

How the Endeavor of 'Improve' Supports 'Transcend'* ~ Shinzen Young

00:00:00 It's not an uncommon experience that people report, well I'm sort of spinning my wheels with my formal practice.

00:00:14 It's like, you know, I don't seem to be getting anywhere with day to day sits, etc., etc.

00:00:21 Sometimes if you do some good thing in the world that's special, you volunteer, you do something,

00:00:39 and then you go back to your formal practice, you'll see that it's sort of like, now it's moving again.

00:00:47 That would be an example of the seva or what you put out influencing what you experience.

00:00:58 It goes to a somewhat broader formulation, which is see beyond self and world, refine self and world, or improve self and world.

00:01:11 So you make improvements in yourself and your world that will then influence your experience during formal practice,

00:01:22 which is the main place that you're trying to see beyond the self and the world.

00:01:28 So it's a little larger than seva, it's more improve.

00:01:33 For example, diet, lifestyle, ethics, sila, traditionally it's said, well sort of get that together before you even try to sit,

00:01:47 because otherwise it's just going to be chaos sitting when you try to sit.

00:01:52 So the fact that you have a certain lifestyle, that you're not bringing all this awareness of guilt and bad karma to your sits,

00:02:06 you're not conflicted about- you're less conflicted about your life because you're living your life in a better way,

00:02:18 perhaps diet enters in, exercise, all that sort of stuff.

00:02:23 So those are improvements in yourself.

00:02:27 You bring those- those improvements will probably improve your experience in formal practice.

00:02:35 And then there's the knowledge that you're putting on good things into the world,

00:02:40 and that's in your subliminal consciousness, and it's there, whether you're surface aware of it or not,

00:02:51 it's sort of there in your practice and that supports you also.

00:02:56 So it's really broader than how seva supports sadhana,

00:03:03 it's more like how the endeavor of improve supports the endeavor of transcend.