

# 2020-12-04 Eightfold Path-Right Release

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

release, eightfold path, radical, genuine, liberation, conflict, path, person, complicate, buddhism, word, world, experience, trust, delusion, life, simplicity, talk, live, concern

## SPEAKERS

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A warm hello and we come to the final talk in this series on the Eightfold Path, the eight factored path. And the eight factored path comes to maturity with right knowledge, the topic of yesterday's talk, and today the final is right release, right liberation. And the word right, sammā, might also in some circumstances be translated as genuine. And so, right release is genuine release, genuine liberation.

This emphasis on release is different than letting go. Letting go easily can be seen as something we do. It's can be a choice to let go of something. But release is not something we do. Liberation is not something where we, in a certain kind of way that we make happen. We don't attain it. And also, we're not given liberation. It isn't like we sit here and wait for someone to give it to us. But rather release is experienced. And we might feel it as a gift. But it's not a gift that comes from anywhere. And maybe except just from life. And so this very radical kind of experience of releasing, loosening. Not exactly letting go. Because that letting go might imply that we're letting something go. Release is a radical movement that something inside of us, the heart, the mind, the deepest places inside, loosen, lighten up, free themselves up. And in the fullness of that is what makes a person fully liberated.

Now all along in this Eightfold Path and leading to Right Knowledge and Right Release. This is not a mystical path, per se. It's not a path that you have to believe in something supernatural or believe in something. Maybe you don't have to believe in anything. But it's a movement through our lived experience, and understanding our lived experience in deeper and deeper ways. And starting to live in a genuine way. So it's genuine, the genuine view of things. It's the genuine for the purpose of liberation. It's the genuine view of things. It's a genuine way of thinking. It's a genuine way of speaking, of acting in the world, action, of livelihood, genuine effort, genuine mindfulness and genuine concentration. And perhaps using the word genuine, instead of right, might imply less that we have to do it. But more we come into fulfillment in it. The Eightfold Path has both sides. It's the Eightfold steps practice as we engage in, but we're supposed to graduate or mature out of being the doer of them, to it becoming who we are. The Buddha talked about in the ancient texts that when the Eightfold Path matures in a person, they become the Eightfold Path. And so the word right maybe doesn't work anymore, but the word genuine. We become authentic in this way.

And this emphasis on release that Buddhism has, you know, it's not unique to Buddhism. And I think just about every religion that I know of, in some place or other in the religion and the contemplative sides of the religion or different place, puts an emphasis on release, on letting go. And a recognition that release is not something that we can do. But something we prepare the soil for, the ground for. And we're available for something to really drop away. Like if we just sit and wait, the apple with its own time will fall from the tree. It's a tremendous relief. Because one of the things that we're released from is the preoccupation with self, self concern. There's something very wonderful about being fully present and alive and in this life, and not always referring things back to me, myself, and mine. Not always trying to navigate and negotiate this world with what's in it for me, and how do I take care of myself, how to protect myself, how do I get my pleasures, how do I avoid discomfort, how do I get people to like me, how do I avoid people disliking me. All this self concern, which is reasonable enough to have in this complicated social world we live in, but to have the experience of it evaporating, of its dissolving, of it dropping away, and just to be alive is enough. Just here and present, free in a radical simplicity. And in the Buddhist tradition, this idea of this radical release. That it culminates the whole path. Is a way of kind of realizing or being bestowed or fulfilling a personal kind of integrity and dignity. Sometimes they use the word nobility. And nobility of spirit, nobility of being in the release. And rather than release being a diminishment, it's a fulfillment. What we're doing is releasing all the things that actually limit us and contract us and diminishes us. And to experience this kind of openness, that's so open, so free. That it's not limited by self concept and self concern, but just really kind of here in a full and open way.

And where does that leave us? To have that kind of radical release? I think it leaves us available to the world, open to the world. And it's a way of no longer being in conflict with the world or in conflict with anything. Or say it a little more precisely, a person who has this deep release will no longer create conflict in the world. And what a great gift to the world. What a great, fantastic way of being in this life. To no longer be the one who creates conflict. Of course, there might be conflict, difficulties that somehow approach us and find us and we have to navigate. But imagine being someone who does not create conflict. But rather navigates and walks through the world, responding, taking care of things. And this openness and simplicity, and taking care of the next thing. And if the next thing is something that needs to be changed, just take care of the next thing without maybe without a sense of conflict and hostility and sparks between people. To be available to this world and this radical simplicity, without greed, without hatred, and without delusion. It's a great gift to the world. Imagine experiencing someone who is so fully free of greed, hatred and delusion, but they're present and open and available and friendly with you. It's fantastic. It feels like this is a safe person to be with. An inspiring person to be with.

So to become that person that provides the world with the safety, this inspiration, this model, this way of being, this gift of radical release radical freedom. And of course, many of us would like to have a little bit more in this. Always more, right? We're not really content with radical release in the absence of greed, hate and delusion. Isn't there something more? And the common thing that's offered as more is "Oh yes. You'll have lots of love for the world. You'll have compassion for the world. You'll live for the welfare and benefit of the world." Maybe. At this point when the release is radical and full, I'd rather not add that to the mix. Because it's so easy then for it to be a should and somehow complicate the simplicity. Rather, why don't you try it yourself. Don't put conditions on the release. Don't require it to be

something. Don't only trust it if you know that, "well, then I'll be compassionate. Then I'll take care of people. Then you know something." Trust the radical release from greed, hate and delusion. The radical release from suffering. Trust it deeply. Trust the Eightfold Path. Trust the tremendous richness of it. All of Buddhism is contained within the Eightfold Path. Trust how it's a path of freedom, finding it and expressing it, manifesting it. Manifesting and more and more in our life. Trust it. And then find out for yourself, how you live your life. And I'm confident, at the risk of complicating your life. That if you do so in your own way that's genuine for yourself, you will live for the welfare and happiness of all beings. And it'll be a natural thing to do in your way.

So thank you very much for this series and being here and I certainly appreciate it, the opportunity. And we'll continue next week with a new theme. And for those of you who may be or a little bit discouraged or bewildered that I didn't quite want to leave you with love and compassion at the end of release ... not quite. Probably that'll be the theme for next week. So thank you so much.