element? Whatever internally, belonging to oneself, is space, spatial, and clung-to, that is, the holes of the ears, the nostrils, the door of the mouth, and that aperture whereby what is eaten, drunk and consumed, and tasted gets swallowed, where it collects, and whereby it is excreted from below, or where ever else internally, belonging to oneself, is space, spatial, and clung-to.

BV: It doesn't go into the consciousness element but it's the consciousness that arises at the six sense doors is basically what it's boiling down to. The wind element also has vibration, movement,

inside the body. And that's the thing that moves the blood around is the wind element moving the blood.

{30:20}

MN 62:

13. "Rāhula, develop a meditation that is like the earth; for when you develop meditation that is like the earth, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain. Just as people throw clean things and dirty things, excrement, urine, spittle, pus, and blood on the earth, and the earth is not repelled, humiliated, and disgusted because of that, so too Rāhula, develop meditation that is like the earth; for when you develop meditation that is like the earth, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain.

ST: Can you repeat that? When you develop what?

ST: Meditation like the earth.

ST: When you develop meditation like the earth.

BV: Meditation like the earth.

ST: I like the word "horrified" better than "repelled". It sounds...in the other edition it was "horrified". Because it sounds like the earth would have been taking it personally and the earth doesn't take anything personally. And that's the whole point of this ~.

BV: Well, whatever.

MN 62:

14. "Rāhula, develop a meditation that is like water; for when you develop meditation that is like water, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain.

BV: That's the whole point of the meditation, that agreeable and disagreeable things, when they invade, they won't invade your mind and remain when you don't have a "button" to push, when you allow the space for everything to be.

ST: The problem that was ~ for me was not concepts...

BV: Yes, it was.

ST: ...it was faith in you.

BV: But that's a concept, too. [laughs]

MN 62:

Just as people wash clean things and dirty things, excrement, spittle, urine, pus, and blood in water, and the water is not repelled, humiliated, and disgusted because of that, so too, Rāhula, develop meditation that is like water; for when you develop meditation that is like water, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain.

15. "Rāhula, develop meditation that is like fire; for when you develop meditation that is like fire, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain. Just as people burn clean things and dirty things, excrement, urine, spittle, pus, and blood in the fire, the fire is not repelled, humiliated, and disgusted because of that, so too Rāhula, develop meditation that is like fire; for when you develop meditation that is like fire, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain.

BV: That's the key, that last part is the key to everything. Contacts will not invade your mind and remain.

MN 62:

16. "Rāhula, develop meditation that is like air; for when you develop meditation that is like air, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain. Just as air blows on clean things and dirty things, on excrement, urine, spittle, pus, and blood,

and the air is not repelled, humiliated, and disgusted because of that, so too Rāhula, develop meditation that is like air; for when you develop meditation that is like air, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain.

17. "Rāhula, develop meditation that is like space;

BV: I particularly like this one.

MN 62:

for when you develop meditation that is like space, agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain. Just as space is not established anywhere, so too Rāhula, develop meditation that is like space; for when you develop meditation that is like space, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain.

{35:21}

BV: So, this is what we're talking about here, when they were talking about the elements, the six different elements, to not get involved in...don't be distracted, stay with your object of meditation. Don't get angry when you are distracted, don't criticize yourself when you're distracted. Just let it go and start over again.

MN 143:

11. "Householder, you should train thus: 'I will not cling to material form...I will not cling to feeling...I will not cling to perception...I will not cling to formations...I will not cling to consciousness, and my consciousness will not be dependent on consciousness.' Thus you should train.

12. "Householder, you should train thus: 'I will not cling to the base of infinite space...I will not cling to the base of consciousness...I will not cling to the base of nothingness...I will not cling to the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, and my consciousness will not be dependent on the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.' Thus you should train.

BV: When you get into the arūpa jhānas there are real subtle attachments there. And it's hard...especially after you become very proficient at getting into any one that you point your mind towards you start thinking, "I can do this anytime I want!" And you start losing that curiosity of what's going to happen next, and that's where the attachment becomes very noticeable. "Well, I'm used to getting in this way." And then, once you're in, "Well, it's always like this!", but to be honest it's never like that. It's always different. This is one of the problems that people run across when they do the breathing meditation. "Well, the breath is always the same." No, not even close! The breath is always different! They're subtle differences but it's always different. And you have to learn how to keep your attention going with something like that and have that beginner's mind all the time.

Suzuki Roshi was very brilliant by coming up with what a beginner's mind is. It's really quite good.

MN:

13. "Householder, you should train thus: 'I will not cling to this world, and my consciousness will not be dependent on this world. I will not cling to the world beyond, and my consciousness will not be dependent on the world beyond.' Thus you should train.

14. "Householder, you should train thus: 'I will not cling to what is seen, heard, sensed, cognized, encountered, sought after, and examined by mind, and my consciousness will not be dependent on that.' Thus you should train."

BV: So, what's he saying here? Being in the present moment, seeing what's happening next, without any kind of projections. Just clearly observing.

MN:

15. When this was said, the householder Anāthapiṇḍika wept and shed tears. Then the venerable Ānanda asked him: "Are you foundering, householder, are you sinking?"

"I am not foundering venerable Ānanda, I am not sinking. But although I have long waited on the Teacher and the monks worthy of esteem, never before have I heard such a talk on the Dhamma."

{40:07}

BV: It was given, but he didn't hear it because he was being distracted by other things. Even when he sat listening to a Dhamma talk he wasn't really listening because he was going over other things that needed to be taken care of and how he could help and all of that sort of thing.

MN:

"Such talk on the Dhamma, householder, is not given to most lay people

BV: I've put in the word "most".

MN:

clothed in white. Such a talk on the Dhamma is given to those who have gone forth."

BV: And there are a lot of times the Buddha was just talking to the monks because they were the only ones around. But that doesn't mean it was exclusively just to the monks. And this is one of the points of contention that a lot of people have with the Buddha and his teaching because they say, "Well, he was just talking to the monks! He wasn't talking to us!" Yes, he was. And this is where I wind up getting in some problems because I teach the way that the Buddha is talking about in the suttas to everybody. I teach it in the same way. I don't hold back for monks only. It's not an exclusive club.

So, what I'm teaching surprises an awful lot of monks, especially senior monks. "How do your students understand this? This way too deep for them to understand!" No, it's not! You just have to go along and teach as you go along and do it in a progressive way and you'll



understand it, especially when you put in Dependent Origination. Now, a lot of senior monks, they will not even consider talking to laymen about Dependent Origination. "Oh, it's just waaay too deep! You'll never understand it!" Do you understand it? [laughs] Getting there anyway! Yeah. It'll come, it'll come.

You're understanding part of it; feeling, craving, clinging, habitual tendency, birth, death. So you're understanding some of it, and those are the parts that you see; the easiest. You'll see the rest at some point.

MN:

"Well then, venerable Sāriputta, let such talk on the Dhamma be given to lay people clothed in white. There are clansmen with little dust in their eyes who are wasting away through not hearing such talk on the Dhamma. There will be those who will understand the Dhamma."

16. Then, after giving the householder Anāthapiṇḍika his advice, the venerable Sāriputta and the venerable Ānanda rose from their seats and departed. Soon after they had left, the householder Anāthapiṇḍika died and reappeared in the Tusita heaven.

BV: The Tusita heaven is the heavenly realm where Maitreya, the future Buddha, the Bodhisatta, is right now. And he's just waiting for the time for the conditions to be right to reappear. Now, the conditions are not right right now because we're still in the Buddha era. The Buddha era has to fade away a long time before he would even consider coming back. And there are certain kinds of conditions that he's waiting to have happen.

{44:32}

MN:

17. Then, when the night was well advanced, Anāthapiṇḍika, now a young god of beautiful appearance, went to the Blessed One, illuminating the whole of Jeta's Grove. After paying homage to the

Blessed One, he sat down at one time and addressed the Blessed One in stanzas:

“Oh blessed is this Jeta’s Grove,  
Dwelt in by the sagely Sangha,  
Wherein resides the King of Dhamma,  
The fount of all my happiness.

By action, knowledge and Dhamma,  
By virtue and noble way of life –  
By these are mortals purified,  
Not by lineage or wealth.

Therefore a wise person who sees  
What truly leads to his own good,  
Should investigate the Dhamma  
And purify himself with it.

Sāriputta has reached the peak  
In virtue, peace, and wisdom’s ways;  
Any monk who has gone forth  
At best can only equal him.”

18. That is what the young god Anāthapiṇḍika said, and the Teacher approved. When the young god Anāthapiṇḍika, thinking: “The Teacher has approved of me,” paid homage to the Blessed One, and keeping him on his right, he vanished at once.

19. When the night was ended, the Blessed One addressed the monks thus: “Monks, last night when the night was well advanced, there came to me a certain young god of beautiful appearance who illuminated the whole of Jeta’s Grove. After paying homage to me, he sat down at one side and addressed me in stanza:

“Oh blessed is this Jeta’s Grove...  
At best only

BV: It’s gonna go through the whole thing again.

[repeats] [At best only]

MN:

can only equaled by him.”

That is what the young god said. When the young god, thinking: ‘The Teacher has approved of me,’ paid homage to him, and keeping him on his right, he vanished at once.”

20. When this was said, the venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One: “Surely, venerable Sāriputta, that young god must have been Anāthapiṇḍika. For the householder Anāthapiṇḍika had perfect confidence in the venerable Sāriputta.”

“Good, good, Ānanda! As far as reasoning goes you have drawn the right conclusion. That young god was Anāthapiṇḍika, no one else.” That is what the Blessed One said. The venerable Ānanda was satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

{47:35}

ST: What’s the implication of that phrase, “as far as reasoning goes you have drawn the right conclusion”?

BV: Well, because he didn’t tell him so he reasoned it out and that’s as far as you can go with reasoning.

ST: This is a ~. Why do they always tell them...keep them on his right?

BV: There’s a kind of prejudice that happens against the left hand because of when you go to the bathroom, your left hand...you use your left hand to clean yourself. That’s considered a dirty hand. You never eat with your left hand. People that are left-handed, they have to learn how to eat with the right hand. I mean, they’re forced to. They can do other things left-handed, but they have to eat with their right hand. And I never could quite figure that out because if you’re left-handed then naturally you’d clean yourself with your right hand. You do it with your off-hand. [laughs] But we don’t have to worry

about that. We've got spray devices. [laughs] You don't have to touch anything. [laughs] It really does clean you off well. Eventually, we're going to have some toilet seats from Japan,[laughs] then you won't even have to touch your body all you'll have to do is touch a button.

ST: ~~

ST: ~~

ST: Or disappointment.

BV: Why? What's the big deal? But there is that prejudice that the right is supposed to be the pure side and the left is not. So, even though you might leave with him on your left side, you're on the right side.

{50:00}

ST: I see. Okay.

BV: And in Burma, they have the Shwedagon Pagoda and it's all marble floor going around. Everybody goes to the right but your left hand is...

ST: ...clockwise...

BV: ...counterclockwise actually...

ST: Counterclockwise.

BV: ...and your left hand always towards the Shwedagon Pagoda. And I couldn't figure that out, and if you turn and go the other way you get into trouble because everybody is coming at you. And you've got to worm your way around because they won't get out of the way. I couldn't understand that, I really couldn't.

ST: They walked counterclockwise around the Pagoda, but when they

did the dedication at the Temple of ~~ they walked clockwise around the temple.

BV: So?

ST: It's different when they did it?

BV: What's the difference between Florida and Burma?

ST: A lot! [laughs] I just...

BV: And one country is from Thailand and the other country is in Burma.

ST: So, there's another reason they would go in opposite directions...historically. Right? Okay.

ST: Is that the same reason that the Buddha images usually have the right foot on top of the left?

BV: Yeah. And the image of the Buddha touching the ground, that's the famous one, it's always with the right hand.

I guess a lot of the Burmese...I mean, you could never catch U Silananda with a smile on his face if you had a camera around. He always sobered up when a camera came around. And I guess the idea is that you're supposed to look like you're meditating. And it's hard to meditate with a smile on my...

[tape break??]

{52:06}

...practice that way and the Burmese definitely don't. You know what you were saying about the toughness of the Asians because people are so light and they have to be put into balance when they come to the meditation center. It's a lot worse in Burma, they have some people that are really, really drill sergeants...the teachers. And if they see you smiling they'll come and give you a little...scold you for

smiling.

ST: How will they scold you, "Don't smile!"?

BV: Yeah! "Stop that! Don't do that! That's not right!"

ST: So, we shouldn't go there after we've been here for a while.

BV: Well, you can. They don't do it to Westerners so much. They do it to the Asians.

ST: They don't tell them...they don't explain to them why. They tell them that but they don't explain to them why.

BV: Well, of course.

ST: This is what's interesting. So, if you interview the monk who is looking really stern in his meditation, he won't explain it to you. It comes out as, "Joy is a very bad thing! Don't get attached to it!" The assumption is you will always get attached to it.

BV: Well, and for them, they do! [laughs] What more can you say?

But right before I left, I went around to all my monk friends and I got a close up picture of them because when they take pictures it's always way far away. So, I was getting close up pictures and I was making them smile. [laughs] So, I probably have the only collection of smiling monks in Burma, ever. [laughs] And this picture here is a passport photo and it was so good I had it blown up. Some people wanted to have my picture so I gave them that picture. And I showed my passport to Uray Whatu, U Arocku the monk that came here. You weren't here when he came, I don't think. And he looked at it and he said, "Well, you're smiling!" And I said, "Yeah." "Well, you're not supposed to do that!" "Oh, okay."

{55:10}

ST: They have, Bhante, what's really sort of like a typical monk

pose...

BV: Yes.

ST: ...when you're having a picture-taking. It's really something to watch if you have like say a group of monks. Like, say there's a larger group is like, there could be laughing and joking the monks with each other and all of a sudden it's like, they get their robe a certain way and everybody has this official pose. It's really something fascinating to watch. [laughs] So, I remember like when we were in Albuquerque when you know I mean it's just a ~~

ST: ~

BV: This is U Sobhana (?). And he is very strong with loving-kindness. When you walk into the room he'll zap you with some loving-kindness every time.

ST: ~~

ST: Well, it's kind of...~~~ section...~~ 36...~~ And so because they don't teach that. They're not exposed to that ~~ So...

BV: Well...

ST: ~~

BV: Well, I don't know about that so much. A lot of them are exposed to it. And, generally, when monks get together, I mean, you don't get a chance to see what it's like to be around monks very often because they're in front of a lot of people and they're going to have their serious face on. But when we get behind scenes, we're giggling and laughing about everything.

ST: You'd be amazed the sense of humor that monks have if you get to hang around them for a while. I mean some of these guys that have...

BV: You get to see my sense of humor. [laughs]

ST: ...have these facades that I...

BV: Oh, yeah.

ST: It's this incredible abruptness and seriousness and if you were a stranger walking into a temple you might be wondering, "How the heck would anybody come back!" basically, after seeing these guys who will virtually say nothing to you and this sort of thing. And once you get to know them and find out that they just have the humblest ~ senses of humor and stuff. It's just an amazing thing.

ST: Yeah. They're very much like...they're very much like..

BV: Like little kids.

ST: ...little kids, is the thing. When I took the six or seven of them to the Air and Space Museum to see the films about the Universe. Oh my goodness, they had so much fun! It was like, you know, it was like little ~~

BV: You get monks together and you go to someplace and they all go, "Whoosh!" and disappear. [laughs]

ST: When you took them to the store it was like, "Oh my gosh. There's a teacher taking a kindergarten class, you know. Oh my gosh! They've just gone in the store! I hope we can find them all! I got this same feeling, you know. And then they all come back...to the clock...to meet you. [laughs] ~

BV: Anyway. [laughs]

The whole point of this meditation is to don't cling to anything; to any ideas, to any concepts, any opinions...don't cling to anything. And as you start going in deeper it gets easier not to. Unless the teacher throws a curve ball at you. [laughs] But there are times when a curve ball is needed just to show where there is some things that can still "boink".



{1:00:05}

Somebody like the Sayadaw U Pandita...now, when I throw a curve ball it's a soft one, okay? And you can either hit it or not. When he throws a curve ball, it's like [SMACK] "Did that hurt?!" [SMACK] "Tell me!" [SMACK] And, man, he just bowls you over with this stuff! And, he'd push one button and it might stay pushed for a long time, because of his style of pushing. I was used to U. Silananda, he was more like a ballet dancer and he would come along and he would just tap you, "How this one? Oh, you've still got some there, take care of it. How about there?"

ST: Someone said what's the point of ~~ and why should a person, why should a samaneri stay in ~~~~ Why should they stay with a teacher. And I tried to think about it for a while ~~ and what it is is he makes a commitment, you make a commitment in ordaining. He makes a commitment to you to monitor your shadow. He has to teach you how to let go of your shadows. He's the person who has permission to correct you anywhere, anytime ~~ in any situation and it has to be just fine when the admonishment occurs. But the reason for it has to be always understood that the reason for it is so that...

BV: It's not an ego trip on ~ part.

ST: It has nothing to do with that. He's pointing, out every time in admonishment, something you can't see. You can't see your shadow. That's what that's about.

BV: And, that's what a teacher and guide basically does, too. Just to show you, "Well, there's something there. You're holding on a little bit tight here. Gotta let that one go." See how your reaction is and your attachment to it so you can relax into it and then the next time something like that comes up it doesn't knock you off balance. And that's the whole point.

ST: And it seems like the suttas are almost always about what is this, actually what is this power, what is the true nature of whatever this

is and what it is not...~~

BV: How does it work, how is it verbalized? That is the key to all of observation in meditation. How does this happen? I was on my object of meditation, all of a sudden I'm out here in left field. How'd that happen? Not WHY, not getting involved in the storyline, but HOW did it happen. When you look at how continually, you lose your attachment to the concept. You lose your attachment to this being "you". And, as a result you become more free, you become more alert, you become more awake. And that's what this process is all about; seeing the process in everything. How did it happen? How does sloth and torpor arise? How does anger arise? How does doubt arise? How does everything arise?

{1:04:20}

ST: And then how do you get caught? ~~

BV: Well, we don't care about how you get caught, we care about your seeing how it arises so that you can catch it more quickly so you can let it go. And this, in turn, is teaching you how Dependent Origination works. You're going backwards in your observation of how things arise. When you finally see, "Well, I get caught and I'm thrown away for a long period of time and then I finally let it go and I come back and my mind goes back to it and I see something right before it." You're seeing the Dependent Origination backwards. How it arises. That is the cessation of suffering. That's the third noble truth that it's teaching you right there.

ST: When you just went through that little talk, you used all the hindrances, how this arises, how that arises, and so ~~ in my mind with that same conservation ~~ question how ~~ concept arise.

BV: Well, the concept almost...well, not almost...always arises because of craving, then clinging. That little "I am that" into the story, into the ideas about why "that" is like it is. So when you catch the craving and you relax the rest of it doesn't happen anymore. The craving is not particularly strong, you can let go of it pretty easily,

but it keeps coming back, and keeps coming back, and keeps coming back, and keeps coming back. You might have to do the 6Rs a million times or more.

ST: The hindrances seem easier to recognize than the concepts.

BV: Well, but the hindrances are concepts.

ST: Yeah, yeah. Okay.

ST: So, I was going through my little obsessive dance. First there was the concepts, and then I guess I could 6R them a little bit ~~ now I can recognize a little bit sooner that it was fear.

BV: Yeah.

ST: ~ fear of ~~

BV: Yeah

ST: ~~ obsess on the ideas ~~ fear

BV: Yeah

ST: ~~ earlier than that...

BV: You'll see it. You'll see it. Before the fear there is the feeling.

ST: ~~

BV: Yeah. It's amazing how deeply ingrained some attachments actually are. And fear is one of them. The fear of losing control is huge because how many lifetimes do we think "This is me. This is mine. I control it". And then when you start getting into places where you see there ain't nobody home, there is no controller, your mind freaks out. Starts going, "My God, I might as well die!"

ST: ~~

BV: You can. That's one way that it happens. It happens in a lot of different ways, but it is fear and that's one of the insights in the Mahasi system is fear and going beyond the fear. And when you look at...I wish we had the Anguttara Nikāya, there's so much in that that explains so much about where the insights came from. But the fear is mentioned fairly often in some books of the Anguttara Nikāya and it always boils down to your mind being afraid to see what's going to happen next if it doesn't have control. Of course, that's all illusion, you don't have control of anything. I mean, the house can fall down on us. NOT REALLY! [laughs]

ST: You didn't say that.

ST: Figure of speech.

BV: Yeah, the light flickers and the...

We don't know what's going to happen next but our mind likes that illusion that we're always in control and we know what's going to happen.

{1:10:17}

ST: ~~ some of us, part of the fear is that I'm looking for something to save me,

BV: Yes.

ST: ...and that "something" out there may not exist.

BV: Yes.

ST: I was channeling once and talking with teachers and I kept asking them, "who am I." ~~~ No really. What's ~ what's ~ what's ~. And suddenly it's like the whole universe blew open into this vastness. I said never mind I'll look it up later. ~ [laughs]

ST: Never mind! [laughs]

ST: ~~

ST: Yeah, I don't want to know.

ST: I mean, I had this ~~ moment. Deeply embedded ~~~. I'd rather do some work ~~~ right now.

BV: It's scary. It really is. And what happens it's like there's a line that we draw and we say, "If I go over that line I don't know what's going to happen." until you get closer and closer to the line and you start getting, "I don't know whether I really want to do this or not."

ST: ~~

BV: But as you become more familiar with that uncertainty then eventually you put a toe over the line and you see, "Ah, nothing bad happened with that so there's not much to be afraid of." So then you start walking over that line and on the other side of that line is amazing clarity. But we have to go through it to see it. That's the one.

ST: Yeah, so conditioning is so deep that it's hard to actually see that process.

BV: Yes, yes.

ST: Because you get close to it...~

BV: Yeah. And your mind will come up with all kinds of different ways to distract you rather than to see it. Interesting stuff.

ST: ~~

BV: She came up to my little kuti and all she did was go...[snapping fingers]...and I'm thinking, "I wonder what that means?"

ST: And then the tears started running down my face and I just went. [snapping fingers]

BV: That's all there is...that's all there is is the present moment.

ST: ~and it's like. [snapping fingers]

BV: Everything is going to change. Everything is changing whether you like it or not. Find me something that doesn't change. I mean, you go all the way down to atoms. Atoms are turning, molecules are turning, atoms are turning, the electrons and the protons and the quarks and the whatever is beyond that, they're all moving.

ST: It's like, it was like...

BV: You can't sit still.

ST: Intellectually, I really knew this intellectually.

ST: Stop that so we can get a grip...

ST: It's like we can see the ~~~ we can talk ~~ intellectually I totally and completely knew this, sure. And then something happened, something I can't explain. And it was just like, I was dumbfounded by it. Just...[snapping fingers]..you know? [laughs] And I went from crying to giggling and crying to giggling for almost half the day and then I ~ sit for like long, really long, like two or four hours long. [laughs]

BV: Is a two hour sit long? I do one of those every morning.

ST: I know. But I... ~

BV: It's not long. [laughs]

{1:15:00}

ST: I'm still dumbfounded at the simplicity of when a bird chirps and

then I'm thinking about birds and then a parakeet that I had when I was a kid and there goes my head. That still kind of...like that little mundane level blows me away.

BV: Well, you've still got monkey brain. That's okay. It's like you take a monkey and you tie a string around him and you put it on a post and tie the string on the post. And the monkey can go so far and then it can't go any further. And every day you come and you put one more turn of the string around the post so the monkey can't go quite as far out, can't go quite as far out. And eventually the monkey will just sit on top of the post without even trying to go out. That's what the practice of mindfulness is like.

ST: I'm trying not...according to, you know, to your instructions...I've just been trying not to care if it runs away. I'm smiling at it.

BV: It's okay. Sure.

ST: If it's running, it's running. Hey, it's running away...

BV: That's okay. That's alright. Yeah.

ST: Hey, run away. Coming back. Here I am again.

BV: Yep. That's it.

BV: It would be very easy to get upset and discouraged but then you  
~~~

BV: Well, that's your old habit and you're starting to develop new ones. One of the important things that I like to encourage during a Dhamma talk is what we're doing right now; just discussing. A lot is learned from discussing, because then different instances of things that are happening while you're doing your meditation that you didn't really know about and somebody else can pop up and say, "Well, how about this?" And then it goes [popping sound] "Ah! Okay!"

Sayadaw U Janaka, he said he didn't want us to talk a lot, but if we

were talking Dhamma there was no problem. He's the only meditation teacher that I'd ever run across up to that point that didn't say you have to practice Noble Silence. And we were teaching each other, the monks that were practicing together, because we were going along at about the same speed and I have an insight and say, "Well, I saw this this way" and that would help them, and they would say something that would very much help me. And then when we went into the interview it was a lot of clarity. So, talking about Dhamma is an important aspect of the teaching. That's why I don't insist on, "I don't want you to talk at all," I prefer that you don't talk about gambling and other things, because that's just distraction and nonsense. That's nothing to do with Dhamma. If you're discussing what you're seeing in your practice with somebody else, that's a good thing. Okay?

So, don't be afraid of, if you ran across something you didn't understand, don't be afraid of, next time you see another of your fellow meditators saying, "You know, I saw this and I don't understand it." They might have the answer for you and it might be a better answer than I could give to you.

Yeah?

ST: So, this is one of the spots that got sort of split or got shifted because the monks' rules were not to discuss the monk's practice with the lay person. And when it came to the West it got brought back and it's like, "You will not discuss your practice with Doug!" and so this was like a slippage. It was like a misinterpretation and nobody's ever bothered to really...no monk has ever been at an American center and corrected this and brought it back into a framework. Because the insinuation that then goes out is, you know, the monks never discuss their practice with each other and Michael and I can tell you, that's not true. The monks will sit in a room and they'll talk just like we're talking with each other at a monastery and discuss their practice with each other a great deal, and if you have samaneri they will discuss it with you. Okay?

So this was something that like really was like what I call "slippage"



when it came to the West and it's really off. When we were at that retreat in New Mexico ~~~ discussing ~~ at all.

BV: The whole idea of a kalyāṇimitta, a spiritual friend, is somebody that you can discuss things with, and when you're in a setting like this you get to be friends with everybody so you can discuss it among yourselves. And if you still don't know you can come and talk to me. And ~~  
{1:20:32}

ST: And the kind of guideline thing was...even I guess amongst like a group of meditators is if you are discussing it yourself that you're cautious and you discuss it with a beginner what's going right for you ~~ some kind of judgment because you don't want the beginner to jump and if you were teaching ~~ and you don't want the beginner to, "Well, if she can do it I can do it" and then it becomes this "then I've got to do what she because she did this." You don't want that to happen. That was the reason for the rule that the monks that they didn't become some big shot teacher who was talking about their accomplishments and everything to the people, you see. And then the people are flocking to that particular teacher...

BV: Ajahn Chah, he used to talk about his own enlightenment quite a bit [laughs], and it really turned me off to have heard these things. I just...I didn't want to go to him. And I didn't because of that.

ST: When he got older, though, or when he was younger, too?

ST: So, how do you deal with when conversation goes from dharma to close-to-dharma to not-dharma? [laughs]

BV: Oh, you can say, "I prefer not to talk about this."

ST: Or the...while you straighten your robe. Bhante is ~~ what do I do if I go to a place and the women are way, way off line ~ you know, off topic and he'll be saying straighten your robes and you leave the room ~~

ST: I have a question about the 6Rs, the relax step.

BV: Yeah.

ST: How long could that take to...

BV: [Snapping fingers]

ST: Very quickly.

BV: See, that was the answer! [laughs] It is very quickly. What you want to do is get the 6Rs into a flow. You don't have to focus on the one aspect and make it happen, just relax...if the relax doesn't happen, that doesn't mean it isn't happening, but you don't recognize it. Then your mind will go back to that distraction and you get to do it again until you do relax.

ST: Because that's what I'll...still happen to me sometimes. It gets so automatic, you know, it'll go from, you know, to recognize and to let it be just right through to this incredible brightness and then I can see there's actually some residual tension from that left behind...

BV: Yeah. That's the nature of attachments. They aren't going to go away right away. That's why you can have the same thoughts come back over and over and over again. And every time you do the 6Rs and then you say, "Well, you know this isn't working!" Well, yeah, it is working, it's just not working at the speed you want it to work at.

{1:23:50}

ST: So, what I'll do sometimes, this is sort of like practice I guess you ~ is my impression is, you know, get a kind of zip right through. And I'll notice and it's...and the tension at that point might not be connected to anything but I'll feel a knot in the forehead or something like that and I'll just kind of bring my awareness back to that and see if I can relax, and then go back ~ ~ 6R ~ ~ start all over again.

BV: But you're directing your attention to it...

ST: Yeah.

BV: ...and you don't need to do that because "I" am there when I'm making my mind...my awareness go to a particular place. "I" am in control. "I'm" making that happen. And what you have to do is just 6R it. If your attention goes to that, 6R it again. If it goes to that, 6R it again. Don't just release and relax, release and relax, release and relax, without coming back to your smile and coming back to your object of meditation.

ST: ~~ be there. I'll be smiling, I'll be beaming and I'll feel very bright. And then about a...I can feel...~~

BV: Well, if it pulls your attention to it...

ST: ...some tightness. It hasn't drawn my...it hasn't pulled my attention totally away from it...

BV: It will if it's going to stay around for a period of time, okay?

ST: So I just stay there and...

BV: Just stay there...

ST: ...and let it do its thing.

BV: Yeah, and it'll fade away by itself sometimes. Sometimes it won't. It'll get strong enough that...that it will pull your attention to it.

ST: Yeah, ~~ fade away by itself, it's like ~~ [laughs]

{1:26:00}

ST: It's part of the whole, "I'm not in control" thing.

ST: Yeah, yeah.

ST: It's that things happen and you don't have to do it. All you have to do is come back to ~

BV: Yeah, that sounds like what Gomer...no, not Gomer Pyle. What was that guy?...

ST: Tom Hanks...

ST: Forrest Gump!

BV: Forrest Gump, yeah. "Stuff Happens!" [laughs] Yup! It does! That was a brilliant movie, it really was.

ST: Forrest is right there in the present moment.

BV: Yeah. He really...

ST: "I gotta go to the bathroom!" to the President. That's what was going on!

BV: Yeah

ST: So, in keeping what Sister Khema was talking about as far as, you know, ~~, do I have any boxes as far as time. I mean, how much flexibility do I have?

BV: A lot.

ST: What do I have to show up for?

BV: You've still gotta be here for the first sitting, after that it's up to you.

ST: Okay, I can eat at a different...I don't have to come at eleven if I want to eat leftovers?

BV: Well, the precept says that you...

ST: ...after the noon day meal...

BV: ...after the noon day meal which can be, for you, it can be two o'clock in the afternoon. If you're sitting and you don't want to break it, that's okay.

ST: I know, yeah, I wasn't trying to extend the eating...

BV: Well, I understand but sometimes you can be sitting at 10:30 and it's a great sitting...absolutely wonderful and your mind is very calm and composed. Don't feel like you have to break the sitting to come and eat. If you come at one o'clock, or if you come at 1:30, or whatever because that sitting just extended, that's okay.

ST: Okay. That's definitely one of the concepts that I have to meet  
~~

BV: Well, the only one I really want you to be here for is the morning.

ST: I know.

ST: How about six o'clock?

ST: 5:30. [laughs]

ST: No, that's the ~~

BV: Well, the Dhamma talk, it's a good idea to come for the Dhamma talks, too. [laughs]

ST: ~~

BV: Now, you're at a place in your meditation where you don't have to do the work period if you don't want to. You don't have to come for the meal when the rest of us are eating. Okay? I want you just to practice.

ST: Okay. Thank you.

BV: Uh huh. That's for her, nobody else. You're getting close but not quite there yet. See how much freedom you have?

ST: [various] Yeah!

BV: [laughs] And that's not something that happens with every meditation teacher, I want to tell you that for sure!

{1:30:00}

ST: A lot of things happen here I'm noticing that ~~~ meditation centers ~

BV: And it's ...most of this stuff is for reasons. And I don't always tell you what the reasons are, that's why I'm a sneaky monk.

ST: That seems like that's part of the training to not tell us the reason.

BV: Yeah.

ST: It's interesting that you made a number of things...you said a number of things out loud this year that you didn't say last year.

BV: Yeah.

ST: It's...whatever... just, it's interesting.

BV: It depends on the people that I'm around at the time, what comes up. That's why I have a lot of the same Dhamma talks. Sutta 111, there must be five or six different versions of that on the website, but every one of them is different because it's a different audience and there's different needs that come up. And because of the interviews and my seeing what you're doing with your practice I'll touch on different things. So, it's a different talk even though it's the

same sutta, and you're hearing a lot of the same words because I'm reading the sutta. But there's different stuff that comes up and that's why we keep them all.

ST: I have another question.

BV: Okay

ST: During the Dhamma talk, do we put our attention on the Dhamma talk or continuing to...

BV: On the Dhamma talk, definitely. There are some times for some students that while I'm giving a Dhamma talk it can change their perspective, and not just a little bit but a lot. And that's one of the things it says in the sutta about "giving ear". Okay, you give ear to a Dhamma talk and it can clear up something that you've been holding on to in one way or another that you didn't realize. That happened to me one time when Sayadaw U Janaka gave a talk on nibbana. And right after that talk I had a major shift in consciousness. I'd never had a Dhamma talk affect me so deeply. Because he was confirming the things I was thinking was right but I wasn't sure. And when it all came together my mind just went, "Yeah! That's right!". So, you "give ear" to the Dhamma talks.

And, I'm not saying that as some kind of an egotistical thing like I'm so great at giving Dhamma talks, because I'm not. But there's enough of the sutta that's being brought in that it can really make things clear for you.

{1:33:45}

ST: I wanted to support what you just said by giving an example that happened for me also. During one Dhamma talk there was one word that changed my life and I could see different before and after. And, what it was was the teacher was reading the sutta and he said, I think the word "she" instead of "he", and it was unbelievable. Things are different before and after just beginning with that day. So, you never know what it's going to be.

BV: She's just telling you she's a sexist. [laughs]

ST: No, no. It was the, you know, it was just he, well, I could explain it...

BV: Yeah, that's...great. And that's a good thing for me to keep in mind occasionally to do that.

ST: It is a concept I had but it relaxed it and it allowed me to...

BV: It allowed you to hear the Dhamma and not feel apart of it...

Anyway let's share some merit so we can go back and get to work.

May suffering ones, be suffering free  
And the fear struck, fearless be  
May the grieving shed all grief  
And may all beings find relief.

May all beings share this merit that we have thus acquired  
For the acquisition of all kinds of happiness.

May beings inhabiting space and earth  
Devas and nagas of mighty power  
Share this merit of ours.

May they long protect the Buddha's dispensation.  
Sadhu . . . Sadhu . . . Sadhu . . .

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