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SPEAKERS

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Those of you who come in the last two Sundays know that I've been talking about the Four Noble Truths. And it sounds like to continue that today by talking about the Eightfold Path. And the Eightfold Path is sometimes presented as the, one of the one of the key ways to understand the process of practice or the path of practice in Buddhism. And there are actually many ways in which Buddhism down through the ages have tried to organize or categorize or describe a process of spiritual growth, development and freedom. And the Eightfold Path is just one of them. And a footpath shouldn't be taken as being some very sharp definitive steps that you go through but rather Some people say it's like eight strands of a rope, that they go together to make a strong rope. And there are other ways of formulating the path besides April pass, you don't have to stick to that. But I like the Eightfold Path because it allows for a variety of different ways of understanding The inner process that we engage in. So I wanted to try to offer one maybe a little different perspective on the process of the Eightfold Path. And then I thought if I do a decent job presenting it today, then perhaps next week, I can kind of review a little bit and then next week, maybe it can be a good time for questions and answers and discussion about it as well. So I'm thinking a little bit of the Eightfold Path being somewhat analogous to being born and growing up that when you're first born, you are helpless. Pretty much I kind of felt helpless. I mean, I guess that helpless scream is actually very well engineered to get a certain result. It's so it's not, but in any case, there's a lot of luck that the baby can do. For him or herself. And so there's a community of people that support and take care of the baby. And then as as a child grows, it's slowly step by step, the child is able to take care of more things alone. And at some point is able to go to the bathroom alone, some point able to feed herself alone, simply unable to walk alone, simply unable to go to school alone, take the bus alone, grew up in the neighborhood alone, without the parents would hovering over and, and then at some point able to leave home entirely and go off and start a life someplace. And, and then at some point, you know, completely independent of your parents living independently. And so it's a process of discovering certain degree of independence. And so in the same way, the Eightfold Path can be understood as explaining a little bit that process that process of allowing people to discover something we The potential that's there, the baby is born has a tremendous potential. And sometimes people who are now over the baby, and they have blessing ceremonies is one thing that happens in blessing ceremonies, people sometimes anticipate or imagine the potential that's inherent in the child, and they wish it for them, they would hope that that child becomes happy in the future. And as part of the role of parents in the community, to hold the potential the child has, and hold a little bit, I would say kind of sacred but hold a very special and very important and in try their best to help create the conditions that support the best the best potential to come forth. The potential of goodness and happiness, compassion, empathy, a lot of different things. And it's so easy to have other potentials come forth. And so I know plenty of parents in our circles who don't really like to have the children watch television, because it seems to the violence and the various things that come through television supports certain conditions for certain potential to come forth, there's not necessarily so advantageous

or so helpful. Some of the messages of consumerism is not so helpful in the long run. And so there's been a lot of really well meaning parents, including myself, who didn't really understand all the aspects of the impact of our well meaning has. And so one for one for one example, for example, that has been people are writing about now is how

the kind of the self esteem movement in for children has backfired. And now there's a lot of children who think that they deserve everything. And it should come easy. They're really smart, they're wonderful, they're esteemed. And so things like should be relatively easy to the for them, and then they come to college or something and they realize that maybe it's not so easy, that maybe they're not, they're not the best in the class. It's very depressing because they held up so high, you're so great. And, and so becomes quite a challenge. And so I think that people are shying away from the self esteem kind of approach, even though it seems like self esteem should be, you know, really inherently a really good thing. Sort of my firm to say is that there's a wonderful potential in the child. And there's a job to kind of foster what's the best the best potential as opposed to the worst potential. We don't want to end up having, you know, a criminal in our hands going up. That happens sometimes. And I'm very touched by tick, not Han, who, you know, when the both people were leaving Vietnam, the refugees and some of them went and went astray and ended up some of the Thai coast and some of the pirates which sometimes capture and kill and rape, steal from the both people. He said, You know, if I grew up in their condition Their poverty and their situation, I think I would be a part of it as well. Here's someone who basically kind of a safe like person. And he'll be given different conditions and ended up differently. So it's kind of a sacred task of the community, the society to foster the best, and to see the best of a sense of the best and a child. So the Eightfold Path in Buddhism begins with the right view. And part of right view is to have a sense of potential that human beings have that we have. And the stronger and more visceral that sense of potential can be, the more we can kind of try to support that let the conditions be there to let that potential come out of us. And, but also, there are other people around us who represent that potential show that it's possible have attained it to some degree, or the people who can point it out. say, look, there's just potential you have you don't have to always be miserable. You don't have to always suffer and be upset. To be angry and be aversive and you have to always be confused. But it's possible to infuse your life with a tremendous sense of meaning and purpose direction. And it's a direction that speaks to something that's inherent to your own heart, some potential you have. And so, in Buddhism, that potential is described, sometimes in different ways. And some of the more kind of some of the ways there's talked about in terms of spiritual qualities, it's talked about just the awakening of peace, tremendous peace, discovery of great happiness, Maha sukha the discovery or the awakening, of compassion, of love, the discovery of sense of liberation. So you know, and so to have a sense of this into Realize that they're important and valuable, as opposed to some of the other messages we get from society that orientations is a really important part of eightfold path to the right views have really said to that potential possibility. And then to begin to orient yourself on that possibility is there's no moral obligation to do this. But if you're interested in the Eightfold Path, if that's what it begins with is orientation, the right view could also be described as the right orientation. You begin orienting your life organizing your life around this potential responsibility. So you have a sense of this is important and I really want to take it up. There are plenty of people who might have in some sense of its importance, but for whatever the forces there in their lives, prevent them from really taking it seriously getting involved in it really following through on it. They might abstractly think, Oh, this is important, to become free of my suffering, to cultivate love and peace, to develop the capacities to enter into my society, and be of service but they Never get behind it to never is because of fear or because of other things that seem more important to, rightly things. So the absence of the possibility, and the way that that possibility is most commonly described in Buddhism is that it's the possibility of freedom from suffering.

And in order to understand that possibility, you also have to understand something about what the causes and conditions for suffering are. And so you have to be willing to understand this stuff. And if you look and be very honest about the suffering you have, without some honesty or clarity about that, it's a little bit hard to understand the depth of that potential to be free of suffering, the depth of peace or liberation that's there. And so there's an emphasis in Buddhism, of understanding the potential and understanding what stands in the way of it. And This to me is a very important point because a potential is partly seen as an ideal and it's very easy to become overly ideal. Stick and lose track of what's happening here now, because you're blinded by the ideal. And Healthy Spirituality in Buddhism prefers to look at what's actually going on, than looking at the ideal. The ideal is important. That's why I said today, the potential is important. But you don't want to be blinded by it so much, you don't really stop and really take an honest look at what stands in the way of the potential. And partly that's the cause, which then it's dropping away of the obstacles, that a lot partly allows the what's the potential to grow and develop. And so the sensitive, very positive view of human nature, in Buddhism, because it says if you could, if the obstacles fall away, something beautiful begins to shine, the beautiful pure heart can shine, shine more and more. So we have this potential, and perhaps when a person first encounters the Eightfold Path are like a baby and so they need to be screened. was taken care of. And then slowly as we proceed to the full path is a path where we slowly begin to center yourself or cultivating a path that puts us into the very heart of where liberation, freedom or autonomy or independence can be found. But in Buddhism at least, you're not often encouraged to jump into that automatically. If your baby you're not asked, you know, you're not given the car keys right away. So, sometimes I wished I could do that here. There you go. And so, you know, we can kind of create the right causes and conditions to allow something to develop and happen. So then, the in a forecast schema, the second to the full path is usually called right intention, or right attitude. And this means that if you're going to do something that has that has profound meaning, do something that speaks to some of the more sacred content Children most valuable potential if you have, it actually helps if you approach it with a respectful attitude with particular attitude, the best you can. And I know that some people will think well to change your attitude is insincere, I just be myself. But I think in many situations in life, we do change your attitude quite naturally, it's appropriate, who we are, is in part in relationship to the environment. And so we don't just show up, you know, if if you're if you if you're the only one who spoke, if you invented your own language, and said, Well, I'm just gonna speak my own language. It's, it's meaningless. It's pointless to have your own language is basically, you know, the point of languages to communicate with other people. And until you cultivate language and develop language in relationship to others, we develop partly who we are is in relationship to our world and others. And so it's normal to change your attitude accordingly. You go to a funeral. You Adjust your attitude may be pretty natural, but you don't, you know, skip down the aisle with whistling Dixie. Though that might be a beautiful thing to do in other situations. Most people they enter into a preschool classroom, they change their attitude to certain things. You don't talk about certain ways. You know, if you're upset about the vote in the data, you don't go into preschool and start kind of spouting about, you know, this and that, lobbyists, whatever, you, you know, you kind of change what you're talking about, even in preschool setting. It's quite quite common in many, many, many spiritual traditions, that will you enter into the tradition, you should do so with a certain degree of respect. And it's very epitomized, I think, in the Japanese traditions where you have this the ways the Dow's dough dough like Aikido and Judo, and you come to study with a master who's going to impart something, and you have to first kind of demonstrate Have you come with a certain degree of sincerity and respect.

And without demonstration of respect, the feeling of the teacher is that you know, you're not really a recipient, you're not a vehicle to receive what special vehicle to receive this very special thing that I've trained myself to develop. And so it needs to be some show of respect in order to receive what you're going to get. And so I think some degree here in America, that sense of respect and care of adjusting

ourselves so we can receive something is not so common. Writing different reasons. And some people if they studied Japanese martial arts will be you know, that's one of the first things you're learning you come into the dojo and the first thing maybe you do is you get down on your knees and you and you bow. So, in Buddhism as well, there's certain kind of attitude that's helpful to kind of see if you can the best sincere way to adjust and make yourself in order to begin this path. Engaging something profound. And so that orientation that that attitude is usually described in three ways. First, two ways, in a negative and a positive way. Negative means that you put aside your, the attitude you might have, that are driven by the sensual desire that is driven by ill will, and driven by a cruelty. cruelty a little bit, because they're a little bit different. You'll see in a moment why. So put those aside, and instead develop the opposite those try to cultivate or come forth with the opposite attitudes. And usually the opposite of sexual desire is usually just described in the tradition by renunciation. And I think that is a broader term. That means a willingness to be a little bit simple to let go to enter into kind of with empty hands kind of sort of classic Zen story that you probably all know it's worth saying again. The academic condition comes to the Zen master and wants to learn about Buddhism. And so first is investor offers tea. So this the academic magician is holding a teacup and the tea master begins pouring the tea. And when it comes up to the brim he keeps pouring the tea. And the professor says, Wait a minute, it's foolish to stop. No it doesn't it doesn't no more will take no more tea will fit in itself and overflowing. And then Esther says when the same way you're coming here overflowing, you're already full. How can I impart anything when you're already full of your own opinions and ideas and everything. So some some ability to to let go let go of maybe some of your preconceived ideas. Not not absolutely, but not enough. Be willing to kind of take something in and hear something or learn something that might be new. might be different perspective to be challenged. And then the opposite of ill will, is to be loving kindness. So some attitude of kindness at the very beginning of the path. And the opposite of cruelty is compassion. So some cultivation of compassion. So it's hard to develop loving kindness and compassion. It's not an easy task. But it's like you least turning the ocean liner in that direction. I, you know, I'm going to try at least as I engage in this practice in this exploration, to try to do so. So I'm a little bit kinder to myself. A little bit more compassionate. And I know for many, many people, it's really crucial to have some degree of compassion and kindness. Because as we sit down and kind of become more aware of what's going on. self knowledge is sometimes bad news. more of you should have laughed at that. Maybe you haven't done enough self reflection. So self knowledge is often not good news. And so to hold that with kindness and compassion, as opposed to the opposite is very, very important. And hopefully it makes the whole engagement in Buddhist path, something that you do kind of likely to hold it lightly hold it with kind of a lightness of being, you know, take it, you know, even though it's so important are so valuable. The potential we're trying to address in Buddhism. I think it's really important to hold it very lightly not take it too seriously. When I was in the Zen monastery, I went up to my teacher once and said something like I'm not really taking anything so seriously anymore. But the thing I take most seriously practice and I thought it was good maybe it doesn't sound very good to wait said but but I you know, kind of, you know,

concept of sayings was I was at Zen monk, I was pretty intense. It was engaged. It wasn't like I was goofing off But I like this, you know, to holding everything. And in that likeness, the thing that I took more serious it was my practice, even though it was kind of like, like we held. So the attitude that we take. And in the Metta Sutta, the discourse on loving kindness, it opens up not by instructions on how to practice loving kindness, it opens up with instructions of attitude to have, you should be someone who is easy to admonish someone who lives simply doesn't have a lot of things going on. The attitude is so important. And perhaps attitude is both difficult to adjust, and also somehow easy. I think both are true simultaneously. You can kind of have the idea, oh, it'd be useful to be kinder here. Let me try them out. That's easy to have that idea. Maybe it's not so easy always to fall through. But it turns out Minor in that direction, could you simplicity, some degree of letting go appropriate letting go and compassion. So

then as the as the overall within the widest attitude that's helpful. And I think one of the widest attitudes is helpful for raising a baby's love and compassion and care when those around. And then the next part of the path. Next three steps have all to do with our relationship to other people, our society, society and people. And I think this is very, very crucial that, that somehow we're not kind of rushing in to meditate and go into this inner deep inner life. But we're beginning to kind of just like a child who slowly develops to become independent, and only only when they're a teenager or beyond, starts living independently, or even discovers who they are. And a lot of the early years of growing up, it's a lot to do with what happens in society, in relationship to other people. Getting those relationships established to help hopefully in healthy ways. So I think that as we grow up in the, in the Eightfold Path, it's very important to consider it important to consider how we cultivate or develop ourselves, in relationship to society and other people. And it's very easy to overlook that. And it's very easy to have, as adults have ideas that I've already done that I'm an introvert after all, so I don't have to when they want to be involved other people, you know, I'm mature, you know, to be to take other people into account just a little bit of it's frightening, is offensive, because I already think that I'm, you know, great. And, but here at the beginning of the path, we're taking other people into account, and it's talked about in particular way and a full path. But I think it's important to expand it outward, to include how we, the kind of feedback we get from other people, how we take into account our impact on other people. their impact on us and how we are custodian caretaker for that impact and their relationship to others. So one of the things that Buddha said to talk, especially if he was a monk, so we felt he could teach this thing to the Buddha was somewhat reticent to teach laypeople because they hadn't entrusted themselves to him. But when he was teaching to monks, he encouraged them to cultivate themselves so that they were easy to admonish. Isn't it interesting? So you're easy to admonish. So it's easy to cook some people come up to you, your teacher or someone and say, Hey, you know, you know, when you speak, you don't seem to listen to other people very well. You seem to constantly interrupting and kind of giving advice or when you speak, you know, you realize that you often feels like gossip to me. You're often talking about other people and kind of harsh ways. Do you realize you do that? Or do you realize that You seem to always kind of think of yourself first. And even as something as simple as how you put your shoes in the shoe rack, you just think the best, the best spot is always for you. And you'll notice the person behind you it has a cane and limping and has trouble getting there. Have you noticed how self absorbed you are?

And so I'm just making up examples here. But it could be a lot a lot simpler things you could say. But are you willing to give feedback? And, and part of this the social relational part of Buddhist training is to let yourself be someone who's willing to get feedback, not only willing, but invite feedback. And one of the reasons why this is so important is that other people can often see aspects of yourself it's difficult for you to see yourself if you want to jumps you know, kind of jumpstart over the jumps or kind of speed along your own spiritual growth. It's really good to take everyone else. Everyone did you encounter As your teachers, be willing to take them on, give feedback, even when they're not telling you, you know, directly, you know, kindly Oh, by the way, if you thought about this, you know, that could be the it could just be really nasty 15 ethically, there's, there's an art to taking even nasty people as your teacher, you know, it doesn't mean that you agree with them doesn't mean you go along with them, which like, oh, what's required of me now? to not get nasty back what's required of me to cultivate appropriate kindness and compassion in the situation? What's it like to meet and have to let go of something that needs to be let go in the situation? What's it like for me to develop the inner strength that I can meet this person and say no, and respond in a strong and even ferocious way? So what is it what's required the situation and to see what's what's, what's the opportunity here? Take care of other people as your teachers. Friends, invite your friends to give you feedback. Even someone who was my teacher, Buddhist teacher, at some point in our relationship came up to me and said to me, You can be nice and be helpful if you can give me some feedback from time to time. We were in that situation, you know, and what did I do there? What How do you know that I, what I said what I did in that situation that you

witnessed? What do you think of that? Was that, you know, did I conduct myself well or something? And so even people who are teachers, you know, ask for feedback. And when I was in gringotts, there was a wonderful teacher Japanese teachers teaching teachers. Nakamura, Sensei, old venerable old woman, and she looked really old, old, beautiful woman, teacher. And at some point, her her teacher in Japan who was even older than it and so she went back to Japan. To get a new teacher, because it was really important to always have a teacher, and she found someone who was 50 years younger than her quite a bit younger than her. And someone said, What do you know you could be his teacher, and she said, doesn't really matter. It's important to have a teacher, someone you can talk to someone who can give you feedback, someone who you can be accountable to. So, of course, intimate partners are sometimes really good teachers. Sometimes the most difficult ones, sometimes the best ones, because they know you know, what you do when other people are watching. And so sometimes, you know, to allow a partner friend to be a source of feedback is really good. And then there's plenty of feedback we get, not directly but just by paying attention and tuning into how people are reacting to what we say and do or the impact we have. And it's not not meant to be moralistic this thing, but rather, it's there so we can learn and find out what's really going on here. So that we can help support the awakening of a potential, the possibility that, you know, we'd like to just, like say sacred, beautiful, beautiful. We're trying to find something really beautiful, and let it shine and come forth. So I'm in the Eightfold Path, because there's a lot to do with how we how we are together with others. And, and so, we thought, we talked about one of the aspects of the social the social aspect of April path is cultivating right speech. So looking at how we speak, and working on our speech, looking at what motivates our speech or the impact of our speeches, in order to kind of begin to refine ourselves and find out can we speak Can we come from can we discover if we tap into that which is beautiful, which is pure love, which is you know, compassionate and peace For one, and free inside of us, the idea of Buddhism is that when you break the precepts, and you speak in unkind ways, you're not really free. What is it like to come from your freedom?

And so the second are the social parts of the Eightfold Path is right action, which usually defined by the five precepts. But the five precepts are these mirrors. If you're about to if you're about to kill, if you're about to steal, if you're about to do sexual misconduct, if you're about to lie, if you're about to intoxicate yourself, chances are, that you're not really coming from the place of deepest, authentic freedom inside of yourself. Chances are that the desire to freely drink or fornicator whatever is not really coming from a place of freedom is coming from a place of being caught by desire, or by fear or by aggression or something. All right are different things. So Use the precepts as a mirror to come up against the edge of them feel you're about to do something and say, wait a minute, let me look at this. And can I come back? Can I use this a mirror and stop and look back at myself and get back in touch with something, which I feel is important, valuable? That I really know. But don't forget it, I'm really busy and running around or feel stressed or something. And then right action, right livelihood, or we live our life as part of this as well to look at that. So, you know, the theory, I think, here is that partly, our social relationships are, are somehow easier to get feedback easier to work with, then then there's more coarser feedback system, then looking within. I like to think of it as concentric circles. And there's this home basis, beautiful home place in the middle. And so we start kind of, you know, getting to know, the country we're in and then we know that the state and then the county And then the city and then the neighborhood, and then we come home. So the country we're in is when the country have the right view of any sense of this potential that we have. And that puts us in the territory. And then that's the country in the state, we put ourselves in the attitude, the state of mind that we're going to be in. And so we've kind of tried to get to be in the right state. And then, and then we come into the city, the county, the city in the neighborhood, and then we're, you know, looking at right speech, right action, and right livelihood. So we're getting closer, all these things are supporting and closer, and then at some point become close to home, or maybe, or maybe not, we're not quite in our house yet, but they've grown a

lot that the home is sitting on. And so we're getting really close into the last three factors of April path. We're finally getting close to home. And we could look at something that's much more personal Deep inside of ourselves, three about ourselves, our relationship to ourselves what's going on with motivated with us inside. And so this begins looking at our heart during our mind looking inward rather than outward. And so

so the two in a sense, we move to the analogy of growing up chronological age. It's only when a person enters teenage years, that I think a person has a really real start to having a real capacity of being inward and looking at seeing what beliefs they have, what motivates them. So the same thing after you do other work, then for the Eightfold Path to begin looking within. So again, the reference point is always this potential for freedom, freedom from suffering, of peace of happiness. And so the first to the eighth for this inner parts of the Eightfold Path is called right Right in deburring, and the right effort is to find through having some sense of your potential. And so you have a sense of the potential or peace potential is inner beauty. And then you move into a direction that supports that move away from those things that don't support it within yourself. So the social conditions have to be taken care of now. So what are the impulses inside of you? What are the motivations? What are the states of mind that arise in you, which are not helpful to support the cultivation of this potential? If you have a sense of what's not helpful, then avoid them. Don't let that come up. Or if they do come up, learn how to let go of them. So for example, if you've learned that being consumed by desire for things is not such a helpful state to be in, and that looking at no consumer report Every month, not only seems strange magazine, I think because trying to encourage people to be consumers, I guess, good consumers Anyway, you look at Consumer Reports, not that like that, and that and that and that. And after reading Consumer Reports, you realize that the next few days, you just kind of upset about how you can't afford all the things being offered there. And so you realize, oh, maybe it's not so helpful for me to kind of keep going back to that kind of behavior. Because that behavior produces a state of mind, which is not helpful for me. So you begin to take responsibility for your, your inner state, your inner motivation, what drives you with get caught by and making adjustments accordingly. So this is right effort, learning to make those adjustments to what's helpful and what's not helpful. And because you have a standard to measure it against some degree of your potential, your peace, your sense of love subtleness being at home in yourself, you know, you have something to guide you with you Right effort, knowing what's helpful, what's not what things are helpful, you try to develop those things, and you try to maintain those things. Then the next step is not just is even more intimate work kind of coming in closer to maybe now you're in your living room. And now we're called the right concentration. And when the other things are kind of in place well enough, then it's a lot easier to get settled on yourself. If your relationships are not settled, it's very hard to be settled on yourself. So then, if you don't know what you're with your practice is about the direction your life has a real sense of purpose and meaning in your life. It's also hard to be settled on yourself. So the concentration then is this deep settling deep composure. And so we begin in the practice of settling on ourselves and more and more deeply, to really settle on yourself. Sometimes in Zen traditions. Zen Meditation is called settling on oneself. So you're not spinning around, not ahead of yourself, not behind yourself, not the future, not in the past, not tempted to try to create a different self to who you are. You're settling on yourself being settled here. I like the word composure as a description of concentration. And so it would be getting to this inner work now, really kind of working on the, the mind, the heart. And then that most innermost part of it all, close to the innermost part, you're getting really to the very heart of your home. It's not your living room. I don't know, kitchen. I don't know what it is, but to come to the innermost part. And this is the practice of mindfulness. And some people reverse it. Some people feel like concentration is hard. Some people feel the narc tradition. I think mindfulness is really at the heart because it's considered to be the final practice and

So right mindfulness is the ability to really pay attention to what's happening, not just to be subtle here, but to really look carefully. What is really going on in the deepest recesses of my mind, in my heart. And in the deepest recesses of my heart, what are the things that I'm most cling to, one of the things I most resist are the places that are most closed, or the places that are most defended, or the places that are most attached to something. And then to take that step of letting go to let go of the resistance, letting go of the defensiveness, letting go of attachments, letting go the sense of self to completely let go. And that's the fullest potential that we have in Buddhism is found through the complete letting go. If you let go a little bit, we say you'll discover part of your potential. Go a little bit you'll discover a little bit of help. Like a medium amount, you discover a medium of happiness, like a fully you discover for happiness. So it's up to you before you want to go. But, but that's because practice and mindfulness, concentration, mindfulness together working together, that allows us to see or the mind to find those places. The Google corners are in the very cellar of the mind, that something deep has to let go. And then the amazing thing we get a sense of this, even before we get out to the cellar, for the house analogy, you know, before that, start getting some intimation of a degree of well being of peace or happiness, contentment, being at home, that is not dependent on things in the world going the way you want them to go. And not dependent on your health. It's not dependent on your relationships, you're in not dependent on your job. You Have is not dependent on having a home or not having a home, not dependent on having recreational opportunities. It's not dependent on anything. And that is an amazing discovery. I call it a cornucopia according to critical in a revolution and revolutionary kind of switch change in the mind, to have that sense that in orienting the mind toward free to towards a freedom is not dependent on anything going the right way, or going, going the right way or going the wrong way. And so this is when you become an April path, you become a full adult, you can stand on your own two feet. You don't need anything, support anything else around you. But you can really be there fully and completely present and happy and at peace, regardless of the conditions how they change around you. And they can change dramatically. You know, I don't know how it is for people who grew up in United States, I grew up a good part of my upbringing in Europe. And when I was growing up there in the 60s 5060s, World War Two was so vivid, in people's minds still, you know, the people I met with tell me stories of being in concentration camps or being in this big shot or shooting people, you know, the war was so you know, the evidence was around. And so I kind of grew up always, you know, kind of half expecting that things could change in that direction at a moment's notice. And I wouldn't be surprised if United States the Soviet Union fell apart in our lifetime. I wouldn't be surprised as America fell apart in our lifetime. It seems unlikely. But I'm ready. They are so you know, things can change radically. So I'm trying to say And maybe they don't change and they'll kind of that kind of political way they can change for you. And as you all know, I think how quickly from one day to next year life can change one moment to the next. It can change completely and radically. So are you ready for that? When the Buddha was teaching his son meditation, and whose son was about 14 to 15 years old, it was teaching and process of meditation, that deepen the capacity for tremendous sense of well being, discovery, this beauty inside of us. He offered this beautiful practice. And then he said, so basically something like this is the practice that's going to help you to die peacefully. Isn't it something to die a piece to die being present for your experience? So the Eightfold Path is it offering a path for how we can grow up to be spiritual adults. And

many of you are well Along the way, I'm very current all of you are well on the way I'm quite confident of that. And it doesn't hurt to start over again. So why don't you consider the Eightfold Path and see how it can become your own path? Not something that you take on the outside. But how does it work for you? How does how does it come alive? What gives it what's the appropriate expression of it for your life and your so that the potential if you might feel you have can just be a potential to become an actuality. So that's an attempt to offer it a full path and a little different perspective. Next week, I'm hoping you'll consider think about this be challenged by this over the week. I love it when people disagree with me.

So then come back next week I'll do some offer a little different perspective and a full bath as an introduction for the for the morning. But then we'll take questions and comments and discussion and see What are we go with that? Good. Okay, thank you.