At the beginning of each year, I'd like to give a talk on the Four Noble Truths. So I'd like that to be the
topic of today. Some years ago, there was a scholar who tried to argue that the Four Noble, repenting
kind of put back into the early texts of Buddhism and did kind of careful textual study the words and
the passages. Were the Four Noble Truths occurs in the early discourses of the Buddha, and came to
the conclusion that their point of a truce arose in Buddhism after the time of the Buddha, the Buddha
didn't teach them. The person who told me about this was Thanissaro Bikkhu, Taan Geoff, he was
teachers here sometimes for us. And he he'd read the book, and he thought the argument was based
on very bad assumptions. But he said it doesn't really matter. Whoever came up with the Four Noble
Truths, that's my Buddha. So the Four Noble Truths are seen as the very central to the Buddhist
tradition. Some people have said that all of Buddhism coming somehow or other be fit inside the Four
Noble Truths. The four noble truths are often seen as the essential teachings of Buddhism. But in
calling them teachings, it might be a little bit misleading, and also to call them truths. Because
especially a Western audience will often hear that or read that as being tenants or beliefs. These are
the four cardinal beliefs that Buddhists are supposed to believe and I don't think I don't think they're
being offered as beliefs, as they are being offered as something very practical as experiences and
explorations of ways of understanding our life. And something that can be verified very directly, maybe
even immediately in our own experience, as opposed to something we have to believe some tenants
or some assumption as apart from your experience. The Four Noble Truths used to state them before I
go into them are the truth of dukkha. And tentatively we'll call Dukkha suffering, but it's a kind of
inadequate inadequate translation, the truth of suffering. The second is the truth of the arising of that
Dukkha of suffering. The third is the truth of the cessation of that suffering. And the fourth is the path
to accomplish that cessation to bring it to an end. It said that, when a person really understands the Four
Noble Truths, well, they understand all four all together. So some of us can understand suffering really
well. But you don't really understand the noble truth of suffering unless you can some way or other,
understand all four together, they make a system they work at making ecology of the mind or the
heart. They were there. They're integral to each other the Four Noble Truths and so What is the kind of
vision or understanding that helps us to see all four at the same time, and I think is very important to keep in mind. One, perhaps simple analogy would be if you made a really hard fist with your hand really hard, so it hurt. And then, after a while, you're aware that it really hurts. But probably if you did that, you realize the same time of seeing that it hurts to hold tight fist, you realize that it's possible to end that tightening, the hurt, pain is coming from where you're holding yourself. It's possible to end that pain by releasing it. And, you know, you kind of obvious you can do that, you know, just the truth of suffering there, the pain there, and the truth of the possibility to release our scene together at the same time, and then you have to decide whether you're going to release it or not. Because it said the Four Noble Truths are to be seen all together can be seen all together. Maybe it doesn't really matter. Where we begin, we start talking about usually it just talks about the Four Noble Truths. He will begin by talking about the first one, about suffering. And there's some logic to that. But I would like to start today with a third one with the idea that maybe it's arbitrary where you begin. The third one is called nirodha. In Pali, it's translated as cessation or the ending, seizing of something. And all of the whole world of realization of enlightenment of liberation, of freedom from suffering, of relief of release as possible, is kind of subsumed under this third noble truth of what's called cessation. It doesn't say only imply the ending of something. That's literally what it says the ending of suffering. It also implies a whole realm of end Doing it to whole realm, maybe dimension of the heart of the mind. Which Buddhists would like to sometimes called sacred or spiritual or, or has to do with human perfection or purity or, or beauty, well being, dimension of the psyche that is quite wonderful and phenomenal. And most people, I think, have had some experience in their life. Maybe as a child, maybe as a young adult, maybe as an older person doesn't matter. So much experience in their life that have of unusual well being. some sense of well being is unusual from the point of view of what people what you normally experience in day to day experience. Remember, when I first started meditating, I remembered it was kinda like, the meditations that calm the subtleness of meditation, kind of brought back memories. are long forgotten, and happens to many people. And sometimes there aren't pleasant memories, and sometimes they're pleasant ones. And I had both. remember some of the pleasant ones that I had, and one of them was, I remembered when I was about 10 or 11 years old. I was living in Italy. And I took the public bus to school every day, to my Italian school. And, and on the way home to school by the bus home. But I had a system where they had a driver and they had, I think, what they call the conductor, the person who sold your tickets, and he'd sell your tickets and get different tickets for different categories, round trip, children one way and another. There's always a packet of different kinds of tickets. And I live near the end of the bus line. Two or three maybe stops before the end. And so as we got to the end, the conductor would sit down in one of the little single seats and they're the front of the bus He would tally up the tickets he had. They did once he sold his numbers on them, I guess. And then he had this tally sheet. And he'd write down what he'd sold different kind of tickets. So he kept record each time I started making a habit of always trying to sit on the single seat kind of behind where he would sit to do the tallying, because when I watched him do a stallion I kind of was pulled, I didn't have no idea what's going on. But I was pulled into a world of phenomenal well being kind of very global kind of warmth. And nowadays, I understand it was becoming concentrated. Somehow he was concentrated, I guess or another was borrowing his concentration or just he was focused on something and somehow I kind of was like a wave that I got
to ride. And it's like kind of being ridden being pulled on this wave into some kind of state of concentrated well being. And, and when I started meditating, some I don't know some 1011 years after that When that 14, I guess was taught how to use memory, then that memory became a reference point for me, for what was possible in meditation was possible. A reference point for a certain kind of level of well being. Having that reference point, gave me a better understanding of what I could do in meditation and what I could do with my mind, my heart, what's possible how to live a human life. So that was a reference point. To the degree to which we've had some well being some experience of peace or calm or inner beauty, or feeling of inner harmony or, you know, a lot of different words. That's a little bit unusual, but different than a normal way in which we live. That sense of well being can be a reference for what is possible. And having that as reference is what's possible, then the question is, how can I make this more part of my life? How can I use this for my life so that I can move in that kind of direction with my life? Is it reasonable, something we feel is something that we want to do? Is it. So I know, I know, sometimes I've had experiences of well being in my life. When I was earlier in my life that I didn't really like when I was, you know, I didn't really take seriously, but that was nice for what it was. But I didn't really I didn't really see it as a possibility for what I could live in, or be like most of the time or kind of touch into more often. I felt that somehow it was an accident, or it was, you know, just just a fluke, you know, who knows what it was, or maybe it came from certain experiences, certain situations that I didn't want to repeat. I didn't want to go back into those kinds of experiences again. Like the time I felt this tremendous clarity openness and warmth for having an experience they put me if I gone, you know, a foot further sliding down the hill would have gone over that cliff. And, you know, a cliff was really, you know, and it was really foggy. So I didn't know that there was even a clip there until I stood up. So when I realized that, you know, I don't want to repeat that experience as a way of feeling some kind of special lightness is really present and here I am. Some people have car accidents, or near car accidents and just kind of wakes them up really quickly get really clear. So we don't have to kind of look for the car accidents again, but that clarity that can happen tremendous clarity or sense of presence, it can happen different kinds of circumstances, can become a reference point for what is possible to do with the human mind. One of the teachings of Buddhism is the human heart or the mind is quite amazing. It's kind of like software, and the software can be changed, you can change the operating system. And the mind is not hardware. So because of software, it's quite malleable, mine was hardware. Maybe you couldn't change it much. But the mind is software. So, the first the third noble truth, the truth of the cessation of suffering. The Buddha said is something to be penetrated. It's not something to be believed in. Again, it's not a belief system, but it's something to be realized or penetrated or touched. And so the question is not you know what the Buddha said in some ultimate way. But the Four Noble Truths have immediate practical benefits moment by moment in our life. So to penetrate or to realize, the cessation of suffering can mean even a simple way to realize that I don't have to be uncomfortable I don't have to get caught up in being embarrassed situation to come into and you're embarrassed. I came here and sat down and realized my zipper was down when I sat down in front of all of you, that's a very embarrassing bit more embarrassing to tell you. But, you know, I didn't suffer too much because of it. You know, if I suffered a lot probably wouldn't tell you and so you know, I kind of choice there I do, I get caught up in the inner world of embarrassment and self identity and how you see me and all this stuff. And I could have suffered on very contracted, very tight, very
self conscious around this one thing. But basically, I chose not to. I couldn't get away from so that's, you know, very simple, immediate. You know, I see the possibility I came here in a sense, in a situation where there was a sense of well, my sense of well being was not that dramatic, I have a teeny bit of a cold. But my sense of well being was better. Then what would have happened if I got caught up in my embarrassment? So I took seriously, the sense of well being I had as a reference point for my embarrassment. Often what happens in life we forget, we get caught up preoccupying, what's going on. And we think this is it. This is how it's going to be always. UK we don't maybe we logically think we're not going to say that. But it's kind of like how we operate. This is going to kind of caught up in the drama of this particular event right now. There's a very healthy way of using reference points, to help us then to find the path to find what's possible. There's unhealthy ways of using reference point if you beat yourself up or sell critical for you know, I used to be, I used to feel better and now I feel worse, I must be a bad person. Or it's really important that I feel better. There's all kinds of ways in which we can kind of get caught up in the world of comparisons. But the world of contrast can be very helpful as a person does, hopefully any kind of spiritual practice, but certainly like a meditation practice. Or it could be other things you could be spending a week in the Sierras, hiking or many things you can kind of change the context of our psyche changed the way we are, let go of a lot of surface kind of preoccupations of the mind and help us settle into a deeper sense of well being. The deeper that well being is, the more powerful the reference point is, for what's possible, when we leave that sense of well being. So part of the function of meditation practice is to help us go as deeply as we can, to realize quality or possibilities of well being are not available in daily life. The unusual thing about most people's daily minds is that well being is relative. So if you're the Buddha gave us analogy I don't know if this works exactly but comes to mind. Apparently in ancient India people had leprosy which causes you to feel really bad and your skin they would put their hand or their body into fire, because fire somehow cauterize, I don't know what it did, but it somehow made it feel better was a relief compared to what they were feeling. But then once they were somehow cure to leprosy, the Buddha said, then the last thing we want to do is put the arm into the fire, because that'd be really painful. So in relationship to the tremendous pain, I guess, of leprosy, the fire was a relief. But in relationship to a normal arm, it's not a relief. So in a normal life, if you're really anxious about you know, any kind of normal thing you're really anxious about, I don't know, choose something meditating, really anxious about going back to the military. Or you're not, this is something I should not check for you're anxious about a small check for your car. So you know, so finally you figure out how to do it, you send a friend to do it for you and knows how to get these things done. And, you know, and it passes. And, and then you hear that it passes and you feel those relief, and you feel a sense of well being in that level of anxiety is gone. And you feel kind of good. But that level of being feeling good is only relative because in that state of good can actually you can actually be better The degree to which the mind is preoccupied or caught up or contracted, is often invisible to the mind, the mind that's distracted is often so distracted doesn't even know it's distracted. So, what I'm trying to say here is that the normal everyday consciousness people walk around has levels of, of discomfort or this this ease or, or suffering or contractions or tightness or that often isn't invisible, that often is invisible as we just go around pocket preoccupied with our life. But once we kind of settle deeper and deeper and deeper, and let go and let go, perhaps get more calm, more calm, deeper calm, then we see there's
possibilities that will be that are much greater than what we even think is possible when we walk around the streets of Redwood City. Let me make my point. Okay. So part of the function isn't like a meditation practice is to show us a possibility. Now, some people will go on retreat, and experience perhaps a kind of possibility. And then I know it's pretty common for people to feel really bad as they leave when they leave the retreat. And the normal mind comes back. Oh, I had it. And I'm really a bad person, because now I don't have it. Or there's many, many situations where we have something very profound. And then if we lose it, and we feel kind of somehow we suffer because you've lost it. That's the kind of meditation suffering. You know, we had something great meditation once, and then we haven't had it for a whole year ever since. And this is, you know, a sign of personal failing or something terrible. But one of the ways to use modern ways of practice with a third noble truth is to appreciate the memory of something the possibility of something and then in that memory and that understanding of it, then begin to search for the path. Where do I what is it that I have to work with? What is it that I have to work with, in order to you know, what is it this is highlighting that shows me where my work is. And to understand where their work is, is one of the crucial things in Buddhist practice, whereas my work, what the work is that I have to do here. If it's only about kind of going, a beautiful linear line, from your suffering to great infinite happiness, he's got a slide you know, it'll be great, right? And, but doesn't really work that way. Some people have had that experience through drugs. A lot of people in the 60s came through Buddhism through LSD. And they had some of them had good trips and had bad trips. But you know, this wonderful slide effect is just It was easy. Most of the people who survived that in a mature way, stop taking the drugs and realize they had work to do. The drugs showed them a possibility. And now they have to get down to work. And they had to kind of work on themselves see take responsibility for what's going on here. And so that the greater the contrast, the more it gives us a chance to understand where the work is, with what we have to address and work with. Where the path is, we're beginning to find the path looking for the path. So the fourth noble truth is a truth of the path. The truth of the path begins with what's called seeing the path having a right view, finding the path. So how do you find the path you know, you have this possibility of well being you've tasted it perhaps to some degrees, that older Big, you know, it's possible, you know, you're not having it now. So you see a contrast. And you know, so you know, it's possible to be different. But you don't know quite how you see the possibility if you don't know how. So the Buddha said there's a path and the path begins by finding the path. So you define the path and the question is, where do I find the path? Where do I look here? One of the very remarkable things about what the Buddha taught is that he made the made it took a simplest route, the simplest formulation, to find that path. There can become complex maze mazes to be created, that you can kind of maybe find the path but it's so complicated and amazed like, or you can find one that's relatively easy to find straightforward. And my father is a scientist and one of the things he loves about science is when you find when you figure out a new equation. And it's fairly simple and beautiful simplicity is beauty. So equals mc square, right? amazing discovery. It's so beautiful and simple, elegant, like, my father likes elegance. It was really elegant solution. So I think the Four Noble Truths is a really simple, beautiful and elegant solution to the human problem. It's very profound, but it can appear on the surface to be kind of simplistic or trite or not very deep or ultimate compared to what other religions might have suffering, the cause of suffering, the end of suffering and the path I mean, you know, where's worse,
you know, some people have union with God. You know, that's like, pretty hot and Buddhist just have a suffering cause of suffering. You know, So you know, but I think it's, it's, it's like it has elegance, it's really simple. In its simplicity, it's very profound. So the beginning of the path, the first step in the path is finding the path. Finding the path, the elegant solution, find the path the Buddha offered, was to look at our life through the framework of the Four Noble Truths. To look at our life through that perspective. So, not look at it, for example, through union with Brahma, the great God. Now let's look at it through union with oneness with nature, not look at it through finding the true self. There's a lot of kind of wonderful things spiritual people do that are kind of metaphysical searches that have a lot of difficulty in the search and what we find how we relate to it. So the Buddha wanted to want to avoid Any kind of metaphysical quagmire he called it in offer something that was free that means that we get into you never get out of perhaps. So the Four Noble Truths is that the form of knowledge is not a belief, the whole foundation of Buddhism not based on a belief of any kind, I would say I would argue, but rather than something we can experience and feel, how many of you know when you're suffering or if some of you apparently, the rest of you are kind of in remedial Buddhism? Well, some of you who don't know, we some we can know suffering. And also sometimes we don't know the degree to which we suffer and Sunder There are levels of suffering we don't even know we have until the mind gets really still in concentrating. So it begins there's something we can experience the suffering so the first noble truth of how we find the path Beginning to appreciate when there is suffering or this word. Suffering is kind of a big word dukkha. The word dukkha is sometimes translated into English as stress, sometimes is unsatisfactoriness. Sometimes as unease sometimes as you know, what else choices have I heard? What? Well thirst is a second one is the second noble truth is a cause of that dukkha and the word suffering maybe is inadequate, because it suggests that surface kind of big word, but even mild discomfort, mild annoyance is dukkha. And so, but the point is here is that you find the path by beginning to appreciate the discomfort or the disease or the dukkha, that is present so you realize what you're working with, you see the possibility, perhaps a freedom, you see the possibility of well being of calm or peace, you know, you don't have it, you don't have much of it, you see it as possible. The work to getting there is not to do a spiritual bypass around your life around your difficulties, which some people would like to do. But rather the path is through our life as it actually is, through the life of our discomfort. What is my suffering here? Do you really understand it and see it, Carol? Clearly? We're uncomfortable. We're suffering because we have to get the smog check. What is that about? Where's the work? Where's the path we found there? Where's the spiritual path be found in that particular phenomena? Do we blame the DMV? blaming the DMV is not where the work is found. It's counterproductive even if the DMV responsible, even with someone responsible somehow for the condition of your suffering, it's not where the spiritual work is, it resides, it doesn't reside in out there. It always resides in here, the spiritual work. Where is it in here that I contribute? Whether I'm suffering, I contribute to that suffering. So the Buddha said that the duty or the responsibility in relationship to the first noble truth of suffering, is to understand it, to understand it really well. That's the kind of, you know, the bad news of Buddhism. Because we'd like to have something inspires us and lift us up makes us feel better. And he told you understand your suffering, that's what begins. But it's much more understandable when you get the good news first, right as we get resilient today, to start with a third noble truth, there is this wonderful thing that's possible. The
thing is in order to do in order to approach that freedom in a healthy way, you need to look at yourself understand it. As you understand it, part of that understanding is to understand the cause of it. What is it that gives rise to it? And there is a wide range of things. Sometimes you'll see it's obvious what gives rise to it, it's really simple and easy. And other times, it's very complicated, very difficult to see the, the cause of our suffering. So the cause that Buddha gave is what you said was he defined it as thirst. And thirst is not a technical, psychological or spiritual word. It's just kind of like a colloquial expression thirst. So part of that meaning is that it's evocative because it evokes, I think, for me, at least evokes Okay, that kind of feeling of being driven or compulsive compulsive feeling you really thirsty. You're kind of there's kind of Feeling a compulsion I need water. You have to be really thirsty, right? You're in the desert. And we have these expressions in English like thirsting for power, or other words like that right? thirsty, unhealthy kind of movements thirsting for power, thirsty for money thirsty for. And so, you know, it's kind of a feeling that you're not really a free person, when you have that kind of compulsive activity of the mind or the harder, you know, we're driven, driven is maybe a good, modern equivalent to thirst. Because we say a lot of people are driven. When you're driven, you're not free. So underneath the umbrella of this word, thirst or driven is, is things like clinging, craving, grasping, resisting, denying, all those moving kind of pushing away or holding on to running away. All these ways in which the mind somehow or other or the heart somewhere other contracts onto itself. tightens up. With Buddhism called suffering. Sometimes it can feel more mental. Like sometimes you feel a contraction in your brain and your mind feels a suffering there. Sometimes it's more in the heart, in the emotional body, sometimes in the physical body when we feel it, right, right. These are places where it might manifest the discomfort that we're feeling, that the kind of discomfort that arises from the fact that we are resisting reacting in a way that is tightening down or holding out or freezing or something. So, the second noble truth is the truth of what gives rise to this discomfort the stuka district. So is driven is and the responsibility or the or the activity to be done in relationship to it is not again to believe this. The activity in relationship to it is to Let go of it, to abandon the cause. If there is clinging to abandon, it's let go of it. Now, it's very important to understand the Four Noble Truths are relevant in the simplest situations of our life, as well as the most profound. So that we begin practicing them are working on this on the simple everyday kind of things of our life. Things are places where it's really easy to see, oh, I'm suffering. I can see the cause. I can let go of that cause. So, you know, I'm convinced that every one of you has someplace really easy we can do that. Do it. start exercising that muscle. In the simplest places. It's like going to the gym. And you know, I go to the gym, sometimes when they Probably all, you guys noticed that you're always rectangular weights, they're all stacked up. And you can tell I put this pin into the, you know, into the way that you want. And so like if, if you put the I put the pin in the five pound weight, you know, it doesn't really do much for me, maybe if I just spend a couple of hours, eventually have some meaning. But that fight kind of doesn't do anything. But after go down there, like to the eight or the nine pounds, sometimes you know a little bit further, and then I can feel a workout. But if I could go down there and put it on that 20 or 50 or something, you know, then it's hopeless also, that time just the right one, right? And then you're pretty much too much or too little, you have to kind of pace yourself just right. And you work there and exercise that muscle and kind of you know, get stronger and stronger and then eventually you can kind of move down to do more weight and more weight, more weight, more weight, more weight. And then you know more weight
until finally you realize that you can't go any further but the so the mind or the heart spiritual at the same way, some people try to jump in too fast, too deep, too deep, too fast. They think, Oh, I'm supposed to realize the true nature of the self in this city, you know, to resolve all my complex karmic difficulties. Right now. Thank you this retreat. And, and sometimes that's like too big of a way to take on. But if you just work work at a place was appropriate for you. And if you take up take a seriously in the simplicity of places simple places of your life, you're exercising that muscle. And as you actually get stronger, and as you develop this capacity, this skill, to look at suffering to find its cause and to let go of it. That will be useful as you get at situations where bigger and bigger things when you face bigger and bigger things, heavier and heavier weights. I know some people are To get interested in something like Buddhism, when there's some great crisis in their life, and they will come to the teacher, for example, and say, Well, what do I do now? Well, you can give people advice. But if they've been building that muscle for the few years before that crisis, they might have had the skills and the ability to understand what's going on, that they don't have because they weren't practicing all along. Don't wait until a crisis. Start now when you can and build the self understanding and self, the person that the skills you need, the ability to see. So there's the truth of cessation. There's a truth of letting go. There's truth of letting go of clinging and the well being that can come from that. That gives us a sense of what's possible. Because we've tasted it, even if it's just a little bit if you want to taste it more, then do something like a meditation practice or do those kind of things that allows you to step into that world with greater where often don't live your life on automatic pilot we can continue living a life of suffering, life of being preoccupied or caught up, that precludes the possibility of well being. well being is essential to Buddhist spiritual life. avail yourself of your capacity to feel well being, to the degree to which you can. I think a lot of people shortchange themselves, because they feel like other things are more important. So, as long as you get a sense of your well being, then you can see the contrast of that times when you don't have that well being in in that contrast, there you can start finding the path. And the Buddha said, the most elegant or the simplest, most direct way of finding the path is not to ask metaphysical questions not just not to search for something which is different outside of your experience with a start in your experience of what's happening right now, by looking at where the discomfort is, where the suffering is, and as you look at that suffering, then explore it get to know it in a wise way be wise about it. And when you're wise and explored well enough at some point, sooner or later, you'll see the driven is the compulsivity, the thirsting or the clinging. That's given rise to it. Once once you see well enough, what's given rise to it. It's sometimes good to see it for a long time and really see it well carefully. Then you can maybe begin letting go of it. Let go of itself. So the truth of the cessation, the truth of the path, the truth of suffering, and the truth of letting go of the cause of suffering. Now the, the path, the fourth noble truth, there's eight different steps in the Buddha laid out. I'm not going to go into them today. But those eight steps are our recognition that it's not easy to do this work. It's easy to talk about it's easy, sometimes a small, little simplistic things in daily life, but they really do as well as not easy. And so we need a whole you know, we need to kind of include a whole kind of holistic approach to making this possible this kind of work. So the Buddha said it's important to look at our behavior and to live a life that is supportive of developing deepest form of well being human being human person can. So we look at our behavior. And then it's important to begin developing skills of looking carefully. skills of mindfulness. So we can look well, and skills of
concentration. So when we look, we look with some ability to be still in concentrated focus as we do that, if we're not focussed, we're not going to see very well. So it might take, you know, a long time to develop and explore the Eightfold Path is eight steps into integrate them into our life. So they become really good support for the able to do this looking at suffering and letting go of the cause. The second of the Eightfold Path, and I'll end with this is called the right intention. So the first April path is seeing the path Seeing the path that's in, in suffering, the cost of the cause of suffering and the relief from suffering, seeing that the path is just not so simple formulation. It's the first step. The second step is having seen that is having the right attitude or the healthy attitude or intention in relationship to what you've seen. So, the second that second step of the Eightfold Path is right intention or right attitude. And this has to do with trying to find the attitudes that our attitudes are helpful and not harmful. To avoid attitudes which are antagonistic to ourselves or situation unkind, harmful, and try to cultivate intentions or attitude which are friendly, kind, non harming, compassionate. Because it can be, it's very difficult to do this work at times of looking at suffering. And to do it in a wise way, you need to bring with you an attitude, of acceptance of compassion, of kindness towards yourself in the situation. Some people, maybe all of us at different times, need to spend a lot of time working at this second step with a full path, developing the kindness, the compassion, the non harming attitude, the what's going on. Because to go sometimes go directly into suffering and look at it is counterindicated because some people, it's almost like, be traumatizing to look at their stuff and look at where the difficulties are, and, and just kind of kind of like putting salt on a wound. And so sometimes you don't want to have this direct approach. But you want to kind of work on the second step with a full path for a while, so that when you do look at your suffering, you can and how you're calling suffering through the clinging and grasping, that you can somehow do it with a lot of kindness, compassion and gentleness as you do that, in a wise way. When you thought about the thought about the Four Noble Truths, the monk canister has said that he uses the analogy that if you go to the plains of Africa to go and photographing the animals it's not so wise to go searching all over, wandering around looking for the animals to take a picture of it's wiser to sit by the watering hole and wait, because all the animals sooner or later will come to the watering hole. In the same way, the Four Noble Truths are the watering hole. If you sit by the Four Noble Truths, everything that you need to know for your spiritual life will come to you. If it doesn't come to you, you probably don't need to know it. So may you explore the Four Noble Truths for this year. It may bring you, you and your neighbors and your society, a lot of benefit from your explorations. May all beings be happy. Thank you