

Dick's Buddhist Background

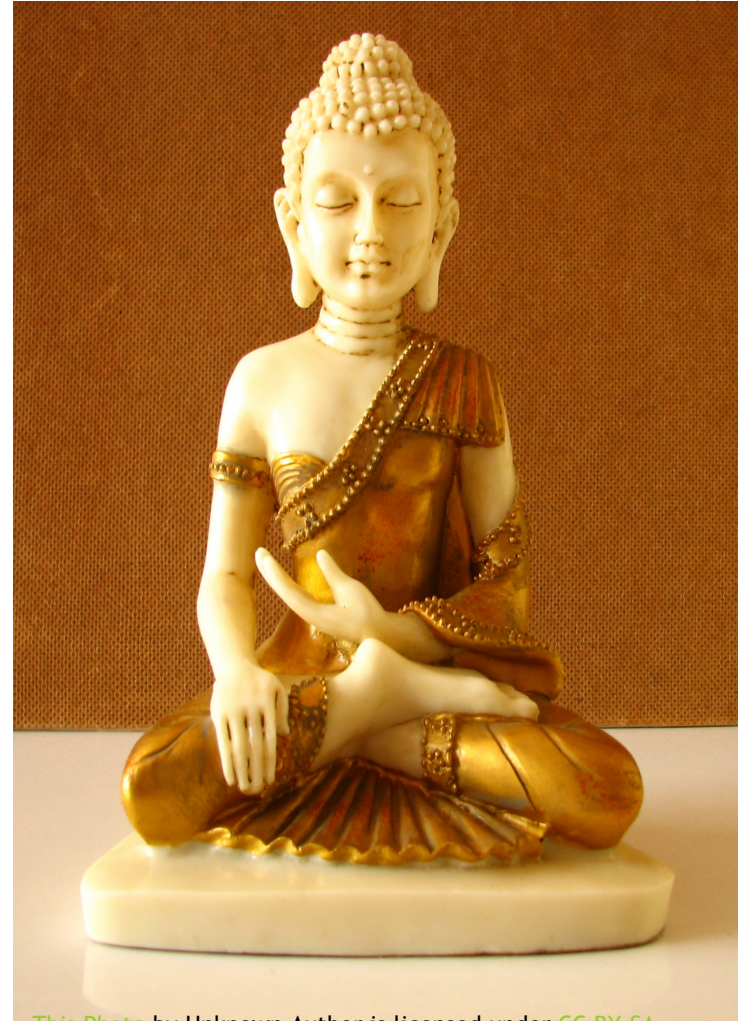
I Practiced and studied Buddhism for years including some time in a Ashram in India.

During the last 10 or so years Buddhism has not been a primary focus, but I continue to practice it.

I'm not an expert.

Talk Outline

- ▶ The starting point for Buddhist practices.
- ▶ A story of what it's like on a 10 day retreat.
- ▶ How the 2 paths of AA and Buddhism merge and separate.
- ▶ How to do Buddhist mindfulness meditation.

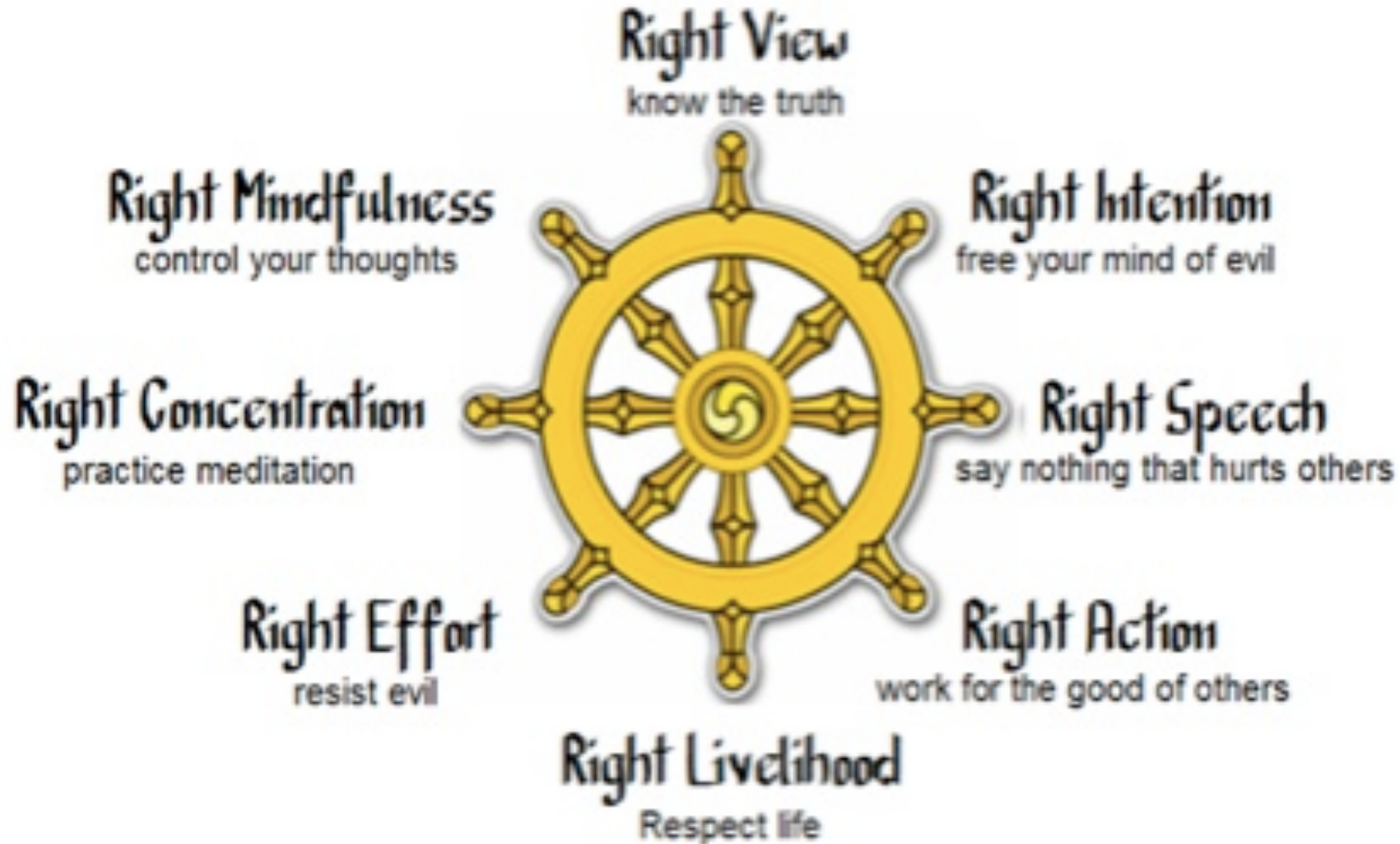


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THE 4 NOBLE TRUTHS



The Noble Eightfold Path



The Paths Merge And Separate

- ▶ 1st noble truth is that we are suffering and our 1st step is that our lives are unmanageable.
- ▶ The eightfold path leads to a way out of suffering and folds perfectly into steps 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 seamlessly.
- ▶ Buddhism is thousands of years old and has more tools and insights into how to face our character defects and ways to deal with them.
- ▶ I have found Buddhism more revealing but not as healing.
- ▶ Buddhism has no higher power, to surrender to and to open to.
- ▶ I have not experienced enlightenment and am not working to achieve it.
- ▶ My focus is to become a more kind, loving, forgiving, peaceful, etc. human.

Buddhist Wisdom

Although we are usually unaware of it, especially if we have not yet begun to cultivate an awakening practice, our minds are constantly filled with the noise of our own inner monologue. It's a 24 hour show, unmonitored, and uncensored. Although the monologue has no allegiance to reality, we believe and react to every word. Our patterns run rampant, like kids in a classroom when the teacher steps out for a minute or two. Weaning ourselves from automatically believing in our own thoughts is the initial project if we wish to awaken or live in a better place.

Let's Take A Look -Falling Into Grace, by ADYSHANTI

At a retreat, where I was teaching a woman came up to me and said, “I feel such immense rage inside me! even as I'm sitting here at this retreat, I'm not being disturbed and not being challenged, I just feel so much rage. I look at people, and find myself judging them and being resentful of them for no reason whatsoever. I've walk around feeling really, really angry.”

I could see in her eyes and in the way she held her body that these emotions of rage and anger had taken over her whole system. I said, "I don't want to talk to you. I want to talk to your rage”.

Falling Into Grace Continued

At 1st she looked at me kind of perplexed. She didn't know what I meant so I said it again. I said, "I want to speak to the emotion of rage" "Tell me how it views your life, what it thinks about others? What are its judgments? What does it feel like inside. What are its judgments about people in your life".

She looked at me with a sense of horror and said,"! Oh no, not that".

I said,"yes, yes, yes, that's what I want to talk to.

I want you to give rage its voice. Stop holding yourself separate from it, stop trying to get rid of it".

As you can see Buddhism takes us deeper and it has really helped me work with my character defects. In this case anger and rage.

One Type Of Buddhist Meditation -Mindfulness

There are many forms of Buddhist meditation I'm only going to teach you one - mindfulness.

Sitting in a chair feet should be flat on the floor, the back upright, eyes closed, and hands on your lap.

Focus on your breath at the tip of your the nose and follow it as it

goes down to your lungs, noticing your belly expand and then follow it back up.

You can also do this by keeping your focus just in your nose as the breath goes in and out.

When you become aware of a thought make a mental note of it, and let it go and go back to your breath.

Mindfulness - Noting Practice

The idea of this practice is to make a soft mental note whenever a particular thought, emotion, or sensation arises while we are meditating. This helps us to become aware of what we are experiencing, right now. If I note that I feel angry, for instance, I mentally note that I am angry. If my back is uncomfortable in this chair I note it. If I'm planning my lunch date, I note it.

After making a mental note we just let go of it and go back to either our breath or our sacred word.

I do this with 1 of my meditation sessions each day and I have found that my thinking goes either to planning or the activities of the day. If I look deeply I see that this is primarily fear driven. I next ask myself what am I afraid of.



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Awareness - Noting Practice

See if you can pick up a pattern of repeated thoughts in our next sit.

Like anger, resentment, judgment, fear, planning, and so on.

If you doing a daily practice try this for a month or so and then write out the patterns that you experience.

Then explore them at a deeper level.

So let sit for 20 minutes and see if you can do a little noting.

If you name it, you tame it.



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2 Books

- ▶ **THE JOY OF LIVING -
YONGEY MINGYUR
RINPOCHE**
- ▶ **THE 12 STEP BUDDHIST -
DARREN LITTLEJOHN**