

ALBA WHITEBOARD

Day Retreat - 14 January 2023

Being Dhamma

..... Just step aside

Led by Randula Haththotuwa



*Just step aside and let Dhamma look after this body
Just step aside and let Dhamma look after the mind
Just step aside and let Dhamma flow through the heart
Just step aside*

*Just step aside and let Dhamma look after things that you use
Just step aside and let Dhamma look after people you know
Just step aside and let Dhamma look after the projects you do
Just step aside*

*Allow the warmth of Dhamma to flow through your life
Feel the ease in the heart under Mother nature's love
Rest in peace in safety under the Lion's watch
Just step aside*

....that's all Dhamma asks of us

Thank you friends for joining the retreat.

Please use the space below to share your reflections. The board will be cleared a week after the retreat. You may wish to put your name or leave it anonymous.

Thank you Randula for an inspiring day and for sharing your wise reflections.

You mentioned in the morning that the Buddha said something about us not identifying with various aspects of what we take to be our true selves.... e.g., feelings or perceptions and that he said something along the lines of "you wouldn't want to identify with bits of rubbish that you were carrying around with you, so why identify with these things?". I found this image quite helpful and wondered if you could reference a sutta from which this teaching comes. The closest simile I could find was in the Vitakkasanthana Sutta, where he talks about wearing a carcass around the neck, but that pertains to The Removal of Distracting Thoughts rather than identifying with aspects of a false self.

Actually, further to this, I have just read the Anatta-lakkhana Sutta and remembered what you were saying about these things (the 5 Khandhas) not being *fit* to be considered self according to the characteristics (impermanence, suffering), so I believe that's why you were making an analogy to carrying/wearing rubbish? Our form, feelings, perceptions etc are not fit to be considered self because they are impermanent and painful, so identifying with them as self would be like carrying/wearing rubbish?

My apologies if I misheard or misunderstood what you said. Thank you again for an insightful day.

Dear Dhamma friend,

Thank you for your kind words and for sharing your reflection on the White board - well done - it is often difficult to be the first. It is a letting go of sense of self - and we are all now benefiting from your sharing. 😊

Yes, you are right it was just my interpretation of it as a helpful visual aid to letting go rather than something I read that the Buddha had said. You are also right that the Buddha gave the image of wearing a carcass around the neck for thoughts but we could apply it to the other five khandas as well.

We should also remember that it isn't about pushing things away either - but allowing things to just be. So if it is something we are attached to or like - we allow it to cease and if it is something we don't like and pushing away we allow it to arise and patiently be with it - it will cease on its own.

Also it is not about destroying our sense of self either nor is it to create one. We can be aware of when it is present and when it is not present. When the sense of self does arise,

know it too as a phenomenon that arises and ceases rather than the all seeing, knowing, controlling 'I' that governs, runs and experiences life.

Thank you again for your sharing

With Metta

Randula

Dear Randula

Thank you for a deeply nourishing day of practice yesterday. Your theme of stepping aside - allowing things to be - was one that I believed I applied to my life. But during your guided meditation I had a deep insight into how I (unintentionally) imposed myself into a relationship by offering Dhamma advice when, it became clear to me during the mediation, I should really step aside and just be a friend; offer non judgemental support from the sidelines. Lessons from Right Speech to be applied here too. So, thank you for your wise guidance and wonderful teaching, Randula. 🙏

With metta and blessings

Madeline

Dear Madeline

Thank you for sharing your insight in to identifying with the Dhamma too and stepping aside 😊

Glad you enjoyed the day

With Metta

Randula

Hi,

I was disappointed that work prevented me from attending the session. I wanted though to express how much I appreciated the "just step aside" poem that appeared in the ALBA email. I found it very moving and inspiring. Is it an original?

Metta and thanks,

James Buckey

Dear James

Sorry you missed the day. Andrew will be editing the recordings and we will put it on the website as soon as they are ready. So maybe you can listen to it in your own time.

Thank you -yes, I wrote the poem a few years ago - maybe I will post it here as well. I'm glad that it resonated 😊

With Metta

Randula