

Truth Week 3: More on Experiential Truth and Non-Clinging as the path of opening to it

From David

How central to mindfulness practice is this parami of Truth, Truth Discerning Awareness. I know that is why I first sat down on a cushion, because of the promise of truth, and my ardency to see truth. We sit in the middle of our life experience and, with the help of generosity, warmhearted virtue, and the wisdom to renounce the many delusions and stories of self that inhabit our minds, we open to the truth of what is here, the constantly changing star stuff of our inner experiences.

Truth comforts us in our meditation, and it enlightens us. We open into a wider awareness than our small conflicted self references, and we breathe easily into this. It is as if we can say, Ahhh. Relief in truth of presence. Sensations, movement, feelings, light, maybe white noise sounds inside our heads and outside sounds. We sense a movement of intentions and make some inner gesture toward opening and letting go of contracting. We may sense warm energy rising or falling up and down our body, opening various parts of the body, sensing the awareness accompanying this all, purifying our mind before we can call it breath, sensation, energy, feeling.

We sense what is there before concepts, before I, me, and mine in any way, shape, or form. Thoughts come and go, sometimes light and seemingly random, sometimes heavy and compulsive, accompanied by emotion. This is the closest we get to truth, our truth within us, our body, feelings, perceptions, thoughts and consciousness. Maybe this is all there is, the truth of this very moment of living experience constantly changing with no abiding self. What a relief. What happiness.

These miracles of moment by moment bits and pieces (called dharmas, truths, in the Abhidhamma) inhabiting the miracle of awareness. Your awareness. That is all. Including all the mumbling of concepts, of me and mine. Including the urgency of mental formations. All in awareness and purified (simplified) by our awareness, in sitting, standing, walking and lying down. What could be greater activity, than seeing this? We can base our life on this. It is not so important how far we go on the path, just to be on the path is enough, abiding in the movement of non clinging, putting our burdens down, disentangling, and go as far as we can go in this brief fleeting life.

Gil has used a simile of a huge cavernous dark dank warehouse, with a glorious colorful carousel of horses in the middle. There are horses with gold flowing manes, smiling with perfect teeth; fierce warhorses in armor with spiked helmets; traumatized horses with wide eyed expressions of panic; sleepy horses. The people get on the horses that they like. There may be some horses that more than one person wants, so they need lawyers to sort this out. And the carousel begins and goes round and round and round, for days, weeks, years, for decades. Sometimes people get off their horse and get on another, and ride that one for a while. Unseen on the walls of the warehouse are doors. Occasionally these doors open and light comes in. The people may or may not notice, though the ones that do may get off their horse for a while and venture over to the door and look out. They see outside the door a clear blue sky that stretches forever warmly lit by a warm sun, glistening blue lakes, trees and flowers and streams and people warmly talking and laughing, beautiful birds cruising the skies. The people look at this in wonder, for a while, and then they go back and get on their horse, and ride and ride and ride, for years. Sometimes, some people stay on the other side of the door for a

long time, and sometimes they stay there and let the door close behind them. They prefer to see.

We see numberless delusions, and we see enlightenment. Through the practice of the four foundations of mindfulness we see all the variety of our human experiences. To see more clearly, we become the eightfold path, opening our heart with the goodness of right intention and virtue, and moving in the direction of wisdom, letting go of dukkha, our heavy burden of clinging, and sensing what is here over and over again. This is the practice of truth discerning awareness, the practice of enlightenment. As our minds calm and become more still, deeper truths emerge. Maybe some happiness arises, some peace in this openness, truths that nourish us.

The self is the wind drag to clear seeing. Praise, fame, success and gain thwart the freedom of our kindness. We all have our own way to navigate through the rough waters of kamma, guided by good teachings and good friends on paths to ease our way. The goal is always Here.

In the following very inspiring talk by Gil, he describes how we are supported by truth.

https://www.audiodharma.org/talks/audio_player/6254.html

There are lots of beautiful quotes from the Buddha. I will share some of them, and a few notes:

"One's liberation based on truth is unshakeable." The agitated mind has a deceptive nature, is false. Our thoughts about who we are are false. Leave passing thoughts alone, let them leave you alone. We cannot cling when the mind is quiet. We can notice we feel better and better when we are not being involved with passing thoughts. We are just better off!

"What is false is that which has a deceptive nature." That which is true is that which has an undeceptive nature." Nibbana has an undeceptive nature.

"The supreme state of sublime peace has been discovered by the Buddha, that is liberation through not clinging." We can cling. It is optional. If we want to set the heart free, it helps not to cling. We are left with this vast wonderful world with a heart. Clinging is the key to all of dharma.

"A person who has heard that nothing is worth cling to, that person directly knows everything." Some aspect of the mind can be not agitated. That is nibbana, the wonderful feeling of release, of absence of agitation. Things don't have to stick. By the time we reach for them they are gone anyhow. Birds leave no trail through the sky. It takes a while to deeply trust, like opening one finger of fist at a time.

Here is another talk by Gil, about truth setting us free.

https://www.audiodharma.org/talks/audio_player/7907.html

Pay attention to suffering, stress, sorrow, lamentation and everything you need to know about peace, freedom and compassion will show itself to you. Just to be alive is enough. Simple. We don't need to prove ourselves to anybody, or to ourselves, just be here as I am with no need to prove, no apologies. Every moment is fresh, without past conditioning carrying us along. Something about seeing is freeing. Don't get stuck in idea of permanence. See the suffering directly, simply, and then see the release from it.

Here is a wonderful talk by our dear wise Ajahn Sucitto:

https://www.audiodharma.org/talks/audio_player/9090.html

And Ajahn Passano, a short video on Truth Discerning Awareness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NydV7fZr99E>

Enjoy your experience of Truth,
David

Reflection/Exercise:

Please try to do the following. Sit in meditation with a laptop in your lap, and come out of the meditation intermittently and record what you are experiencing. Maybe do this for 15 minutes, or so, and then read it later to see what truth you are seeing about your own experience. Be as precise as you can about your physical experience, where it is and how it is felt, rather than generalizing about a story. It could include passing thoughts, the words or pictures, noticing the tone of voice. It could include some experience you sense about awareness itself.